

USNATO
READER
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MICHAEL NEWLIN
Political-Military Officer, US Mission to Regional Organizations
Paris, France (1963-1967)

Ambassador Michael Newlin was born in North Carolina in 1929. He received both his bachelor's degree and master's degree from Harvard University in 1949 and 1951, respectively. His career has included positions in Frankfurt, Oslo, Paris, Brussels, Leopoldville/Kinshasa, Jerusalem, Vienna, and an ambassadorship to Algeria. Ambassador Newlin was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1997 and by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.

Q: You left UNP in 1963 and moved to USRO. What do those initials stand for?

NEWLIN: United States Mission to Regional Organizations. That was supposed to cover a variety of organizations, but basically it was the U.S. Mission to NATO.

Q: The head of it at that time was Tom Finletter?

NEWLIN: Thomas K. Finletter of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party of Stevenson, Eleanor Roosevelt. A former Secretary of the Air Force and New York lawyer.

Q: Did he take on a strong hands-on approach or did he let his staff run things?

NEWLIN: Finletter's great goal was the Multilateral Force--the MLF--which was to put strategic nuclear weapons on cargo ships and then to have the Germans and others on board with us. And this was his great--like the ancient mariner preoccupation. (Laughter) As far as the Democratic Party was concerned, LBJ and Finletter were opposites. In one of his first visits to Washington after Kennedy's death Finletter managed to have a small meeting with LBJ at which he made a strong pitch for the multilateral force. Not all concerned agencies were present. LBJ told Finletter to go full steam ahead. As we know, not even a meeting with the President can guarantee the shelf life of a controversial policy. One needs constant broad-based support in Washington which was lacking. In spite of the green light, the administration did not push the MLF project but it was not formally dropped. After Harlan Cleveland angered LBJ over leaking a story on UN finances, he was sent to replace Finletter thereby dooming the MLF. Cleveland's "exile" to NATO was a great boon to the Alliance.

Finletter told a story about a meeting he had with President Truman while he was serving as Secretary of the Air Force. An important policy decision had come up in which there were compelling arguments on both sides. Finletter, the good attorney he was, laid out the pros and cons dispassionately. Truman asked, "What is the right thing to do?" Finletter repeated his presentation after which Truman repeated his question. Cornered, Finletter then said what he would do if he were President. Truman said, "Always do the right thing; it will please your friends and annoy your enemies."

Q: What was your position on the NATO delegation?

NEWLIN: I started out as head of the Political/Military unit which had sort of languished because the idea of a Foreign Service Officer working on Political/Military affairs was not popular with the military side of the house. There were three of us in that office, officers more brilliant than I. We worked on the Multilateral Force and we worked on NATO infrastructure, and on the whole series of problems relating to de Gaulle's decision to make the military leave. I did a great deal of work during the time I was there on moving NATO from Paris to Brussels.

Q: What about NATO nuclear forces? We were quite concerned at the time that the Germans not get their hands on any nuclear weapons.

NEWLIN: Yes. That was the rationale for the MLF--that we blunt any desire on the part of the Germans to develop their own nuclear capabilities. That you associate them getting close to nuclear weapons but keep actual usage in U.S. hands. Also, I was involved in setting up something that has become a permanent thing--the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. That was started while I was there and I was the Group's first secretary. That was an initiative of McNamara. McNamara wanted, among other things, to educate the Europeans as to the realities of nuclear weapons. He used the Group to show what even tactical nuclear weapons would do to the population. I think that was useful. Everybody had to have special clearances. McNamara and other Defense Ministers would come. There were just a few people there. I had to take my turn taking notes. I think that was a useful thing to have done.

Q: What were your relations with the Supreme Allied Commander there, General Lemnitzer at the time, and his staff?

NEWLIN: Finletter was a strong believer in the absolute supremacy of the North Atlantic Council--that you were the personal representative of the head of government and the chief of state and that he should be supreme. When General Norstad, SACEUR, left, he said, "One down, one to go." The other one was the NATO Secretary General, Stikker. There were no problems really with Lemnitzer other than once we got an instruction that I had to deliver in the middle of the night. The telegram instructed SACEUR to get involved with the Cyprus dispute. Lemnitzer read the instructions and said, "These are the damndest things I've ever seen." It was where the State Department wanted the Supreme Allied Commander to get involved in one of the intractable problems no one else had been able to solve. Lemnitzer successfully avoided the assignment.

Q: Of course, you probably maintained close relations with the SACEUR political advisor on it, too.

NEWLIN: Yes. That was John Burns. We had very good relations with him.

Q: Some of the political issues that came up at that time was U.S. troop withdrawal from Europe. Did you get involved in that at all?

NEWLIN: Well, certainly the mission as I recall, we strongly advised against anything like that.

Q: Yes. And what about the French nuclear force?

NEWLIN: Well, the French of course, went their own way. There was really very little that we could do. I guess we watched with restrained amusement when critics asked, "Who is your enemy? Why are you building this?" De Gaulle didn't want to say, of course, "I'm building it just out of national pride." He said, "It will be aimed a tout azimuths." (Laughter) I said to my French colleagues, "I hope for your sake that you don't accidentally fire one of those things towards the United States!"

Q: Were you involved in the question of the flexible response, which was then the big issue in NATO?

NEWLIN: Yes. Very, very much so. In the Political/Military Section we certainly were involved. Rather than massive retaliation, flexible response.

Q: That again, played in with what became to McNamara and the new Administration the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. That was a part of that, you didn't just sit back and say, "Well, the American nuclear deterrent will take care of any problems." There were always wrangles. Difficulties also with the amount of our contribution. Congress said the Europeans are now richer. They ought to pay more. The constant wrangles sometimes... This always involved a forward strategy, too, I gather?

NEWLIN: Well, the MLF died in 1966 or '65, as I recall.

Q: It did. Having been pushing it in Germany, I breathed a sign of relief. (Laughter)

Let's talk a bit about the move to Brussels from Paris. Give us a little bit of background and how did we arrange that? Did we negotiate with the French?

NEWLIN: No. Because there wasn't very much to negotiate. De Gaulle, replaying his tactics during World War II, built up this nationalism against the Western allies. He kicked out the military side. He didn't kick out the North Atlantic Council. That would be kicking out the Ambassadors--all of his allies. Then the question was, well we've just got to pick up and go to Brussels.

Q: The Belgians had invited us?

NEWLIN: Yes. The Belgians invited us, but then the Norwegian Ambassador didn't want to move. He said, "No, no, no. De Gaulle will eventually be leaving." Turned out he had a beautiful home near the Trocadero. (Laughter) He didn't want to pull up stakes. But at any rate, we pulled up stakes, and it was an amazing feat that in nine months a construction company in Belgium was able to put up the new headquarters. And in nine months we were ready to move. Of course, we had no adequate place for the Ambassador to live because everybody else had gone up right away and bought up real estate. So by the time we got there everything was gone. We said early on we had to look for a place for the Ambassador to live. FBO said, "There is no firm decision yet and Congress has not appropriated any money." So we wound up in the DCM's house. Which was alright as a house, but wasn't what you'd expect an Ambassador to own.

Q: Who was our Ambassador who made the move up there?

NEWLIN: Harlan Cleveland. After about a year of the Johnson Administration, he replaced Finletter in '65 I believe.

Q: I never thought of Harlan Cleveland as a man devoted to military affairs. And here he was, in a sense, in the midst of it.

NEWLIN: Harlan was very creative. He was brilliant. He was ruthless towards the French. He liked to coin a phrase. Just before we moved, we were getting ready to move, he gave a backgrounder in which he referred to "The accelerating irrelevance of France." (Laughter) He could take a draft telegram on a very complicated subject, such as NATO infrastructure, and say you have to present this in a much broader policy framework so that Washington will understand its importance.

Q: The French took their forces out of NATO at this time, did they not?

NEWLIN: They did. They pulled out.

Q: To our regret. But they stayed in on the political side, though.

NEWLIN: Yes, they did stay in on the political side. It was difficult to reach a consensus on some things. Gradually we reached a modus vivendi.

The atmosphere when we got to Brussels was entirely different. I used to say in Paris that the year was divided into two six months periods--three months before de Gaulle's semi-annual press conferences, speculating on what he was going to say, the press conference itself, next three months of analyzing what he said, and then it went all over again. That was sort of the political atmosphere. (Laughter) When we got to Brussels, the world went on without de Gaulle. Harlan was right. So we got down to business and you must remember that all during this period, Vietnam was the problem for the United States. We had people come out from the Department and at private lunches they would say, "You've got to remember that every morning the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense wake up and ask themselves, "How do we get out of Vietnam?" McNamara became disillusioned and left. Harlan was fantastic. Clifford was brand new, of course. He'd just gotten into this. At the first meeting of the NATO Defense Ministers that Clifford participated in, Harlan had to take Clifford aside and say, "Here is what U.S. policy is. Here is what the President has stated." Clifford had his own ideas and his staff was new and all that. Harlan was very effective in presenting American policy and in achieving American goals.

Q: You had a lot of preparatory work to do.

NEWLIN: We did indeed.

Q: What were your relations with the French representative by the time you reached Brussels? Were they personally friendly?

NEWLIN: Yes. I forget what the French representative's name was at that time, but he was a very sympathetic person. He would go shooting off to Paris every weekend, trying to lobby for something that was reasonable. (Laughter) I remember one feed-back we got was, somebody in the Quai d'Orsay saying, "Oh poor (I forget what his name was), he's like a riderless horse, but his heart's in the right place."

Q: Any other comments about your tour in Paris and Brussels?

NEWLIN: No. It was great satisfaction to see that the move took place and that the Alliance survived. It was a fascinating time to be in Paris and in Brussels.

Q: One final question: was Vietnam ever discussed in the North Atlantic Council?

NEWLIN: Not formally. It was always there, though. The Perm Reps [Permanent Representatives] used to take turns hosting Ambassadors-only lunches. Vietnam was discussed in these informal meetings. Harlan was quite effective in reassuring his colleagues that, in spite of Vietnam, NATO was still the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

Q: Then in 1968, you were transferred to this country--to New York.

NEWLIN: I went to New York as Political Counselor to the U.S. Mission to the UN.

Excerpts from Kennedy interview of 2006

NEWLIN: Yes. First I might say a word about onward assignments. It was difficult for people in IO at that time because the geographic bureaus had a great deal of say in the personnel system. In the personnel system you were supposed to be available to go anywhere. In IO we didn't have any posts under our control except New York and Geneva. So when it came time for my tour to be up I applied to EUR for a post. I kept getting rebuffed because EUR had its own candidates. Then a friend of mine who had worked with me in IO, and had wound up at our NATO mission in Paris came by to say hello. He was, even though he was a junior officer, he was very close to Thomas Finletter who was our permanent representative there. He happened to be with Finletter on consultation in the Department. I said, "Do you have any jobs coming open in mission in Paris?" He replied, "Yes, Mike, as a matter of fact we do. Would you be interested in working on political-military affairs in the political section?" I said, "I would love it." He said, "I will go over and talk to Finletter." He went over and came back and said, "Finletter says come on over and meet him." I met him. Finletter said, "I understand you would like to come to Paris?" So that was how that was done.

So I was about ready to go off then. In those days of course it was the height of the cold war. The only Eastern Europeans we could have any sort of contact with were the Yugoslavs because Tito had broken with the Soviet Union. Milena and I got very friendly with a Yugoslav diplomat and his wife. I think they had a child with them too. They weren't like the Soviets were, you had to leave somebody behind. After awhile, I think it was over lunch, he indicated that he was an intelligence officer and that he wanted to defect. So I said, "Well I assume you have given this a lot of thought. It is a major step." So I then went back to the Department, and I went over to EUR and talked to the Yugoslav desk officer. He said, "Well we have to tell the FBI right away." The next thing the FBI got in touch with me. One evening, I picked up an FBI agent in my car and then I drove around to a place the Yugoslav and I had agreed. The Yugoslav got in. The FBI agent said, "I understand you want to defect?" He said, "Yes I do." The FBI said, "Well what proof do you have that you are what you say you are?" So the man produced a copy of a recent classified telegram from the State Department. So it turned out that it was a legitimate thing and my Yugoslav friend and his family defected. Then pretty soon after that I was off to Paris. I am told that later there was a message from J. Edgar Hoover to Dulles complementing me on this event. Then some time considerably later, here is a message from the deputy undersecretary of state for administration.

Q: Yes, this is dated November 2, 1965.

Dear Mr. Newlin,

It has been brought to my attention that through your alert response to a situation in May, 1962, the Federal Bureau of Investigation was able to conduct a successful operation dealing with Yugoslav intelligence matters. I am referring to your reporting of a conversation with a representative of the Yugoslavian embassy, Washington DC, and your evaluation of this individual. I wish to commend you for your alertness, your professional handling of this delicate situation. A copy of this memorandum is being placed in your official personnel file.

*Sincerely yours,
William J. Crockett.
Well very good.*

NEWLIN: All right, off to Paris.

Q: You were in Paris from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was in Paris, oh something funny. Personnel developed sort of hiccups over this assignment because it was all handled outside regular personnel procedures. But finally when they got the word that Finletter agreed, they did not want to second-guess him. Eventually Personnel called me and said, "Mike we are ready to write your assignment orders to Paris. We are in the process of trying to save money, so we are going to assign you to Paris for five years to save money of transferring you after four. Is that agreeable to you?" I said, "Yes that sounds all right."

Q: But you owe me.

NEWLIN: I said, "Yes." So that was where we were. We were going off then in 1963 at that time for five years presumably. In those days most people traveled to Europe by ship. So we were supposed to go on an American ship, the old America. While we were docked in New York and people were waving goodbye, I could look down and see that the crew was leaving the ship. A spokesman made a public announcement, "There is a slight difficulty with a dispute with some members of the crew, but we will soon be at sea. We advise the people on the dock to disperse, and we will soon be at sea." Well the America never sailed again. The upshot of it was three days later we went over three docks and sailed on the old Queen Mary. That was a very nice introduction to our thing in Europe. We were met in Paris by the head of the political section, John Auchincloss. It was a very interesting assignment indeed. Finletter of course, had been Secretary of the Air Force under Truman.

Q: Thomas K. Finletter.

NEWLIN: Yes, Thomas K. Finletter. He and Eleanor Roosevelt were with Adlai Stevenson the very liberal wing of the Democratic party. The deputy chief of mission was a very interesting fellow called Durbrow. I don't know if you have ever heard of Durbrow, but he was a cold warrior if there ever was one. Anybody that he disagreed with, he call a goddam UN loving twilight sleeping son of a bitch. 'Twilight sleeping' in those days were narcotics given women in labor. I had the impression Durbrow used the phrase rather than comsymp or comdupe. Since I came from IO, I was under somewhat of a suspicion, and since my wife was born in Czechoslovakia, even though she had risked everything fleeing communism he always sort of regarded her with some misgiving.

Q: When you arrived there, what was sort of the political situation in France vis a vis NATO, I mean at the time you arrived?

NEWLIN: At the time we arrived, it didn't really come to a head so much, but de Gaulle was very much on his campaign to increase France's role in the world and independence. Actually while I was there, the NATO mission was really the focus of a lot of activity in that regard. When I first got there in '63 it was not so. I will say right after we got there, just a few weeks after we got there, the Auchinclosses invited us for dinner. They had a beautiful place on the Champs de Mars. When my wife and I got there, the people taking our coats told us in French, "Kennedy is dead." We were just stunned.

Q: November 22.

NEWLIN: November 22, yes. So we went in, and they had the radio on, so during the entire evening we were listening to the radio as to what was happening in Houston and Washington. That was a tremendous shock.

Under Finletter, we had at that time I arrived a project called the multilateral force. I don't know whether you have ever heard of that. This was a scheme to associate the West Germans with nuclear weapons so that they could defend themselves in case of a Soviet attack. The ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) would be on surface vessels that looked like merchant ships. The United States would control the nuclear missiles but they would be on ships that you could move around. Of course this is something that would drive the Soviet crazy. Finletter was just hell bent on this idea. The minister for political affairs was Phil Farley. He had reservations and said Finletter sounded like the ancient mariner in his dedication to the multilateral force. The French and perhaps some other delegations were not going to have any part of this, but still we spent a lot of time on that.

It became apparent that political life in Paris was divided into segments between the twice a year de Gaulle press conferences. Three months leading up to his press conference there were all these rumors and speculations about what he was going to say. The press conference would take place and for the next three months everybody was speculating as to what some of his oracular statements meant.

Q: I would like to ask you. What did you do. Was your focus on sort of the French association to NATO or was it you know were you looking at the Germans and other people there? How did you go about doing what you were doing?

NEWLIN: Okay when I got there, the political military thing was really sort of the State Department interaction with the American military presence which of course, was very large indeed. SACEUR was just outside of Paris. We had air bases and other military facilities as well as large related infrastructure such as pipelines. So I was involved with sort of liaison with the military from a political standpoint. Once we got an instruction from Washington that instructed the mission to go and see SACEUR, who was General Lemnitzer, and persuade General Lemnitzer to involve himself in the Cyprus dispute since other efforts to solve the Cyprus problem had been to no avail. So Finletter gave me the telegram, told me to go out and see Lemnitzer, and carry out the instruction. So I got in a car and went out and after a great deal of security and questioning got in to see Lemnitzer. I showed him the telegram. "This is what Washington would like you to do." It had been cleared by the Pentagon. Lemnitzer looked at me

and said, “These are the God Damnedest instructions I have ever seen. I am not about to get involved in the Cyprus dispute.” So I said, “I will report back. If you would like to call Ambassador Finletter, please feel free to do so.” I went back, and Finletter and Mrs. Finletter were waiting for me at his residence, I reported, “Absolutely no sale on that.”

I got involved in other things such as the NATO infrastructure program as well. The alliance decided to build an integrated radar program to shield Western Europe. It was very expensive and at the time no European firm was capable of taking on such a huge undertaking. At the end, the contract went to Hughes. We were very close to the Germans and assured them we were working on the multilateral force. Then however, Kennedy’s death changed everything when LBJ became president. Finletter decided he had better go off to Washington and try to ingratiate himself with LBJ and bring LBJ up to speed as to where the multilateral force thing stood. Somehow he managed to get a rather small meeting with just LBJ and a few people in the oval office. While LBJ was a master of American politics, he had had little experience in international affairs. So LBJ agreed that yes, Finletter should go right ahead, full steam ahead and work with other delegations and broaden the effort and so forth. Finletter came back very much encouraged. But I thought to my self, well, I wonder about those in Washington and elsewhere who have doubts about this project. I mean even though LBJ gave him his blessing to mount a major diplomatic campaign on this, I just wondered about it.

I guess I had been in Paris 18 months or so, my wife one morning at breakfast came in with the Herald Tribune, and said, “Finletter is out and he is being replaced by Harlan Cleveland.” Of course I had worked very closely with Harlan in IO before coming out. So that meant that Durbrow was out too. The first thing that happened was that Harlan’s personal political advisor, Tom Wilson, who was not a foreign service officer, but was soon assigned to the mission came out on reconnaissance. I briefed him about the whole situation. Finletter and Durbrow were out. The third ranking person was Phil Farley, who was a brilliant person but rather prickly. In the Department he had been in what was then pol-mil. He had made a lot of enemies in the Department because of his very strong views, including making an enemy of Cleveland. So when I got to work that morning at the elevator downstairs Phil Farley said, “Well I am looking for another job. I am not going to work for Harlan Cleveland.” I said, “Now Phil calm down. Harlan Cleveland is one of the most intelligent and creative people I have ever worked with. With you as his deputy here, we would have it intellectually over all the other delegations.” Then I made the same point to Tom Wilson when he came out. I said, “Don’t let Harlan fire Phil Farley without meeting and talking to him. I think it would be good.” Fortunately this was the way it finally worked out. By that time when Harlan came, de Gaulle had really begun his anti NATO campaign. He had decided that he didn’t want to go so far as to kick the North Atlantic Council which was composed of ambassadors of almost all European countries, he didn’t want to go that far. But he decided he would kick out SACEUR – the military headquarters. There were a number of ambassadors on the North Atlantic Council, who said, “This is all right. The military HQ can go to Germany or Belgium, and the North Atlantic council would stay here. Well if the North Atlantic Council was supposed to manage crises and the military was off in another country, that wasn’t going to work. Some Ambassadors didn’t want to leave their beautiful homes in Paris. So at any rate it was finally decided that we would have to go to Belgium where NATO was welcome.

Q: Well up to this point two things. One, in the first place, this multilateral force with these ICBMs and all on ships. I mean it never happened, but how did it strike you? It must have been a nervousness about this because...

NEWLIN: There was a nervousness about it. At first I thought it was a good idea because it would reassure the Germans presumably. That is what it was meant to do. It would reassure the Germans and dampen any future thought that they ought to try to develop nuclear weapons themselves. But I did see that it possibly had quite a bit of security problems associated with it. On the other hand it would certainly complicate the strategic planning of Moscow because they would certainly make every effort to find out which ships these things were on and where they were stationed and where they were going. These would be surface ships made to look like merchant craft. Of course there would be security problems both at sea and if the were allowed to dock along with regular merchant ships. I have already mentioned what the Norwegian reaction would be. While I worked on the project loyally with Finletter since it was his main interest, I wasn't too sorry to see the thing evaporate after LBJ came in, and particularly when Finletter left, the thing died.

Q: Well did you have any contact with the French military or the French civilians dealing with the French military?

NEWLIN: I did not. My main military contacts were with the American military, and planning for their departure and all the problems associated.

Q: Well it was huge.

NEWLIN: We had air bases.

Q: We had supply lines running through France.

NEWLIN: Yes, we had a big pipeline running from Cherbourg or Le Havre running through France to supply the oil and gasoline that we used in Germany. George Ball sent a telegram saying that we wanted ironclad assurances from the French that that pipeline would not be touched. I remember the Ambassador to France at that time was Chip Bohlen. We were at dinner when this came up. He said, "Ironclad jock straps? Where are you going to get anything like that?" Finally we had to face the fact that both the North Atlantic Council and the military were going to Belgium. The Belgians were marvelous. They managed to put up in six months or less a new headquarters for NATO in a suburb of Brussels plus building headquarters for SACEUR and all of the military further away down near the French border. So at that time, that was in '67 I guess it was. Personnel said to me, "Well Mike, you have been in Paris for four years and you are assigned for five. What do you want to do? Do you want to just say you are though with NATO or do you want to finish out and go to Brussels for one year?" I thought it would be interesting to see how this works out, so I said I would like to go on to Brussels. So we packed up and went off to Brussels for the fifth year of our assignment.

Q: Well while you were dealing with the American military there, and working with our ambassador...

This is tape 3, side 1 with Michael Newlin. Mike, Go back when you arrived. What was Finletter's, and maybe the American military you were talking to attitude towards one, the French and two de Gaulle at that time, and how did things evolve?

NEWLIN: I was rather shocked when Finletter mentioned General Norstad who was...SACEUR when I got there.

Q: Lauris Norstad.

NEWLIN: Yes, he was SACEUR. Just after I got there he announced his retirement and left. Then Dirk Sticker, a Dutchman, was secretary general of the North Atlantic Council. So I remember Finletter remarked when Norstad left, he said, "Well that is one down." Then he wanted very much to have Sticker replaced because Sticker was not always easy to follow the American line. On one occasion Sticker was so furious over the U.S. position he grabbed a piece of paper and wrote, "Dear Dean, I resign. Dirk Sticker." He had his aide, an American, take the paper down to Finletter who managed to assuage him. However, Sticker was soon replaced by an Italian and relations improved. Lemnitzer played his cards differently and wanted to maintain as much professional contact with his French colleagues as he could. The French still had their delegation in the North Atlantic Council. I remember before Lemnitzer left that de Gaulle received him with full military honors to give him the Legion d'Honneur and embraced him. A sort of soldier to soldier goodbye..

Q: Well how did, I mean I am trying to get the attitude of both our civilian delegation to NATO and our military, the people you were dealing with, SACEUR, towards this being kicked out of the country by de Gaulle. I mean was there a lot of bitterness, anti Frenchness or anti de Gaullism or what?

NEWLIN: I didn't pick that up from the military. I guess they figured well this is what is going to happen. We have got to live with it. The only thing is they did drag their feet in closing some of the facilities. There was one facility particularly not too far from Paris that kept dangling. They were missing deadlines. I kept harassing them on that. I said, "Look, you have moved practically everything else." It turned out this was the golf course.

Q: Oh yes. Well this is always the, I mean in the Philippines I understand the golf course was the last thing to go.

NEWLIN: Before NATO left, Cleveland went around saying that de Gaulle's policies being followed were accelerating the irrelevance of France in world affairs. Well this didn't go down well with Couve de Mourville, the foreign minister. I am told that at a diplomatic reception, Couve De Mourville saw Harlan Cleveland and he wouldn't speak to him.

Of course, I should mention that about midway through in the Johnson administration, we began to have the looming quagmire of Vietnam. JFK sent the first U.S. military advisors to Vietnam but when LBJ became president the situation had deteriorated to the point where McNamara and the joint chiefs were pressing for combat forces. LBJ, I had the definite impression, had initial

reservations about this escalation. If you recall there was a big conference of wise men, Acheson, McCloy, Walt Rostow at the White House and all of them bought into the domino theory, that you cannot let Vietnam fall. So I remember somebody coming back to Paris and telling Cleveland that LBJ was having his doubts about all of this, and he wanted others to participate in his decision on Vietnam whether to go for a massive build up of our military. Cleveland said, "He can't have anybody else. He has got to make the decision himself." Cleveland was all for the Vietnam thing. After we got into Vietnam and after things began to go sour, and it turned out not to be a cake walk by any means.

The NATO ambassadors in addition to meeting in the North Atlantic Council which was a formal thing, they would have a luncheon, a private luncheon with just ambassadors present every so often, I think once a month. Cleveland wanted very much to lobby them, all of his counterparts to really support us on Vietnam. Since I had worked for Cleveland before in the Department, whenever he would go back to Washington on consultation, he would take me along. I would arrange all of his meetings. I remember one in Katzenbach's office. Katzenbach was I think in effect the deputy secretary.

Q: At that point he may...

NEWLIN: Cleveland said, "I want to lash the other NATO members to the American chariot. I want the go ahead to start that." Katzenbach looked at him and said, "I don't think you can do it." I remember Foy Kohler coming out, and this was towards the end of my assignment. We had lunch with Cleveland and a few other people from the mission. Foy Kohler said, "You have to understand that every morning when the president wakes up, his first thought is how do we get out of Vietnam?" Cleveland would come back from his consultations in Washington and say, "Well, we must be doing things all right. I got no complaints whatsoever." The fact of the matter was that everybody was so preoccupied with Vietnam that we were not high on the agenda.

Q: Well during this time, '63 to '68 that you were involved in NATO, how did we view the Soviet threat?

NEWLIN: Well the Soviet threat was a serious matter and that was the glue that held NATO together certainly. Everybody believed the United States would certainly live up to its obligations under the NATO treaty to see to it that the Soviet Union did not encroach into Western Europe. There was that underlying belief.

Q: You left I guess before September of '68 when the Soviets went into Czechoslovakia.

NEWLIN: Yes. We had left by that time. That was a chilling thing too, but there was a great reliance on the nuclear deterrent of the United States. Oh I am forgetting something. It is quite relevant here, which is everybody was relying, particularly the Germans, on the American deterrent. McNamara decided, he was Secretary of Defense, that he ought to educate the Europeans on just what nuclear war consisted of and what decisions you would have to make. So he formed in NATO, the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. It was my job within the mission to work with McNamara and his staff whenever he would come. We had to have Q clearances and all sorts of other clearances. What he was doing was showing that if you did have a Soviet thrust

into Western Germany, and you decided to respond with tactical nuclear weapons, he said, "Yes you would kill the advancing Soviets, but in so doing you would kill an awful lot of your own people, and plus the fact that you would be getting hit with Soviet nuclear weapons." So we had maps showing the area of destruction nuclear weapons would cause. I found out later sometime later, that our strategy was with the tactical nuclear weapons in Germany in the event of a Soviet attack we would turn them over to the Germans and let them make their decision just what they would do.

Q: How about during this time you were there, how large did Berlin loom in your radar?

NEWLIN: When we were there, that was not a major thing.

Q: Because it is often, I know by my own experience, I served in that type of situation. All of us who were looking at it were thinking Berlin is the place where World War Three might start.

NEWLIN: Yes, that is certainly true. Khrushchev was unwise enough to try to cow us. He presumably told Rusk, "I have talked to all of the European heads of state, heads of government, and not one of them would go to war if we took over West Berlin." Presumably Rusk said, "Well Mr. Chairman, you just have to consider the fact that the United States just might be crazy enough to do that." Then at one of the crises, I don't know just which one. It may have been the Czechoslovak crisis, presumably Khrushchev was asked at a press conference if he thought America was a paper tiger. "You have to remember that the paper tiger has thermo nuclear teeth." So there was with all of its dangers and everything, there was a balance. The balance of what was MAD, Mutually Assured Destruction.

Q: Was your wife at all concerned or involved at all in the Prague Spring and all coming to Czechoslovakia?

NEWLIN: Oh she was very much indeed. She was just so hopeful when Dubcek came in and with the freedom of speech and assembly reforms. Then she was very distressed over the Soviet invasion and the reimposition of communist rule. It is interesting that Gorbachev knew Dubcek and that they discussed socialism with human faces.

Q: Well then in 1968, whither?

NEWLIN: I was sitting in my office in Brussels and the telephone rang. It was Joe Sisco. Sisco then I guess, had become undersecretary for political affairs. He said, "Mike, I am putting Bill Buffum on the line, and you listen to Bill and agree to what he says." Bill Buffum was then our deputy ambassador to the UN in New York under George Ball. So I said, "Okay Joe, I'll listen." Buffum came on the phone and said, "Mike the head of our political section here is up for transfer, and Joe and I want you to come to New York to be head of the political section." I said, "Oh wow, well I will have to talk to Milena about that." I knew she wouldn't be too thrilled about going to New York. I said, "I will let you know." So I then called him back and said, "Yes I will do it."

THOMAS W. WILSON
Political Advisor, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1964-1968)

Thomas W. Wilson was born in Baltimore in 1912. After Graduating from Princeton University, he worked as a reporter for the Baltimore Evening Sun and later the Paris Herald. He served on the National Defense Advisory Commission, the War Production Board and the Economic Warfare Agency in World War II. After the War, he worked as an Information Officer for the Marshall Plan, and would later serve as a Political Advisor to the United Nations. Mr. Wilson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 30 1996.

Q: You were in the State Department from when to when?

WILSON: '61 to '68. But four years in Washington working with the UN. When Cleveland was made ambassador to NATO, he asked me to come with him as political advisor. I was head of the political section of the U.S. mission to NATO.

Q: When you were with Harlan Cleveland, what was your job with IO?

WILSON: I was really sort of a general factotum. As you know in government, special assistants can be anything. I guess I was a special assistant to Harlan for four years.

Q: What was his method of operating would you say?

WILSON: I think his method of operating was extremely interesting. His theory was that more and more pieces of foreign policy were becoming multi-national, more issues multi-lateral; therefore, IO, since it has to represent the U.S. on issues and in institutions involving several branches of the State Department and maybe the federal government, the IO is a good place to coordinate U.S. policy. He just happened to be strong enough to make that work. It would be hard to believe from the present State Department, but it did in fact work I thought quite well.

Q: Can you think of any major issues where he had to lock horns within the State Department or the government?

WILSON: Well I'm sure there were. I'm just trying to recall. It probably involved arguments every day with everybody more or less. But we were working for a President who thought the UN was a good idea, and the U.S. had a role in it. The White House guy on this was Arthur Schlesinger, and he believed in it. The Secretary of State had been the first guy to deal with the United Nations, Dean Rusk. Our man there was Adlai Stevenson. That was a situation that wouldn't work unless those three guys wanted to make it work. They all wanted to make it work, and it worked very well. And I guess everybody else knew that. That would damp down the bureaucratic problems by itself.

Q: Well now you went to NATO when? From about 1964 or 1965 until about 1968? What was the status of NATO at that time? This was a very difficult time wasn't it? Wasn't this about the time when de Gaulle decided to pull France out?

WILSON: We moved from Paris to Brussels during that period, in '67 I think it was.

Q: Was that expected? Were you all waiting for de Gaulle to do that?

WILSON: Yes, I think so, in the sense that we knew de Gaulle didn't like it. The first thing he pulled out of the military you know, so the military, of course, had to move. I think he wanted to keep the political headquarters in Paris, because I think he just thought he would have more influence on it. But we decided that if he didn't want to be in the military end of it, we'd take the political out too. Most people think of NATO as a military organization with a bunch of six feet two inch Texas generals in line. It's a standing diplomatic conference. One that has been going on for 35 years now.

Q: Well how did you find the move to Belgium? Did the organization you were with adjust quickly or was there a period of discouragement?

WILSON: It was fantastically easy. The Belgians did a marvelous job. I thought we'd sink Brussels. It turned out that they took us very well. There was literally no problem. First of all, NATO is a very complicated organization. You've got the missions of 16 countries actually living together in a common office building. You eat together. And NATO works at all kinds of levels. The diplomatic mission of the ambassadors have a formal meeting once a week. There are no records, no rules. Everything is by consensus, and it's very formal. Except that they also meet several times a week informally at lunch at somebody's house. Meetings can be called at any time day or night. Then there's a senior political committee made up of sort of number two people. I wasn't number two, but I was the American on the senior political committee, and these are people who can be pretty much trusted to stay in line, but to be a little bit more informal and find out a little more about why the other guy is being so silly. There are subgroups and you meet in all sorts of formations under very different rules. But, there's some way to get it done at NATO somehow or other. I'm not making very clear sense of this. It worked because everybody wanted to make it work; that's the one thing. Maybe the other thing that hit me between the eyes was the extent to which the U.S. is the leader, whether you want to be or not. I sat for about three years behind the U.S. name card around the conference table. I didn't particularly want to be the leader. In fact, I wished that some of our allies would show a bit more leadership than they sometimes do. I finally got it through my head that there was absolutely no chance whatsoever of getting NATO to do anything until the U.S. position was known. I could not trap my colleagues, even though I got to know some of them quite well, into any initiative. What happened most of the time is that something starts with a U.S. initiative, breaks down into a four party consensus, and then that's accepted by the rest of them.

Q: Were the French still playing an active role on the political side when you were there?

WILSON: At this point the French were making sure they weren't going to do anything American that they could get into trouble with de Gaulle about.

Q: So they were sort of a write off?

WILSON: Yes. They would go along as long as they weren't getting into any trouble with the Quai d'Orsay, but they wouldn't even try to get clear to go along if they weren't so sure about it, but they contributed nothing at all.

Q: Were you there when the Soviets and their block invaded Czechoslovakia in the summer of '68? In august of '68. How did that hit NATO? What was the feeling and what were the expectations when the news came out?

WILSON: I will claim that the U.S. delegation was not surprised, and it's because there had been some very good information about what was going on and because it seemed to be overwhelmingly clear that the Czechs had gone out of control. The Soviets could not live with what the Czechs could not go without at this point. The Russians had no alternative but to invade. And I will say that we were the only people in NATO who thought it would happen.

Q: Did you expect that this might lead to a larger war?

WILSON: No.

Q: Well, you left there shortly after that then.

WILSON: When was Nixon elected?

Q: '68.

WILSON: I resigned. Not that, I am a Democrat, but this didn't have anything to do with it. Any of the times I worked for the government it had nothing to do with it. But I thought it was time to get off the merry-go-round. Cleveland resigned, of course. The new Secretary of State, William Rogers, asked some of us to stay until spring, because they were having the 20th anniversary of the Treaty of Washington, which was the basis of NATO, you know, meeting in Washington at that time. I resigned, but Harlan asked me to stay until June to let Rogers get ready for that meeting. I came over here and worked with Rogers getting ready for the 20th anniversary of the Treaty of Washington celebration or meeting.

Rogers then asked me to stay with him in the Department which I did for about six months or so until the end of the year.

**HARLAN CLEVELAND
U.S. Permanent Representative
Paris & Brussels (1965-1969)**

Ambassador Cleveland was born in New York City and raised in the United States and Switzerland. He was educated at Princeton and Oxford Universities. During World War II he served on the Board of Economic Warfare, after which he held a number of senior positions dealing with Italian economic recovery, US and UNRRA assistance programs in China and Taiwan and NATO issues. He also served as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations and as US Ambassador to NATO. Ambassador Harlan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Well then, in '65 you went to the NATO job?

CLEVELAND: So in '65 under rather dramatic circumstances, I went to the NATO job. Once I had been confirmed, then there were plans for the usual laying on of hands which usually took place upstairs in the State Department where our current ambassadors met. De Gaulle had threatened to start at that season the rhetorical barrage about the UN that ended up in the withdrawal of France from the military aspect of NATO. So somebody obviously had to say something in reply to this big ploy of General de Gaulle. The person to say that was obviously the President.

So, my laying on of hands ceremony was suddenly promoted into the rose garden, and I helped draft the speech that the President gave on that occasion. It sort of set our line about being flexible about the French but adamant about our support of the UN, of NATO.

So when we got to Paris, it wasn't until two years later that we had to move the whole thing to Brussels. That is a story in itself that we'll get to. One of the first things I did in the mandatory calls on all of my colleagues, the other ambassadors to NATO, I called on Pierre DeLouisse, who was an older man, more de Gaulle's generation, had known de Gaulle very well. It was interesting that the French all through this period put at NATO their best foreign service people. The French foreign office was trying hard to make sure they didn't have any Goths in that because de Gaulle felt so strongly about French sovereignty being compromised by their membership in NATO. So, I call on Ambassador Pierre DeLouisse, and had an extraordinary experience. I had no sooner sat down on his sofa when Ambassador DeLouisse, still standing, said, "I hope you are not going to ask me what the old man means." I said, "Well Mister Ambassador, I wouldn't really want to bring negotiations up in this first courtesy call." He said, "Now look. You and I don't know each other yet, but we are going to have to work very closely together. We can do it two ways. We can sit across the table and glare at each other, or we can sit down on the same side of the table and we can gaze up at the great enigma and try to figure out what the hell he means."

After that, I never could treat him at arms length. He had shown such a human side of himself as a diplomat. He was more than a regular foreign service person because when he left that job, he was appointed by de Gaulle as head of the ORTF, the French radio-television monopoly. So, he had a good in with de Gaulle, and he was also a very popular colleague with both his personal sensitivities and he was also a very bright professional.

Q: Well, what was our reading at that time? I mean, all right, de Gaulle wants us out, so we get out.

CLEVELAND: No, he hadn't said yet that he wants us to go out. There was a rumbling about it. He didn't actually lower the boom for almost two years. They were being difficult about a lot of issues, especially military issues. It wasn't really part of their policy to object to a North Atlantic Council, they were just objecting to all these military commanders, and so on, being in the environs of Paris, and all the troops. So it wasn't until two years later that he finally said all foreign military will have to get out of France. That meant not only the troops doing various things, communications, aircraft duty and so on, but it also meant the supreme commander of NATO, an American and his whole staff will have to get out. There was then a period of uncertainty. Some of the allies were soft on France, and we were inclined to be, didn't want to offend France by saying the North Atlantic Council had to leave too.

But as the American representative on the North Atlantic Council, I was clear we were going to have to go. I finally got the State Department at my recommendation, to instruct me to ask one question in the council chamber. In the event of a war in which France remains neutral, how does France propose that we keep closely in touch with our supreme commander who is going to be in Belgium? The French ambassador, who was a very good friend, I had told him ahead of time what I was going to be asking. He looked up at the ceiling for a moment and said, "You'll never get an answer out of the Quai d'Orsay on a question like that." I said, "I know. That is the idea." So, he absorbed the question and reported it to Paris and the military. After about three weeks of no answer, the Danes, the Greeks and others were inclined to be uncertain whether we should move or not. Everybody agreed to move.

Q: Well, I would imagine there would also be the problem that most just didn't want to move because Paris is Paris.

CLEVELAND: Well, I think there was some of that sentiment. We really didn't have that feeling. We were looking forward to the chance to see another piece of Europe, in personal terms. In fact our general experience was that we had a more fun time living in Brussels in a sizable house, but a lot smaller than the mansion that we lived in in Paris with a lot fewer servants in Brussels, but it was just a more congenial environment in general. The Belgians were more welcoming. They had us in their homes in a way that didn't happen in Paris.

Q: Well, you had the political alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and then you had the military. You were dealing mainly with the political side.

CLEVELAND: No, I was dealing with both. Remember I remarked before the decision was made by McNamara when I was appointed to make me his representative in Paris too. So, I was really reporting both to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. I had one of my deputies who was a civilian in the McNamara whiz kid think tank in the early part of the Kennedy administration, Jim Stanley. So I did a lot of business with the Defense Department as well.

Q: You were there from '65 to when?

CLEVELAND: To '69, almost five months into the Nixon administration.

Q: Had Greece and Turkey come into the organization by the time you got there?

CLEVELAND: Yes indeed. And the Greek and Turkish ambassadors happened to be extremely good friends. You would see them walking down the hall with their arms around each other and so forth. I had already been through one Cyprus crisis when I was in the State Department in the early '60s. In 1967 we had another one where at one point President Johnson had to send Cy Vance, a former Deputy Secretary of Defense, at that point, over to try to make sure that the Turks understood that it was very serious violation of their friendship with us if they should invade Cyprus. I called Washington up one night to ask, "Shouldn't we get the Secretary General of NATO involved, get him to go down and make peace between these two allies, make the point that allies can't go to war with each other?" I had been really pushed into this by the Turkish ambassador who came to me in great alarm saying he thought the invasion would be tomorrow morning if I couldn't do something about it. So I went not as an envoy but as the American representative to the Secretary General. The problem is he had to go without having an invitation from either of the two countries at the time he left. We had an American plane standing by at the airport, a military plane to take him first to Athens and then to Ankara. We were able to announce that evening that the NATO Secretary General was going down, not as another piece of the deterrent in fact. The combination with Vance we thought was the most effective ploy. But the interesting thing was when I called to make that suggestion, the crisis task force was working on Cyprus. I had assumed they had already been considering this, but I can't remember who I was talking to, said that we haven't really discussed that yet, but that is a good idea. I know they were getting quick instructions. It often happens, it does happen I think in diplomacy, the person on the ground can better figure out what his instructions ought to be than anybody else, and shouldn't be bashful about making suggestions.

Q: Well, this Cyprus crisis came about to a certain extent because of the colonel's coup in Greece. That was in April of '67.

CLEVELAND: Yes, they were becoming more militant about it. But the Turks had made very clear that they were going to take no nonsense. They kept the Turkish military force in the Turkish part of Cyprus. It was clear that if the Greek Cypriots tried to sort of envelop the whole island, that Turkey would get into it. They almost got into it on their own initiative as it turned out, so it was a very dicey, hairy situation.

Q: What, during this time, '65-'69, what was the feeling about the Soviet threat at that point?

CLEVELAND: Well, it was regarded as a maximum threat. They had this huge inventory of nuclear weapons. I suppose at that time there were 10-12,000 nuclear weapons in the world; almost all of them ours and theirs, a few in the hands of the British and French and Chinese. Our problem with the non-nuclear allies, particularly Germany, West Germany at that time, Federal Republic, was that their political leaders tended to overstate the probability of a nuclear reaction to anything. You hear politicians say that the first Russian soldier or, East German soldier, who sets his foot across the demarcation line, all hell will break loose.

Well, we had started at my suggestion really, a nuclear planning group which still exists. We were anxious to be able to cut the non-nuclear allies in on what nuclear war would be like and you couldn't deal with it. It was becoming a lot more clear that there was no way you could have a nuclear war that you could win. You'd shoot your own foot as badly as you would hit the other fellow's foot.

There had been an idea of setting up a multilateral force, MLF so-called, to be another nuclear weapons system, surface ships, but we needed another nuclear weapons system about as badly as a hole in the head. We finally suggested we set up a group that included some of the non-nuclear allies, who would be rotated, so the total number would be kept to fewer than the 15 members. We had 15, too big for conducting serious conversations in secret. We established this group. We had the first meeting in Washington, McNamara presiding, and the defense ministers from the countries involved. One of them was Turkey. To everybody's surprise, including the surprise of the security people surrounding us. McNamara suddenly dives into this capacious briefcase and pulls out photographs, satellite photographs, of a defense installation in Russia. The code name was a classification that in itself was classified at the time and way above top secret. You could just see the security people blanching and fidgeting. But that was a case that we were taking this information sharing very seriously. Finally I said to McNamara, he really had to be personally present every time we met, otherwise it wouldn't work. He agreed to do that, and he did it.

Clark Clifford succeeded him. When the Nixon administration came in, Mel Laird also stuck by that principle. So we were dealing with nuclear policy by playing war games, by having simulated exercises. You had to assume that the enemy would come over into our territory first, but you couldn't assume anything about the defensive alliance. You couldn't assume a preemptive strike ahead of time or anything like that. We played a whole series of war games with these non-nuclear defense people as well as the French and the British. We never could play a game with these tactical nuclear forces where we didn't kill more people on our side than the other side. You might mess up an invading brigade, but you also messed up a number of communities in West Germany, mostly West Germany. So there was a sudden diminution of the nonsense coming out of the political leadership in the non-nuclear countries, particularly Germany. The plan worked, that is telling people the nature of nuclear war turned out to be a much better way of educating them than having them participate in a complicated surface force where everybody got to do different things.

Q: Well, was there any communication with the Warsaw Pact at this point? In a way, they must have been running the same games and finding out this wasn't going to work.

CLEVELAND: Well, no, there was not really any. Just intelligence people on both sides trying to figure out what the others were doing, but there was no real cooperation in thinking through. That was one of the things that bothered us, that they might think more highly of the possible advantages of using nuclear weapons than we were inclined to. Everybody in our camp was of the opinion that I came to, and that I think McNamara and some other top military leaders like Admiral Noel Gayler, who was the commander in chief of the Pacific did. When he retired, he said it was a weapon too big to use. I came to the conclusion, I started calling it not the ultimate weapon but the ultimately unusable weapon.

Q: Well, you had theorists and a sort of a lobby that was particularly powerful in scientific circles. Edwin Teller is the name that comes to mind. There were others who were playing games. If we lose two million, they lose three, and somehow we'll come out ahead on this sort of thing. Did you run across these people/? They tended to be more in the Nixon era.

CLEVELAND: Well, Teller actually was more active earlier in the argument about going from the A-bomb to the H-bomb. Yes, there was always this overestimation, and to some extent our own military politics and military dynamics tended to exacerbate the problem. The three services were competing for having nuclear weapons systems. The navy finally got the main deterrent system, the Polaris submarine and its successors. The air force had the bombers that were dual-capable as they called it. The army had the Pershing missile and other howitzers that were also dual-capable. I visited all the main military headquarters while I was in NATO. I learned a lot about the thinking, and the thinking often hadn't carried deeply enough, the analysis of what would be the effects of nuclear weapons both in the short term and the long term. Chernobyl hadn't happened yet, so they weren't thinking about the world effects of nuclear energy. Through all this time the Soviets, to answer your earlier question, were just being implacably the enemy. They weren't really doing anything to help us stop thinking of them as the implacable enemy.

Q: Well, during the time before de Gaulle finally said, "Everybody get out", there was this point in '65 when France was in the military organization. Was the rest of NATO beginning to move around and come up with the idea we can't depend on the French forces and make contingency plans, contingency thinking?

CLEVELAND: Well, the French really took care of that. They were in a way ahead of the allies moving in that direction. Within the French military forces there seemed to be some division of opinion. The cooperation in the Mediterranean with the French navy was completely different. Even after de Gaulle's pull out, the French navy continued to be part of NATO exercises in the Mediterranean which obviously made military sense.

Q: I know when I was consul general in Naples in '79-'81 the French navy was right there. In fact they were probably one of the strongest contingents of the Mediterranean fleet.

CLEVELAND: Indeed the pull out itself, the French pull out itself, was vastly over estimated at first by the press and some comments coming from Washington. I argued in a series of increasingly eloquent cables that here is a guy who is doing something for domestic consumption and to some extent for Soviet consumption, but what he had carefully not done is do things that would really be harmful such as forbidding over flights over France and interfering with communications through France. Both cases would have put a crimp on keeping the Mediterranean and northern fronts as part of the same military system. I said the fact that they haven't done anything about either of these indicates clearly that de Gaulle has thought this through and is trying to make his public declaration without hurting NATO. Don't let's help him hurt NATO more than he wants to. That did finally prevail but it got a lot of argument.

Q: Were you finding that within the French military there was some disquiet about pulling out? I would have thought that being by themselves did harm the military readiness by not being part of the NATO system.

CLEVELAND: Yes, it did. I didn't pick up, but I wasn't really in a position to pick up any dissension in the French military ranks. De Gaulle was so much in charge, particularly as a military man. He was, in fact, a great thinker among strategists of our time, which was revealed by the fact that he was able to pull off this political operation without really hurting NATO. Gradually the French got more and more cooperative with military exercises, and so on, but it has never been an easy relationship.

Q: Did you find you were there at a crucial time, of having to work and tell everybody, "Cool it. Don't aggravate the French anymore. Do what we have to, but at the lower ranks, let's not go into a pout on this thing?"

CLEVELAND: I did that kind of education with my own mission and to some extent with the other allies and with Washington. Fortunately, the president's political instinct, President Johnson, and the advice he was getting from Dean Rusk and others, George Ball, was very much along the same line. George Ball was in public somewhat more exercised than others. He regarded it as almost a personal affront.

Q: I'm told, I heard other people remark, that he wanted to be very tough at the beginning on this, and it was Johnson who said let's cool it.

CLEVELAND: Well, George had worked in France, had been a consultant to the French government. I think he almost felt personally affronted by the French getting off the wavelength at this point. It is true that the President was very clear on this from a very early stage which helped a lot. I was just trying to reinforce that from where I sat.

Q: How were the British and French taking this?

CLEVELAND: Well, the British were really pretty cool about it. There was no way in which they could challenge the French anyway, so they didn't. In fact, it wasn't even within the NATO circle. I think it was regarded more as a matter of French-American relations than it was anything else. Even the Canadian angle, which heated up when de Gaulle visited Quebec and said something to the effect of, "Vive le Quebec Libre." The rest of the Canadians always will regard that as an affront, but I didn't perceive their French relations as narrowly dicey as I thought our relations with France had come to be. I suspect that most of them felt that in the end that the relationship was going to be soured or sweetened by what the Americans did. That is what I was working toward.

Q: Well, was there any other sort of crises we had? I mean this was a longstanding crisis, wasn't it?

CLEVELAND: That really lasted in a way the whole time I was there. And the nuclear discussions were another theme that went all the way through. I learned a lot about consultation,

the nature of consultation. I wrote a book about NATO as soon as I left the job that summer called NATO: The Transatlantic Bargain. I have a couple of chapters in there that are, in fact, a general theory of consultation which could apply in a lot of other contexts as well for foreign service people.

It was a particularly interesting and difficult assignment because in a way every member of the North Atlantic Council, when they spoke up, was speaking to the American representative, always trying to influence what the United States was going to do. So I felt that I was in a position that I had to exercise some leadership of the whole group while not seeming to, not being arrogant about it. I solved this problem mostly by working very closely with and through the Secretary General, who was a very bright, very wise, Italian diplomat. He and I were very good friends. Many of the things we wanted done, we would suggest to him that he take as an initiative. He wasn't just a patsy. He would think it through himself, but we were very often on the same wavelength as him.

So, as an education in the nature of multilateral diplomacy, it was a wonderful experience. That's why I wanted to capture it in writing before I went on, because I went from that job to the University of Hawaii, and I knew there wouldn't be that much time for writing about NATO after I got to Hawaii. That book, from the publishers point, was probably a dog.

Q: It's there.

CLEVELAND: It's there.

Q: These things go on library shelves and are used. The title again?

CLEVELAND: NATO: The Transatlantic Bargain. I am doing a session at the World Future's Society this summer. The title is in effect the Transatlantic Bargain Revisited now. Europe is becoming a union. I was always very much interested in the future of Europe. I had gotten to know Jean Monnet back in the early days. When my younger brother was a Foreign Service officer, his family actually was assigned as part of his staff for awhile. My other brother Van had also been very much involved in the State Department, earlier under the Marshall Plan and later in the international economic economists area. He was also involved in the early days of the European Union. He had a very warm feeling about the importance of European integration. I was always watching; I was always looking at the Transatlantic Bargain, NATO compact, as something that among other things would make possible the Europeans coming together. It certainly had that effect in gluing Germany to the west, and eventually gluing even East Germany to the west. It had the effect that we all hoped it would have, that a war among western European countries was inconceivable.

Q: This, of course, still remains to me a high priority to keep the organization going because if you don't tend and water that organization, people can start going their own different ways. You get different sets of politicians and we see, particularly in Yugoslavia, you get some particularly nasty politicians. You can end up with very bloody conflicts.

CLEVELAND: Yes. I would have preferred to see an operation shortly after the cold war was over.

Q: We'll pick this up the next time. You have left the government. You have left NATO and gone to the Hawaii center. We'll talk I guess in our last go round about the role of a think tank and sort of the academic side of global relations and your part in that.

Today is June 7, 1999. In 1969 the new Nixon administration came in and you went out.

CLEVELAND: Well, I didn't go out right away. I stayed for, it turned out, almost five months. They asked me to stay on. I had known Nixon a little bit. He had visited me twice at NATO. I was always impressed by the fact that he was genuinely interested in foreign policy. He was able to remember the second time what I had said the first time that sort of thing. So they asked me to stay on. Part of the problem was we had cleared with both Nixon and Humphrey, the Democratic candidate, the notion of inviting NATO for the 20th anniversary meeting. We have just now had the 50th anniversary meeting. This was the 20th anniversary meeting of the North Atlantic Council. We wanted to hold it in Washington, and both candidates had agreed that it was okay to plan that for April which is the anniversary date. So we did that. I think that part of the reason for asking me to stay on for a little bit was that it would have been hard for somebody else to hit the ground running fast enough to organize that particular event. I was still at NATO when President Nixon and Henry Kissinger and others came for their first visit in person. I did some writing at Henry Kissinger's request, about NATO. We had actually a very comfortable continuity of policy because what we were doing at NATO was essentially what they wanted to be doing at NATO also.

Q: Yes, there wasn't really much, in those days particularly, political controversy over NATO, was there?

CLEVELAND: None really at all. We had this huge meeting in Washington of all the defense ministers and all the foreign ministers and heads of government. It was a gigantic affair with huge dinners and so forth. When that was just winding down, I was getting ready to go back to Brussels to clean up and leave. I was just negotiating with the University of Hawaii about the terms and conditions of coming out there as president of the university. I had a message to go up and talk to the new Secretary of State who was Bill Rogers. To my surprise he started mentioning other ambassadorships around the world I might be interested in. He mentioned Greece, he mentioned the Philippines and so forth. I was pretty much had my heart set on this next step if it happened. Just in that time in that same week, I got a firm offer from the board of regents of the University of Hawaii to come out there starting in the fall.

Then I got another message to go over and visit the Secretary. He offered me the ambassadorship to Italy. That was a different proposition from my point of view. I had spent many years in Italy. I spoke some Italian, and it was much more tempting. I like Italy, I liked the Italians and so forth. But we decided, Lois and I in the end, that a lot of it would be more of the same. The way to grow is to do something you didn't know how to do rather than do something that I thought I did

know how to do. I knew something about Italian politics and I knew quite a lot about how to be an ambassador by then. So, we decided the University of Hawaii would be more adventurous and interesting. It did turn out to be indeed both adventurous and interesting.

Q: You were at the University of Hawaii from '69 until when?

CLEVELAND: '74, five years.

Q: When you arrived there in the fall of '69, what was the university like? How did it impress you?

CLEVELAND: I should mention as a parenthesis that I spent the summer writing a book about NATO because I figured if I didn't write it then, I never would. I holed up in Syracuse, New York, where we used to live, and wrote what I think still stands as a pretty good history of NATO of the four years I was there and some of the background.

DONALD A. KRUSE
Political Military Advisor, NATO
Paris (1965-1968)

Assistant to NATO Secretary General
Paris (1968-1970)

Donald Kruse was born and raised in Philadelphia. After graduating from Wheaton College in 1952, he joined the Army. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1957, his career has included positions in Canada, Luxembourg, France, Belgium, Israel, Italy and England. Mr. Kruse was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: In 1965, you went to France. You were a political military advisor to NATO?

KRUSE: Actually to the U.S. Commander in Chief in Europe--EUCOM, as we call it.

Q: You were there from '65 until when?

KRUSE: I stayed in Paris and moved down to the embassy to take a Pol-Mil job in the fall of '66 and then stayed on in Paris essentially doing pretty much the same thing, although it's a little different down at the embassy where you are really back to a State Department operation.

Q: Let's talk first about the '65 to '66 period and EUCOM. Who was the commanding officer at that time?

KRUSE: General Lemnitzer was the overall Supreme Allied Commander. At his EUCOM headquarters, the American-only command in St. Germain-en-Laye, he had a deputy who was a four star Air Force general, Jake Smart. On a day to day basis, we worked with Smart.

Q: Where did this command fit into the overall...

KRUSE: EUCOM was the overall joint command that oversaw our Army, Navy, and Air Force in Europe. It is currently in Stuttgart, as all of our forces moved out of France in 1966. In that sense, it comes right from the JCS to EUCOM and then out to these subordinate service commands. It was at this time in my career, after my stint with Alex Johnson, which got me very much into political-military subjects. This was a desirable assignment for me to get out to Paris and to be able to continue to work on what was essentially NATO-related issues. EUCOM was U.S.-only forces. As you know, there are times when we use our forces in Europe not to do NATO things, but to perform unilateral tasks.

Q: What would be an example of a non-NATO thing?

KRUSE: A recent example was when our forces assigned to the Sixth Fleet attacked Qadhafi, that was clearly an American-only thing--not under NATO authorization.

Q: As the reaction to the Czech invasion by the Soviets and their allies, was there any sort of cranking up or was it just a feeling that this was something we couldn't do anything about and we just watched to make sure that something else wouldn't happen?

KRUSE: My recollections are that the NATO military asked for guidance, what to do. I think NATO authorized some minor steps, maybe more intelligence information collection and moderate increase in readiness, but certainly no alerting. Again, the Alliance looked to the United States for what lead we were going to give. It wasn't too long before it was clear that the United States was not going to engage militarily. It was not a close call. The Alliance did not want to go to war with the Soviets over Czechoslovakia however sympathetic allied countries were to the Czechs.

Q: At that time when you were dealing with NATO, what was the general feeling about Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, East Germany? Where would they go?

KRUSE: There was a question as to how loyal their forces would be if there was to be a real encounter between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, how much real fighting we'd encounter from some of the Warsaw Pact nations. But given the examples of East Germany and then Hungary being crushed earlier by the Soviets, most people in the Alliance were feeling that as long as the Soviets were calling the shots the Warsaw Pact would follow their lead. It would not be possible to free the Czechs from the Soviet Empire.

Q: You weren't expecting a dissolution of this Alliance?

KRUSE: No. I think we still were pretty much of the feeling that the Europeans had come to terms with communism in the East and that was probably the way it was going to stay. Subsequent to the fall of the Soviet Empire, even West Germans told me that when they finally got to East Germany for the first time, they were appalled at just the mediocrity of everything, if

not worse. They said, "We thought we knew our brethren. We thought we knew East Germany. We were just abysmally wrong in knowing how bad it was."

Q: Did you ever find yourself while you were with the Secretary General's office having a problem wearing the NATO hat rather than the American hat?

KRUSE: We tried hard to wear the NATO hat. Jokingly, you were called "the American spy." This has been typically a job that Americans handled. There would always be a person in the private office of the Secretary General. George Vest and other officers had been assigned to previous Secretaries General. I guess you do your best to serve the Secretary General. He knows that you're a career Foreign Service officer. He knows that the American must write an efficiency report on you. He knows you've got to show that you're doing things the Americans want. Everybody that works at NATO is seconded, if you will. There isn't any NATO nationality. Everybody has their national biases. But, sure, being the American and being in a strategic office, you do try to talk a more NATO line and understand the European situation.

Q: How did you find the Norwegians and Danes within the NATO context?

KRUSE: Not very strong militarily. We were always battling the Danes to keep their standards and equipment up. The Norwegians were maybe not quite so bad. The rhetoric was that they were strong allies. It's just that they didn't have much to contribute militarily. They had their particular views on nuclear weapons. Norway wouldn't allow nuclear weapons on their soil. That made them a little bit of a second class citizen. After all, the Alliance was based on nuclear deterrence.

Q: How about those two foreign friends, Greece and Turkey?

KRUSE: Well, they both liked NATO better than each other, that's for sure. There was a lot of question about whether they should ever have been allowed to come in--their aversion to democratic ideals. The Greeks have their great democratic traditions but during those years--the '60s--Greece was a military dictatorship.

Q: During this thing, the colonels were in the whole time you were there.

KRUSE: Yes. I often cite the examples, that both in Portugal, where a dictatorship was in force, and in Greece with the colonels, there was no doubt that the pressures of being within the Alliance helped eventually to destroy these dictatorial regimes.

Q: What was the attitude towards the Greeks and the Turks when you were there?

KRUSE: That they contributed to extraneous problems. I came to see that more in my later job when I was in Naples because we clearly could not conduct a regime of sensible exercises in the Aegean because of the Greek and Turkish views of what you can do there. So, it was a nuisance to us. More than a nuisance, militarily, it certainly meant we couldn't do things that we wanted to do.

Q: Were there any particular tensions at that time or were sort of the Turks and the Greeks treated with a certain (inaudible)?

KRUSE: The Turks were admired for their tough military. They contributed a lot of forces. Of course, it was essentially to protect their own country.

Q: They bordered the Soviet Union.

KRUSE: Right. The Greeks were not as formidable a fighting force.

Q: I don't think Cyprus did. It blew up in July of '74. The colonels came in in April of '67 and kept the lid on for that period of time. I was thinking that this might be a good place to call a halt for today. We've covered an awful lot of your NATO business at this point. We've covered really from '68 to '70 when you were assistant to the Secretary General. We'll pick up when you moved over from '70 to '73 at the U.S. Mission to NATO and talk about the differences there in your job and perspective and all that.

CHARLES ANTHONY GILLESPIE
Administrative and Security Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1967-1968)

Charles Anthony Gillespie Jr., was born in Long Beach, California in March, 1935. He graduated from UCLA in 1958 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Following a six year term with the U.S. Army, he entered the Foreign Service in 1965 and was nominated by President Reagan as Ambassador to Colombia in 1985. In addition to Colombia, he was posted to the Philippines, Indonesia, Belgium, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Chile.

Q: He is known as Jack Tuthill.

GILLESPIE: He was a career officer. There was a change there and Bob Schaetzel took his place. However, this happened fairly quickly. In any event, I arrived and took up residence in Brussels in April, 1966. The first event I had to deal with - I'd actually been told about it in Washington - was the NATO Ministerial Meeting, which moved from capital to capital in those days. It was going to be held in Brussels and hosted by the Belgians in May or June, 1966.

Q: At this point NATO Headquarters were in Paris.

GILLESPIE: NATO Headquarters were in Paris. The North Atlantic Council met there. The military headquarters, the true military arm of NATO, was in Paris, although the military forces, for the most part, were in Germany. NATO was quite an establishment. It had been in Paris since the organization was created in 1949. However, Gen Charles De Gaulle had been President of France since 1958. In 1966 De Gaulle decided that France would no longer be the site of NATO Headquarters. The French representatives at the NATO Ministerial Meeting, with Secretary of

State Dean Rusk present, made it clear that it would no longer be an active member of NATO. It would remain a member of the North Atlantic Council but would no longer have its troops under NATO command. That was the basic French position.

This was basically an eviction notice to NATO. To this day I have never gone back to find out the details of why this happened, but here I was, a brand new Security Officer, at post for a couple of months. The Secretary of State was attending the North Atlantic Council meeting in Brussels, with his Executive Secretariat(S/S)staff and all of his support people. As we know, when the Secretary of State travels, he leaves someone in charge as Acting Secretary of State. However, the Secretary of State remains the Secretary and is never away from the job, just as our President does not leave the Presidency, wherever he goes. I had to deal with all of this stuff at a post which is not used to having the Secretary of State visit very often. This was the little American Embassy in Brussels, and it was quite a job supporting the Secretary of State.

That was quite an introduction to me. I fairly quickly found out what I thought that I was supposed to do. Apparently, all of that worked pretty well. Then I learned that the whole NATO operation was going to move to Brussels. Belgium offered to be the host, and the other members of NATO accepted the offer. They figured out how they were going to do it all. The idea was that NATO would be out of France by 1968 and established somewhere else, within a couple of years. This set off bells and whistles and set gears to turning, as you can imagine, in the capitals of the 15 countries which belonged to NATO, including Washington and, most assuredly, Brussels. That put a whole new twist on my assignment to Brussels. The European Community, which I was going to get to know, became a secondary consideration at this time. The move of NATO Headquarters became an overriding priority - getting it done and done right.

As an aside here, I might mention my introduction to Brussels and Ambassador Ridgeway Knight, who was my new, ultimate boss. The Security Officer reported to the Administrative Counselor, who headed what was called a Joint Administrative Office, because there are two Missions in Brussels. In fact, we served two masters, but there was one master, i.e., Ambassador who was the supervisor of the other Ambassador. That is, Ridgeway Knight, the Ambassador to Belgium, was my ultimate boss.

Ridgeway Knight is a person for whom my admiration will never cease and never diminish. He is the son of an American artist who took up residence in France at about the beginning of the 20th century. Ridgeway was raised in France and attended school there. He came back to the United States and went through a very traditional, establishment educational process. Although his father was somewhat Bohemian in behavior, I think that he was quite conventional in his views. I think that Ridgeway Knight's father went through a resuscitation in the art world in the 1980s. He has disappeared from vogue since then.

In any event Ambassador Ridgeway Knight joined the Foreign Service, if I remember correctly, just before World War II broke out. He worked as a wine merchant in France before he joined the Foreign Service, so he has had business experience. As I learned later, he is a true connoisseur of wines and knows the wine business up one side and down the other. Some time after he joined the Foreign Service, he was attached to the staff of Robert D. Murphy, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the American Embassy in Vichy [The capital of the part of France

not occupied by the Germans during World War II], Consul General in Algiers, and a long-time Foreign Service Officer who had a distinguished career. He received a commission in the U.S. Army and joined the staff of General Mark Clark in connection with the invasion of North Africa by the Allies in November, 1942. He was subsequently involved in much of the political-military activity taking place in the Mediterranean area, including North Africa and the Italian campaign, where Gen Clark commanded the Allied Fifth Army Group.

One of Ridgeway's favorite stories, which he didn't tell often, but which was very moving, was when he and Murphy went with Clark to a very secret meeting West of Algiers just before the Allied landing in North Africa in November, 1942. Ridgeway and Gen Clark traveled to Algeria by submarine and then landed by rubber boat. Murphy, who was then Consul General in Algiers, traveled to the site by automobile. Knight was given the job of guarding the boats - making sure that they would be there to take them back out again when the meeting was over. I guess the meetings were with various French military officers.

Q: Actually, the meetings were with French officers appointed by the Vichy Government.

GILLESPIE: Knight would tell this story and then show the scars on the back of his hand where he kept himself awake by stubbing burning cigarettes on his hands. They had to wait for many, many hours, and it was very difficult to stay awake on this occasion.

I have to describe Ridgeway Knight because he is not physically very big, although he has a tremendous presence. He speaks English with an accent which is not truly French, but you know that he is not a native speaker of English. It is soft English, and he is a very soft-spoken man. I watched him work both within our own bureaucracy and with foreign governments. He was smooth as silk and tough as nails. He was my ideal of a diplomat.

In any case the next big event was the move of NATO to Belgium. This triggered an explosion in our Mission in Belgium in every way. Ken Lindy, the Administrative Counselor in the Embassy in Brussels, was told very nicely that he was going to be replaced. If I recall correctly, the administrative people in the Department of State in the U.S. dealt with moving a couple of hundred State Department and other agency civilian employees. In view of the larger number of military people who were going to move into Brussels, many of whom were American, the State Department decided that it had to beef up the Embassy staff in Brussels. Ken Linde was replaced by Ralph Scarritt.

When I arrived in Brussels, the Administrative Section consisted of Ken Lindy, a General Services Officer (GSO), a Personnel Officer, a Budget and Fiscal Officer, a Security Officer, and the chief of the Communications Unit. That was about all. Within about a year, by some time in 1967, there was an Administrative Counselor, Ralph Scarritt, a very senior officer - in today's system, a Minister-Counselor - who had been the Director of Foreign Building Operations (FBO); a deputy Administrative Counselor, Michael Conlin, a very capable man; three Americans in the GSO office; and I, who was replaced in 1967 by a more senior Security Officer, Bob McCarthy. I must say that it was all handled pretty smoothly.

Ralph Scarritt, whom I met before I met Bob McCarthy, had apparently talked to various people about me. The way they handled the situation is that they told me, "All right, you've been the supervisory Regional Security Officer, covering this region for about a year. What we propose is that McCarthy will come in as supervisory RSO. However, you will be fully responsible for the U.S. aspect of the NATO move to Brussels. Your job is all of the security arrangements for the transfer of what is called the 'U.S. Mission to Regional Organizations' - USRO - to Brussels. It will be the U.S. Mission to NATO, as it was in the past in Paris." That's how the Department took care of the various egos and all of the other personal matters associated with this move. I turned the supervisory security officer job to McCarthy, but I still had a large piece of the action.

Q: What were the security requirements involved? In the first place you would think that when you think of security in Brussels, it is almost an oxymoron. After all, Brussels is not Beirut. What were the security problems in 1966-1967?

GILLESPIE: The problem involved espionage. We were involved in counter-espionage. At the time, two doors down from our Chancery in Brussels, was the USSR Commercial Mission to Belgium. It is now the Russian Commercial Mission to Belgium. There was no doubt that 80-90% of the inhabitants of that large building were either from the KGB, the principal Soviet civilian intelligence organization, or the GRU Soviet military intelligence organization. At that time in Belgium we had a very substantial intelligence presence. We had very close liaison contact with the Belgian authorities, who had their own intelligence service. This was a time when technical penetration and the recruitment of intelligence personnel loomed very large. At that time terrorism was really not a factor. However, violent demonstrations were a problem, because, even as I arrived in Brussels in 1966, the Belgian and other European Leftist groups and others were violently opposed to what was going on in Southeast Asia. President Lyndon Johnson was sharply criticized for this. Remember the slogan, "Hey, Hey, LBJ, How many kids did you kill today?"

One of my jobs as the RSO was to deal with not weekly but almost biweekly demonstrations directed at one or another of our installations, either the U.S. Embassy, the U.S. Mission to the European Community, or an American-owned bank. For example, the Chase Manhattan Bank or another American bank would have people marching around in front of it. The United States Information Service (USIS) would bring in speakers to lecture at the University of Louvain or the University of Brussels to speak. They were denied platforms. Official American Government spokespersons were denied permission to speak by these demonstrators. I had to deal with this problem and tell people whether it was safe or not to speak on various occasions.

However, the real concern about the NATO move, in addition to arranging for both offices and people to be housed right and taken care of, was how to deal with the Eastern Europeans (the Soviets, the East Germans, and all of the others from the Warsaw Pact). They were directing their penetration devices at us, as well as at the Belgians, Germans, and French. Remember, NATO had a lot of shared secrets. This was a major problem and challenge. Without going into any of the detail, I had already had my first major counter-intelligence investigation. This involved someone associated with our communications activities, who had been in Eastern Europe. It seems that, in this case, he had been approached by the Hungarian intelligence service, and might have been recruited. In this case the Hungarians were probably acting for the KGB.

In fact, that case put me into direct contact with our own intelligence and counter- intelligence community in a very intense and deep way. Through them I developed my own contacts with the Belgian intelligence, counter-intelligence, and police authorities. This later turned out to be both interesting and useful as we handled the NATO move. I had studied French in high school. As I think I told you earlier, I think that my language aptitude is pretty good. By the time I'd been in Brussels about six months my French was really quite workable. I was able to go off and deal on my own in French. I have to tell you that this was considered a little rare for a U.S. Security Officer. Unless a Security Officer was already bilingual by reason of birth or upbringing, there weren't very many linguistically qualified RSOs.

Q: This is true, and it represents almost a social class matter. I assume that your coming out of a military intelligence background must have enhanced your credentials. I mean that you were able to work that much more easily with our military and NATO military people. How did you find NATO and also Belgian security?

GILLESPIE: Belgian security was always suspect. The whole Belgian scene, even at the time of World War II, had left itself open to infiltration. The fact was that there were a lot of Belgians who were willing to swing one way or the other for a lot of different reasons. Our U.S. intelligence people would say, in terms of the Belgians, "Be careful with this, be careful with that. You can reveal this, but don't reveal that." They gave me that kind of guidance.

NATO security was very interesting. You may recall what the situation was before the Cold War ended. We had a full-time U.S. Security Officer seconded to the chief of NATO security. The U.S. officer at this particular time was John Abidian. He was a Foreign Service Officer who had been a professional Security Officer for his whole career. Abidian, I guess, was of Armenian extraction. He spoke several languages: French, German, and, I think, Russian. He was highly qualified in that sense and was a very experienced Security Officer. As soon as the NATO move started to develop, I developed a routine. I would get on the Trans-European Express (TEE) every Tuesday and Thursday morning. I should say that we lived in the vicinity of the battlefield at Waterloo, South of Brussels. I would take a local train from Waterloo to the Gare Centrale, Central Station, change to the TEE, and make the run down to Paris, which took about two hours. I would get to Paris about 9:30 AM. Then I would work all day with our own U.S. people, especially a woman named Mary Mulloy Carmichael. She had been appointed the coordinator for the NATO move by Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, our representative to NATO at the time.

Ambassador Cleveland was a political appointee who had been the Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs. He was a very big name in the field of public administration in the U.S. He had been the Dean of the Maxwell School of Public Administration at Syracuse University. He was a staunch Democrat and even today, almost 30 years later, is active in the Aspen Institute. He went on to become the President of the University of Hawaii and of the University of Minnesota. Really, he was a super gentleman and very much an intellectual.

I would go down to Paris in the way I described previously and meet with our people there every Tuesday and Thursday. I would get on the train and return home in the evening. I would spend about five hours to and from by the time I did it. I would put in about a four or five hour day in

Paris, planning and preparing the security aspects of the NATO move. Some of the questions we dealt with included: how were we going to move the documents? Would we bring the old safes up to Brussels? Would we get new safes from the U.S.? What building arrangements did we need? A new headquarters was being designed for NATO. We needed to figure out what we needed in terms of space and how this space should be configured. It really was a major planning process covering the physical move of equipment, people, and activities from one place to a new environment.

I got deeply involved, both in the U.S. security side of it and how this fit into the NATO security side, how they meshed, and how this would go over in the Belgian context. I spent a year and a half involved, not exclusively, but heavily, on such matters. So that's how we worked it out with the security people. There was a lot of detail to it, and I spent a lot of time on it.

Q: What did you think of the intelligence people from the Soviet bloc countries? What were some of the threats and actions taken? They must have had to beef up their operation, too. When they learned of this NATO move, they probably had to send a whole bunch of people down to deal with this.

GILLESPIE: Yes. At the time we thought that they saw this, both on the basis of our speculation, as well as something more than speculation, as a tremendous opportunity. We were all quite convinced of this. NATO Headquarters is a very complex organization, leaving aside our U.S. Mission to NATO and our own Embassy. It was complex then and is even more so today, I believe. NATO has what is called an international staff. That staff consists of nationals of member states of NATO who are seconded by their governments or are employed directly by NATO, with the approval of the respective governments. John Abidian, for example, the head of NATO Security, retained all of his U.S. Government employment rights but had been, in effect, seconded by the U.S. Government to this organization. We do the same thing with the United Nations and other international organizations.

I suspect that there were about 1,000 - and maybe more - NATO employees in Paris who were French nationals or nationals of third countries employed by NATO as an organization. They had no direct connection with their own, national governments. We knew that not all of those employees would move to Belgium when NATO Headquarters moved. That meant that there would be an employment boom in Brussels for the Belgians. So this was not only going to strain the employment market, because these positions were at white collar level, clerical type people, semi-professional or professional. There were also all kinds of custodial employees, janitors, cleaners, and people like that. As we knew that the Eastern Bloc intelligence services used a blanket approach, as they had when I was in Germany with U.S. Army Intelligence eight years earlier, we figured that they would try to penetrate the NATO Headquarters staff by recruiting Belgians and others to be employees of the headquarters organization and to do all of the things that low-level, intelligence agents do. For example, spotting people for recruitment, keeping track of people's movements, trying to pick up documents, learning the procedures, and doing all of those kinds of things. This would then allow the higher level recruiters or planners to figure out how they were going to penetrate or obtain top level secrets - including, in the case of NATO, real military secrets.

We might make a short digression here. Diplomatic secrets are something of an oxymoron. Secrecy in the world of diplomacy is a very transitory thing. A secret lasts until you want to make it public, hopefully under your own control. However, military secrets, including plans for a weapon and "what will you do if" kind of thing, are all supposed to be safeguarded. I think that those were some of the principal targets of the Eastern Bloc intelligence services.

So our concern was, first, how would NATO Headquarters be effective? The U.S. tended to take a paternalistic, or at least avuncular view, of an organization like NATO. We did not want to see NATO secrets compromised. We did not want to see problems of that kind. We knew that the Eastern Bloc intelligence organizations would be very actively engaged in trying to penetrate NATO. Every indication was that they were doing exactly that. The Soviet Trade Mission just a couple of doors down from our Embassy was increasing in size. There were indications that agents were entering Belgium under non-official cover. My contacts among the Belgians were concerned about this problem, some of them quite vocally worried that Belgians were going to become involved in this kind of thing. This meant that there had to be a lot of security checks made and a lot of care exercised. In the security process there isn't a whole lot that you can do, after a certain point, to maintain security.

There was also concern about physical security. That is, how could we lock all of the doors and such matters. By that time these matters were fairly mechanical. Our Mission to NATO had its own communications facilities. We had moved to what is called the on-line encryption system. That is, it was no longer necessary to encode messages off-line as much as had been the practice in the past. In the Philippines the Embassy was still using relatively old-fashioned machine devices. You would type out a cable on paper. That would go to the communications center where a communications operator would copy the communication in the clear - that is, not in encrypted form on tape, much as if you were copying a teletype message. Then you would run that tape through one machine which handled the encryption process. You would get a tape from the other side of the machine, which was the encrypted message. Then the encrypted message was transmitted over radio facilities.

In Brussels I found that, by the time NATO was getting ready to move out of Paris, basically all communications were on-line. That is, you took the telegram, typed it into a machine, and the message went out automatically. You didn't have to do all of the other processing previously required. Eventually, a few years later, we went to a process involving Optical Character Recognition [OCR] technology.

The buildup of the Embassy in Brussels was substantial. The pending arrival of the U.S. Mission to NATO was a major development. Interestingly enough, I learned that the U.S. Mission to the European Community was also growing. There were people in that Mission from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Department of Agriculture who were not like the usual Agricultural Attaches from the Foreign Agricultural Service, as we call it. You had a lot of different people there, such as from the Treasury Department.

To deal with the problems which came up, we developed a cadre of junior officers - on their first or second tours in the Foreign Service. I'd just like to mention this because it was significant to me and may have been to others. We ended up with about two dozen officers on their first or

second tour. In those days each Ambassador had a staff aide, and there were junior officers in the Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular Sections. They were doing rotational tours serving relatively brief periods of a few months in each of the Embassy Sections. I was only on my second tour and really hadn't had much of a full, first tour.

I was tremendously fortunate because both the Mission management - that is, the DCM, Jack McSweeney, and the Ambassador to Belgium, Ridgeway Knight, plus the people from the U.S. Mission to the European Community (USEC), included me in everything. I was included at the professional level, because I was the Security Officer, and they included me as well with these other, junior officers. We would get together as junior officers. I forget whose idea it was - it may have been Harry Blaney's, who was very much of an activist. He used to say, "This is an opportunity we can't afford to miss. We have a lot going on here." As a group we came up with the idea of trying to figure out what the Foreign Service did - and how it did it. Our device was to go to Ambassador Knight and say, "Would you tell us what you do?" He responded positively and, in effect, helped us begin a process which lasted for the four years I spent in Brussels and into which each new group of junior officers fit.

To manage this process, monthly meetings were held in the homes of the various, junior officers with one of the senior officers of one or more of the Missions in Brussels. By the time I got through the process we had spent evenings, or afternoons, with the three Chiefs of Mission and the three Deputy Chiefs of Mission. At one time, I think, we had had the three Ambassadors and the three Ministers (because each DCM had to be a Minister). Then, in the NATO Mission we had what I saw for the first time, a Minister for Political Affairs and a Minister for Defense Affairs, who was the senior Department of Defense (DOD) official. If I remember correctly, we had 16 Counselors of Embassy - the heads of the various Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular Sections. We also had the chiefs of the various offices of the intelligence community, in addition to the FAA people. We would go around, either at a dinner or a dessert kind of affair. By the time I left Brussels, we had met with each of these senior officers. Often it was an evening affair, but it was all business. We asked them, "What do you do, what does your organization do, why are you assigned here, and how can I fit into this?" It was one of the most wonderful experience that I had ever.

GILLESPIE: I left the security field in 1967, when the NATO move was completed. I shifted from security to be the Administrative Officer at the U.S. Mission to NATO, but still reporting back to Ralph Scarritt and Michael Conlin. We were all moving in that modern management direction. That was very much a part of what I was hearing and learning about.

Then I learned that Bob Brewster, the Executive Director in the Bureau of European Affairs, and his deputy, Vic Dikeos, were also very much of that same persuasion. So you're right. Crockett's views still...

Q: These were the young Turks.

GILLESPIE: The young Turks. These were the people with more modern outlooks. They were very quick studies, so they could participate in this effort. If they were talking to Idar Rimestad, they knew how to handle that. They weren't cynical, but they knew what to do. They knew how to deal with Congress. They used to say to themselves, "Look, we've got to cut through some of these old ways, make this system move more efficiently, and look to the future." This was very important. So Crockett's effect was real but, as you say, his outlook had not prospered during his time as Under Secretary of State for Administration in that sense.

The other thing that happened in Brussels which was fascinating was that, because the pressure was on, probably four or five junior FSO's, who thought that they were never going to do administrative work, were assigned to this large administrative office because of the move of NATO Headquarters to Brussels. We had a young officer at the time, Frank Hodsoll, who had come into the Foreign Service from the Sullivan and Cromwell law firm in New York. He was sure that he was going to be an Ambassador on his second tour in the Foreign Service.

Q: Of course. This had been John Foster Dulles' law firm.

GILLESPIE: Dulles' law firm. Frank was quickly grabbed out of the Political Section, assigned to the Administrative Section, and was told, "Go out and get 130 housing units." He was brand new in the Foreign Service, on his first tour overseas, with nothing but the A-100 course at the Foreign Service Institute behind him. He had no administrative training - nothing like that at all. It turned out that, for whatever reason, he came knocking on my door and said, "I need some help. You're kind of my age. Can you give me a hand?" We started to talk about the Foreign Service regulations. I said, "This is the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM), and this is what you have to look at." Then I got Michael Conlin, who was, of course, very actively interested in this. I said, "You know, you guys really have to talk. So that worked out, and Frank Hodsoll ended up setting up a unit with 15 people in it which went out and got 130 housing units. He satisfied as many people as you can think of, so that, by a certain date, when the trains came in from France and the cars came in from Paris, everybody had a house to go to. These houses were furnished, had plumbing, the lights were on, the phones were in, and here was this young FSO who had done it. He was thrown the ball, caught it, and ran with it. We had a lot of cases like that. It was exciting.

However, it seems to me that it says something about the quality of the people we had. We had others who refused to play this game. We had FSO's who said, "No, I did not come in here to deal with janitor services. What do you mean?" Waterdale, to whom this particular officer was reporting, said, "Well, maybe you should just not have come into the Foreign Service at all if you can't be a little flexible." This officer said, "Well, I don't have to put up with this. I'm going to talk to the Ambassador." Waterdale said, "Well, go right ahead." And Ambassador Knight said, "How soon do you want to leave the Foreign Service, because that's your choice." The man left the Foreign Service a year later. He just couldn't take it. It wasn't what he wanted.

Q: Perhaps just as well. The weeding out process works.

GILLESPIE: Of course, and it has to. However, in that sense, Foreign Service friendships which I developed in Brussels have really matured, because several of us were together for more than a

couple of years, at a very exciting time. It also was a time when the U.S. dollar was strong, we were all starting families at the same time, and our children grew up together.

Q: Three children was the size of the normal family.

GILLESPIE: We were rich beyond our dreams, in a material sense, because our housing was provided in Brussels. Brussels is so middle class that it hurts, but it has just enough at the top end, so that we knew which were the good restaurants, we could go to them, we could afford the baby sitters, and we could do all of these things. These were the halcyon days of that aspect of diplomacy.

Furthermore, the diplomatic community was booming. I can vividly remember that, before the NATO move was announced, it looked as if Brussels was going to be a quiet place. But once the move was announced, all of a sudden the young diplomats in Brussels were all agog and excited and getting to know each other, other diplomats assigned there, and Belgian officials in the Finance Ministry. I had my contacts, some of whom turned out to be very nice people. We introduced them to other diplomats and security and police types. It was really a very pleasant time for us, in that sense. My own move...

Q: Before we go into your own move, at this point had you run into Congressmen Wayne Hayes and John Rooney?

GILLESPIE: Yes, I dealt with them both while I was still the sole Security Officer.

Q: How did you find them? They were important figures in the foreign affairs establishment.

GILLESPIE: Congressman Rooney stands out in sharper relief than Congressman Hayes. Rooney came to Brussels, accompanied by the Assistant Secretary of State for Administration. There were probably two or three other members of Congress with him, as well as some Committee staffers. I was told to make absolutely sure that there was an unending supply of Beefeaters Gin available for him. There was a suite for Congressman Rooney and mini-suites or nice rooms for the other members of Congress at the Hotel Louise, or a hotel with a name something like that. This hotel was the biggest, newest, spiffiest hotel in Brussels. The key thing was to make sure that there were at least three bottles of Beefeaters Gin in Congressman Rooney's room. Congressman Rooney was a presence, an August personage when he arrived. The Ambassador went to meet him at the airport. He had a schedule of meetings. I was included in a lunch and a dinner for Congressman Rooney. However, I stayed on the edges of this visit. I never got too close to this visit.

Physically, Congressman Rooney was a short, balding man who, according to my recollection, was pretty well-spoken. He was not rough or crude in any way but very direct in his observations and comments. He would ask, "Why are you doing this? What are you doing this for? What's this? Why are you doing that? What's happening," and so forth. There was nothing untoward in all of this that I can recall. I wasn't a part of the late evening conversations, whatever they were...

Q: He drank but he kept his entourage under control.

GILLESPIE: You couldn't call him puritanical, but I don't think that he was notorious in any way in terms of his behavior.

Q: I've never heard of women being brought in to entertain him. It was just that he was the Grand Pasha as far as the Foreign Service was concerned.

GILLESPIE: And you had better be nice to him. Well, I got into this in greater detail later on during my first tour at the Department of State.

What I remember about Congressman Hayes was that his escort was a young FSO from Ohio, who is now dead. His name was William Dixon Boggs III. Dick Boggs was a Political Officer. I don't know whether it was through family connections or what, but he was a protégé of Congressman Hayes. Boggs came to Brussels with Wayne Hayes before the NATO move occurred. We were working with FBO and getting involved in all of these housing arrangements. I vividly remember that there were two secretaries who came to Brussels with Congressman Hayes. I can't remember their names, but they were almost twins. I don't think that they were related, but they looked a lot alike. I learned quickly that they did not need to have typewriters in their rooms. That was not why they were there. Again, I don't have any knowledge of anything terrible that happened, but these two women were at least adornments and were traveling companions of Congressman Hayes.

Q: Wayne Hayes came a-cropper by having a so-called secretary who didn't type on his staff.

GILLESPIE: He "met the bridge," if you recall. She was a dancer from Argentina named Fannie Fox.

Q: It became almost a joke around Washington. He left Congress under a sort of...

GILLESPIE: These two younger women were really rather nice looking. I can remember that. I think that one was named Rita, but I don't remember the other one's name. The two of them went wherever they wanted to go and did whatever they wanted to do. They were at receptions, dinners, luncheons, and things like that. They were always introduced as Congressman Hayes' secretaries.

Dixon Boggs, whom I later got to know very well, married a Belgian woman. He died a few years ago. We got to be pretty good friends. He just had this "grape" fall into his hands and held onto it for a while. Eventually, Congressman Hayes disappeared from the scene, and Dixon continued with his Foreign Service career. Just as an aside, the way things worked in those days, Boggs came to Brussels that one time, probably in 1967 or maybe early in 1968. Lo and behold, in 1969 we learned that William Dixon Boggs was going to be assigned to a newly-established position in the U.S. Mission to NATO. When the Ambassador said, "But I didn't ask for him," he was told, "Don't worry. Congressman Hayes set this up." That's just the way it happened. Dixon came out to Brussels. There was some grumbling about what he was doing there, but he kept busy. He created a job where there had been none and he was fine. Those things happened.

Q: You moved over to become Security Officer for the U.S. Mission to NATO?

GILLESPIE: No, I didn't, as a matter of fact. What happened was that part of the deal with Administrative Counselor Ralph Scarritt when this fellow Bob McCarthy came in to take over as Security Officer at the Embassy in Brussels was that I would handle all of the security arrangements for the NATO move. Scarritt told me, "I'm going to call on you, Gillespie, for other, NATO move related activities that may not involve security. I have worked this out with McCarthy, your boss, and with Brewster, our Executive Director in the Bureau of European Affairs. I've worked it out with Marvin Gentile chief of the Department of State Office of Security." He continued, "If you do a good job, when NATO moves up here, I'll move you out of security and into the Administrative Section, if you're interested." I said, "That sounds fine to me."

At that time I wrote a letter, as we used to do in those days, an "OFFICIAL-INFORMAL" letter to Gentile, in which I said, "I just want you to know that this is what Ralph Scarritt has laid out for me." I gave a copy of this letter to Scarritt and got a nice letter back from Gentile, which said, "Sounds fine to me, Tony. You've done a great job as a security officer. If you continue..." and so forth. He added, "We'll be delighted to have you in general administration because we know you're a friend."

So that was what happened. I went through the NATO move. Everything worked out very smoothly. I got involved in the housing arrangements and a lot of other things. I became deeply involved, beyond the U.S. Mission to NATO move, with NATO Headquarters construction, financing, and those kinds of things. As it turned out, the U.S. was very interested in those subjects, too - in the international headquarters aspect. We had our own Mission to NATO problems, and then we had the NATO Headquarters arrangements to see to. Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, the U.S. Representative to NATO, had appointed Mary Carmichael Mulloy to see to that move. However, he didn't have an administrative staff of any kind in Paris. He relied fully on the Embassy in Paris for that. Interestingly enough, the Administrative Counselor at the Embassy in Paris had been Administrative Counselor in Manila, John Lennon. Lennon remembered me. So when I would go down to Paris on my security related trips, I would go to the U.S. Mission to NATO and take care of matters there. Then I'd receive a phone call, "Would you come and see Mr. Lennon?" Lennon would give me material to take back to Ralph Scarritt or would ask me what I thought about various matters and how we were handling this or that. I began to spread beyond security just because it was convenient for everybody. I guess I was able to handle these things.

Anyhow, the upshot was that in 1968, after I'd been a Security Officer for two years - one year completely on my own and the better part of a year working for Bob McCarthy - I received orders which cut my tie to security and assigned me as Administrative Officer to the U.S. Mission to NATO but detailed to the Joint Administrative Office in the United States Embassy in Brussels.

I then had the best of all arrangements in the Foreign Service. I had two Rating Officers and two Reviewing Officers for my efficiency reports. I was part of the administrative structure at the Embassy in Brussels and worked for the DCM and the Permanent Representative at the NATO

Mission. I also found that the U.S. military had assigned a senior administrative person as Administrative Officer to the U.S. Mission to NATO to manage the marriage of the State Department civilian and the Defense Department administrative structure.

So there was a very interesting management supervision chemistry in this situation. There were a lot of different people, agencies, and systems coming together. It could all have gone to hell in a hand basket, but we all sort of made it work. It worked rather well. Lieutenant Colonel Jim Soldow was the military person assigned. He was a Lieutenant Colonel, and I think that I was still an FSR-7 [Class 7 Foreign Service Reserve Officer], which is fairly low in grade.

Q: That is about the equivalent of a First Lieutenant.

GILLESPIE: Yes. I was co-located, shared an office suite with him. We had two secretaries, both of whom worked for the Defense Department, but one of whom was assigned to me. His secretary was Peggy Cousins. My secretary was Judy somebody or other. I was the other person in the office. We were the administrative element within the U.S. Mission to NATO. Jim was a peach of a guy. He was a typical military officer from the Adjutant General's Office (AGO.) His professional life had been spent in administrative affairs. He knew authority relationships, knew whom to salute, and whom he didn't have to salute. He knew all of that stuff. Jim knew no foreign languages when he came to Brussels but immediately set out to learn French.

I haven't gone back to check this, but my recollection is that George Vest, the DCM of the U.S. Mission to NATO, may have come up to Brussels with Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, or it may have been somebody else, with Vest taking over the DCM position from that person later on. However, Vest was my DCM. Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, throughout the Johnson administration and into 1969, was the "PermRep," Permanent Representative, of the U.S. Mission to NATO. You could not have asked for a better boss than George Vest.

Q: George Vest was later Director General of the Foreign Service and one of the nicest guys. I've never heard anything adverse about him at all.

GILLESPIE: He was later appointed a Career Ambassador. Nice or not, he was easygoing and was never in a flap. In any event, Lieutenant Colonel Soldow and Vest agreed on how Soldow and I would divide up the pie in terms of jurisdiction, and I fully agreed with this proposal. Soldow wanted to have his own relationship with the senior officials in the Embassy in the administrative area, because he saw that as being very important. There was a tremendous amount of detailed work to do with NATO Headquarters in the administration and personnel area. They named me as the Mission's representative on the administrative and personnel committee of NATO. Soldow was also on this committee, but I went to all of the meetings, because they were all conducted in French. As I mentioned before, Soldow did not speak French. It was a lot easier for me to handle this, although it was possible to arrange for translations of the proceedings into English.

That was really a break for me. It got me involved, of course, in the administration of the headquarters of the organization, in addition to personnel matters. That, in turn, led to my involvement in some of the other matters, including budget and finance questions concerning

radar, weapons systems, and troops. So I became somewhat of a conduit back to that part of our U.S. Mission as well. This broadened me tremendously.

Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, who was something to behold in action, had come up with a theory, which I always associate with Charles Atlas, called creative tension. You may recall the term, dynamic tension, the advertising slogan associated with Charles Atlas and body building. Cleveland's creative tension idea was as simple as this. Give two people the same assignment to handle and see how they work it out. He had developed this concept while he was the Director of the Maxwell School of Administration at Syracuse University.

Q: President Franklin Roosevelt used this concept extensively.

GILLESPIE: Cleveland probably articulated it in a social science context. Later, during my tour of duty with the U.S. Mission to NATO, I found in the files the monograph which Cleveland had written on creative tension. It explained an awful lot of what was going on.

I'll never forget one day when I was called in by Ambassador Cleveland personally. He said, "I know that your job is not to do certain things but to do other things. However, I like the way you operate. Would you be so good as to look into this matter?" It was something to do with a particular weapons system and its introduction into NATO. I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, that's really..." He replied, "I know, but you'd enjoy looking at this. By the way, don't tell anybody else that you're doing it." Well, I found out that one of my colleagues in the Political Section had been given exactly the same assignment by Ambassador Cleveland. In handling this assignment we ran into each other. I don't know why Cleveland didn't figure out that this would happen, but we figuratively banged heads at a certain point. I looked at him, and he looked at me. I said to him, "Bob, what are you doing?" He said, "Tony, the Ambassador wants me..." In fact, the Ambassador wanted both of us to do the same thing. So we collaborated on this effort from that point on. We told Ambassador Cleveland about this, and he said, "Well, you see, that's one of the very positive outcomes. The two of you have worked together on this, and I got two people working on it for the price of one! The product is much the better for it." Anyhow, he laughed about it, but he would do that from time to time. He was a very funny man.

In any event that got me into the field of more general administration, where I learned about procurement and budgeting in the State Department. I learned about the Department of Defense (DOD) side because, when Lieutenant Colonel Soldow would go on leave, I acted on his behalf. When I was away, he handled all of the State Department stuff. George Vest treated us almost interchangeably. A lot of things were starting to happen then, because now we had these periodic, ministerial meetings. At Defense Ministerial meetings we also had experts meetings, we had Under Secretaries of State and deputy ministers of defense meetings, and we had Daniel Patrick Moynihan when he was on the White House staff. Remember that his idea on the Committee on Challenges to a Modern Society was put in the NATO context. This was mainly an environmental project. It was all new and different.

Q: NATO was taking on more than just a military and security role.

GILLESPIE: NATO developed into a political and military alliance. Certainly, in that sense you could underscore the political aspects of certain things. So this was a very exciting time.

Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, DCM George Vest, and Robert Ellsworth. I'm trying to think of whom else I dealt with. We had a change of administrations with the election of President Nixon, and Democrats were out. Bob Schaetzel replaced John Tuthill at USEC [U.S. Mission to the European Community], and John Eisenhower replaced Ridgeway Knight as Ambassador to Belgium. Some career people were moved. An officer named Timothy Stanley, who happened to be one of the heirs of the Stanley Tool empire, was the Embassy's Minister of Defense Affairs. George Wilson, a political appointee, had been assigned as Minister of Political Affairs. When I got to NATO, Wilson was replaced, interestingly enough, by Larry Eagleburger, later Deputy Secretary and then Secretary of State in the Bush administration. We had a whole raft of people who, I later learned, had very good reputations in European Affairs, Arms Control, and Disarmament. Raymond Garthoff, a true expert in U.S.-Soviet relations, was the Counselor for Political- Military Affairs when the NATO Mission came up to Brussels. Ray Garthoff was a free spirit in every sense of the word. Intellectually, he stretched the boundaries all of the time. He was not a drinker or anything else in a negative sense. However, he would regularly challenge the Ambassador and do all kinds of thing - often with a nice touch.

One anecdote about Garthoff is rather interesting. 1969 was the 20th anniversary of the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty, under which NATO, as an organization, was established. A special NATO meeting was held here in Washington, and the "wise men" of the Common Market and NATO were brought to the U.S. I was given the job in the new position I had of escorting them on Aircraft Tail Number 26000, the VC-137 jet aircraft better known as Air Force One when the President flew in it. Ambassador Cleveland, the DCM of the U.S. Mission to NATO, and I accompanied these high NATO dignitaries to Washington. Ray Garthoff was left in Brussels as the charge d'affaires of the U.S. Mission to NATO and our acting Permanent Representative. Of course, all of the other Permanent Representatives were in Washington, and their respective missions were all in the hands of charges d'affaires. For some reason there was a North Atlantic Council meeting in Brussels while the Permanent Representatives were in Washington. Garthoff wrote up a report on this meeting as a kind of spoof. He reported the statements made by the various people, by nationality. It was a wonderful spoof, which he put in a cable to the Department of State. He actually sent the cable, thinking that it would get laughs.

Well, Ambassador Harlan Cleveland obviously had a threshold of toleration, and this cable went over that threshold. It very nearly got Garthoff fired from his position in Brussels. People who read it on the Seventh Floor of the State Department where the offices of the Secretary and Under Secretary of State were located laughed long and loud. Then I thought, "Don't mention this to Ambassador Cleveland. This will be a very sore point." Anyway, that was Garthoff - truly, a free spirit. He recovered from this episode. Ambassador Cleveland backed off, and everything turned out to be okay. However, it was a lesson to me that there are limits to how far you can go in the Foreign Service in playing games. You can play games up to a certain point, and then you'd better be careful.

Q: I was told by one of our colleagues that Warren Christopher, at the time of this particular incident, the Deputy Secretary of State, and now the Secretary of State, doesn't have much of a sense of humor as far as telegrams go. His advice was, "Don't be flip."

GILLESPIE: That's curious, of course, because there was a tradition of telling jokes in Foreign Service cables. My earlier boss in Jakarta, Ambassador Marshall Green, was well known in the Foreign Service for two things - green pencils and puns. In the most serious cable he could find a way to insert a pun. I hope that someone has gone back and collected some of those puns of his. I can recall that during some particularly grim and grisly moments in Jakarta during the Sukarno-PKI crisis Marshall would find a way to turn a phrase. If you looked twice, you might say to yourself, "Oh, oh, the shaggy dog just came into this cable" or, "There's Marshall Green again."

What this taught me was that whenever you think you have a really bright idea, serious or not, maybe it's best to think about it - to sleep on it - before you do anything with it. Don't get too cautious, but be careful!

There were all kinds of issues coming up in Brussels in August, 1968. I was due for home leave and, of course, that was the time when Soviet tanks appeared in Prague, Czechoslovakia. I actually had to delay my departure on home leave because our whole Mission to NATO went on alert.

Q: NATO was "cranking up." No one knew what...

GILLESPIE: We didn't know what was happening. We didn't know where this situation was going to come out. It was scary and really tense. We didn't know what we were going to do or how we were going to do it. This situation could have led to World War III. I must say that I was fortunate at this time. I've had occasion to work for bosses who say, "Look, I've got resources. I'm going to use them." We were all given assignments to handle by the DCM and the Ambassador. Of course, 1968 was a presidential election year in the United States. Finally, I had home leave and went home. I think that my family and I traveled on what turned out to be the last scheduled, West to East crossing of the Atlantic by the SS United States. This was in October, 1968 - not a very lovely month. It was a very rough crossing. With my wife and two kids we traveled from New York to Le Havre France. It was a lovely ship, with great service, and all of that. I'm glad we did it. Traveling by ship was part of the old Foreign Service. This doesn't happen very much any more.

The big development in 1968, of course, was the election of Richard Nixon as President of the United States. I had completely missed a visit by Vice President Hubert Humphrey to Europe, which would have been in 1967. Prior to his becoming a candidate for President on the Democratic Party ticket, Humphrey came to Europe. I don't know, Stu, whether this was one of those moments that you look back on. It turned out that during the Humphrey visit in Brussels President Johnson took away the Air Force aircraft that Humphrey was flying it. This had something to do with a fit of pique and anger on the part of President Johnson - directed at Vice President Humphrey.

Q: Probably not being too supportive of Johnson's policy...

GILLESPIE: It may have been something that Humphrey said. You never could be sure. There was Hubert Humphrey, stuck in Brussels. He was supposed to go to Italy from Brussels. It was really a very tough moment for him. I got involved in this matter because of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) connection in the United States Mission to the European Community (USEC) and the security side of things, including liaison with the Secret Service and so on. Basically, it worked out that the FAA had a plane, a [propeller-driven] DC-6 or DC-7 or something like that. They surreptitiously flew that aircraft into Brussels from wherever it was in Europe and then flew Humphrey down to Italy so that he could meet his schedule. I had had something to do with the Humphrey visit because he had been in The Hague (The Netherlands). He then came to Brussels and was to continue his visit to Europe from there.

There were tremendous demonstrations in Brussels and against Vice President Humphrey over our involvement in Vietnam. I made the cover of *Paris-Match* because there was a picture of Vice President Humphrey's car with a big egg in the middle of the windshield. I am in the picture, leaning over and trying to clean the egg off. I didn't get hit with anything, but that picture was on the cover of the magazine. Anyway, Humphrey came and went.

The key development was the 1968 presidential election. Nixon won. One of the first stops on President Richard M. Nixon's first trip outside the U.S. was in Brussels. That got to be a very intriguing and interesting series of events. Because of my position as a Security Officer, I was present at events where FSO-7 or FSR-7 officers would not normally be present.

One of these events was one of the most unpleasant moments that I've ever experienced. That was when the advance party for that trip came out to Brussels. The advance party came prior to the inauguration. It consisted of H. R. Haldeman and John Erlichman, the two senior members of the Nixon staff. Haldeman was Nixon's chief of staff, and Erlichman was a counselor to President Nixon. Another member of this group was named Peterson, who was going to be the Director of Personnel in the Nixon White House. Peterson was the chief of the advance party for the Belgium stop.

Anyway, this advance party came to Brussels. I was assigned to Peterson as his control officer and went with him to all of his appointments. We had the three Missions in Brussels at that time. We had Ambassador Cleveland, a Democrat and political appointee, as chief of the U.S. Mission to NATO, and a career officer, Ridgeway Knight, as Ambassador to Brussels. I can't think of the name of the Ambassador to the European Community, who was also a career officer. We all met in the Conference Room at the Embassy in Brussels. The three Chiefs of Mission were sitting together, side by side, at the end of a long, conference table. The three White House people Haldeman, Erlichman, and Peterson were at the opposite end of the table. The senior staff people involved in the meeting sat along the sides of the table. I was sitting in a back row, behind this Peterson guy from the White House who, I think, was a pretty nice fellow.

There were lots of questions about the schedule for the Nixon visit, including what we were going to do about a visit to NATO, which had just moved to Brussels. Also discussed was what was going to be done about a possible visit to USEC and to the King of Belgium. There were protocol and lots of other, major questions to be dealt with.

I'll never forget that at a certain moment over one of these questions which had to do with King Baudouin and the downtown Royal Palace in Brussels, either Haldeman or Erlichman from the White House staff directed a question at the Secret Service agent who was there. Ambassador Knight interjected something like, "I think you'll want to take into account..." I've already described Knight and the kind of person he was. Haldeman stopped everything, turned, looked at the other end of the table, literally glared at Ambassador Knight and said, "Ambassador, when we want your opinion, we'll ask for it." You can imagine how this affected everybody in the room. I've never heard anything like it.

Q: I've heard of this kind of attitude from Haldeman.

GILLESPIE: From then on this summed up for me the kind of White House that we were going to have. This was really a nasty, mean attitude displayed - and to a person who, to my mind, was absolutely the wrong target for that. It was really quite educational.

The Nixon visit itself was fascinating - getting involved in all that. This was a case where you see the Foreign Service doing the kinds of things which the public just doesn't know about. This was a case where a middle grade Foreign Service Officer was told, instructed, or ordered, "You will be in charge of the White House baggage detail." He was an FSO-4, whatever that would be the equivalent of in today's Foreign Service - perhaps an FSO-2. He said, "I didn't join the Foreign Service to handle baggage." His boss and the DCM said, "Look, you will either supervise handling the baggage or you will get on a plane and you will be out of here. What do you mean that you didn't join the Foreign Service to do this?" He grudgingly did it. He screwed it up, as it turned out. He should probably not have been put on the baggage detail. He didn't do a very good job of it. But if you want to see tension or strain, have a Presidential visit on relatively short notice of a brand new administration. This visit included Henry Kissinger then the National Security Adviser to the President, Al Haig, the Deputy National Security Adviser, and Larry Eagleburger, Executive Assistant to Kissinger. Peter Rodman, Winston Lord, and Tony Lake may have been in on this visit, too. This was a team of people whose reputations were made somewhere else. These were mostly junior staff officers at the time, other than Kissinger and Haig, of course.

I'll never forget President Nixon. I rode in the lead car in the Presidential motorcade, with the Secret Service, bringing the President to the hotel. I hadn't really seen Nixon at the airport. It was dark and under lights, and he had made a little speech. When he arrived at the hotel, I was standing inside. Here was this face of Richard Nixon. His pancake makeup was very heavy. It looked as if this man had just come off stage.

Q: I've heard this again and again.

GILLESPIE: He looked like a caricature of himself. He came on through and went on to do his thing. Well, everybody who was involved in handling the visit survived it all. It actually went rather well, but believe me, I learned then and there, as I had learned from other, minor visits in the Philippines, that detail is everything. You can't have surprises. It showed me the importance of personal diplomacy - the fact that the President was coming out and doing these things. How

much really gets done during or more likely prior to, because of, or after these visits! This was a very important kind of thing.

That more or less carries us through my time in Brussels.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point? One other question I would like to ask is, did you see any change with the advent of the Nixon administration, in terms of the atmospherics, although this really wasn't your job? Another question is, were you getting any reflections about the American military presence in NATO? This was part of a bad time we went through. We were taking resources away from NATO and putting them into Vietnam. Could you talk about your impression of NATO and the Soviet threat as we perceived it at that time? We'll pick this up the next time.

This September 29, 1995. This is a continuation of an interview with Ambassador Tony Gillespie. Tony, did you get any sense of "gingering up" or shifting of focus as the Nixon administration came into office in January, 1969?

GILLESPIE: Sure. When I moved into the U.S. Mission to NATO, this followed a very bold step taken by the French, or what appeared to be a bold action. The French said that they did not need to be part of NATO as an organization. They said that they were going to develop their own independent striking capacity, the *Force de Frappe*, and they wanted NATO Headquarters out of France. That meant both the civilian Headquarters, the North Atlantic Council, and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters, Atlantic Powers - Europe). Both of those headquarters were moved to Brussels as a result of that.

That was, of course, important to people like Secretary of State Dean Rusk and perhaps to President Lyndon Baynes Johnson. However, my observation was that the U.S. Permanent Representative, Harlan Cleveland, was sort of Chairman of the Board of the North Atlantic Council. He was a political appointee of President Johnson's but quite experienced over a number of years in the workings of government - not always in the field of foreign policy but in many areas. The move of NATO to Brussels, I would say, further cemented and consolidated this position of the U.S. as the "first among equals." Or "first among all," whether they were equal or not. Remember, Turkey had now come into NATO. Greece was already a member. They were sort of down at one end of the scale. There were also the Scandinavian countries Norway, Denmark, and Iceland, which were not always so enthusiastic about what was going on. Even in those times you detected a sense that perhaps U.S. "hegemony," control, influence, or dominance of the proceedings within NATO was not always welcome.

You could see this in little things, such as the administration of Headquarters operations. I would never characterize this attitude as resentment, but there were occasional "declarations of independence" that would come out when we went in under instructions to move things in a certain direction. We would find that there was fairly strong resistance to what seemed to us to be a fairly logical move. I would interpret that, and did so interpret it at the time, as a sign of that mood.

Then you had the change from the Johnson to the Nixon administration. After March, 1968 we knew that President Johnson was a lame duck, since he wasn't going to run for re-election. President Nixon came in, charging ahead with his program. As I think I mentioned earlier, virtually the first step that Nixon and his administration took was the visit to Europe in the early winter of 1969. Brussels was one of the first stops on that trip. Brussels was included because it was now NATO Headquarters. There were efforts made to reflect the U.S. concern and interest in, as well as support for, the NATO alliance. This was important. Henry Kissinger National Security Adviser to the President, whose views are pretty well known, saw this as an opportunity to make a statement about U.S. foreign policy and where we were going.

However, as you indicated previously, all of this was happening against the background of events in Southeast Asia. I think that I mentioned that, even before move of NATO Headquarters from Paris to Brussels, there had been demonstrations against U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. There were constant complaints and editorials, not only in the Belgian press, but in other European publications, on this subject.

I guess that what I saw happening in NATO with the change from the Johnson to the Nixon administrations was the diminution, in practical terms, of the "power," if that's the right word, of the U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO. Robert Ellsworth was appointed Permanent Representative by the Nixon administration. He was a competent man. He did not bring with him the kind of public service and public administration background and stature that a man like Harlan Cleveland had. However, he knew a lot more about defense questions. It was pretty evident that the direction from Washington was becoming more specific as to what we were to do and not to do, with control over Mission operations.

I noticed that, about that time, there began to be increasing discussion of what role Germany - and particularly the Federal Republic of Germany West Germany - was to have in NATO Headquarters and particularly the SHAPE structure. There was a question as to whether a German could ever be the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR). Discussions of that kind began to come up, and probably flowed from the French withdrawal from the NATO command structure. There was speculation that the next country to withdraw might be the Germans. Even then, the Germans were regarded as the up and coming group in NATO. The British always seemed to be there, but almost always had a secondary role by comparison with the U.S. That was my impression at the time.

My recollections are not so good on other changes in NATO Headquarters. The Secretary General of NATO was an Italian. He was important, but not as important as the Secretary General is now. I've noticed that, over the years, the Secretary General of NATO became more important within the organization. At that particular moment he was nothing but an international functionary who sort of kept things going. He presided over the North Atlantic Council meetings as a kind of neutral figure, if you will, like the Speaker in the British House of Commons. The Secretary General kept things on track and kept them moving.

During that particular period, from what I could see, there was a very strong and new emphasis on the command structure of NATO and on hardware and systems. There was a lot of concern

about interoperability of equipment. I suspect that this was because at least some of the European economies were now becoming increasingly capable of producing their own war materials. It was then very important to make sure that those materials were all compatible with the NATO idea of a unified command structure across a lot of language and national lines.

Within NATO Headquarters, both on the military as well as the civilian side, efforts were made to try to make sure that systems under development were compatible. That lead, then, to the creation of "super systems" of management, whether they affected information flow, radio operations, or anti-aircraft or anti-missile activities.

I found the relationships between the military and the civilians within NATO very interesting. On the U.S. side we tried to be as integrated as we could. There was a body called the Military Committee of NATO, as well as the North Atlantic Council and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe). The Military Committee had very high-ranking officers serving on it. If I remember correctly, they were four star generals. The Military Committee didn't really parallel the North Atlantic Council, which included the senior representative of each country. The Permanent Representatives of the U.S. - and I think that this was true of all of the member countries - at least nominally represented the country, the chief of state, or the head of government. In our case he represented both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense.

Within the Permanent Representative structure there was a further breakdown, including the Defense Adviser, a senior civilian, supported by a large staff under his control. He gave advice on defense strategy and major issues to the U.S. Permanent Representative. This whole question of where the U.S. stood in the world and what we were doing in Asia, for example, would come up from time to time, but always tangentially. It was never direct. There were never any challenges, at least as I saw it. There were concerns about whether we had enough resources, whether we would be sufficiently committed to the whole development of NATO, and where NATO should be going in the direction of further "interoperability" and so forth.

Q: Was this a little early, mainly because of the discontent over our involvement in Vietnam, for discipline to turn a little rancid and for the armed forces to be denuded to fight the Vietnam War?

GILLESPIE: No, this was 1969-1970. Our slide into Vietnam had begun. The bombing of the Embassy in Saigon had happened in 1965. We were five years from that, in terms of where things stood. In a more direct way, insofar as it affected the Foreign Service and the State Department, it was while I was in Brussels that it was decided that we would really infuse Vietnam with Americans on a large scale. That's when the program known as CORDS (Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) was established. There was a call for volunteers from among the FSO (Foreign Service Officer) corps to go to Vietnam. I can vividly remember some late-night discussions with friends about whether we should go or not, and where we were going in Vietnam. However, at this point I think there was still that strong hope that it was all going to be worked out. Remember that President Nixon and Kissinger came into office with the idea that they were going to get us out of Vietnam and that this was all going to be taken care of. So it wasn't until a couple of years after I had left Brussels that the situation in Vietnam became neuralgic to the degree that you indicated.

Q: During your time in Brussels what was the impression within NATO of the Soviet threat, both military and potential? Were we really waiting for the balloon to go up?

GILLESPIE: Well, of course, Czechoslovakia was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1968. There was speculation in the press that the Soviets were preparing something, but nobody outside the Soviet leadership really knew anything about it in advance. The reaction to this Soviet action was extremely negative. However, there were also tendencies just beginning to develop during the Nixon years concerning whose doctrine would pertain to what. For example, how much hegemony would the Soviet Union exercise over the satellite countries of Eastern Europe.

I left NATO and Brussels in the spring or early summer of 1970. At that point I don't think that anyone in NATO Headquarters downplayed what appeared to be the real capabilities of the Soviet Union. In the U.S. establishment there was a firm conviction that there was a strategy coming out of Moscow of probe, push, and take advantage of the situation wherever possible. The view was that this was a continuation of the whole trend of post World War II thought that World War III was something to be averted. There was an awful lot of NATO concern, as there was concern by the U.S., about the defense of the Fulda Gap in West Germany near the border with East Germany. There was the fact that the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG) appeared to be prepared to move, at a moment's notice. We would get up to the minute intelligence reports on who was moving where and what Soviet Guards unit had gone to what point. There would be meetings of the North Atlantic Council - not always at the Permanent Representative level, although this happened occasionally - to deal with these reports, to analyze them, and to decide whether major hostilities were going to break out. So this concern was very, very real.

I don't recall that there ever was a sense of panic about the situation, but there were very real concerns about Soviet intentions and what might happen. I know that this drove the views of the military and defense people. I had very close friends in the Defense Department and in the Foreign Service who were concerned about this situation. I think that I've already mentioned Francis Hodsoll, an FSO who had worked on arranging for the housing of members of the U.S. Mission to NATO staff who were being moved to Brussels. He had worked as a sort of Assistant General Services Officer for housing.

After this he was given an opportunity to go to SHAPE Headquarters at Mons as the deputy or number two to the U.S. Political Adviser to the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR). The Political Adviser was a senior Foreign Service Officer. I recall going down to SHAPE Headquarters or Frank Hodsoll coming up to Brussels and getting together with me to discuss matters. He had not had a lot of experience with the U.S. military. I think that he had served very briefly as a reserve officer. He would go on at some length about alerts, concerns, and movements, as well as how Allied troops were being moved in response to perceived movements from the other side of the Oder Neisse line. These were all very real concerns, and it is easy to forget how seriously they were taken.

Q: This is what we're trying to recapture.

GILLESPIE: Before NATO Headquarters had really settled down in Belgium, those of us assigned to the Embassy in Brussels and the people assigned to the U.S. Mission to NATO when it was formed in Belgium were authorized to go to the commissaries, post exchanges, and medical facilities in Germany. All of us took advantage of that, to some degree. However, this meant driving over to Bitburg or Wiesbaden, Germany, which were major air bases which came under U.S. Air Force - Europe. You would meet people there in the Officers' Clubs at these bases in Germany and talk occasionally to our colleagues in the Embassy in Bonn or the Consulate General in Frankfurt. The sense of being on the front line, in effect, was really quite strong, because we could see it. We saw fighter aircraft doing exercises in the sky when we went over to the PX or Commissary. My little sons were very impressed with that.

Q: Before we move from a strategic view down to the personal side, could you discuss the arrival of Larry Eagleburger there, because this sort of annoyed some people? Can you explain that?

GILLESPIE: I don't know how much we need to get into Lawrence S. Eagleburger's background. I learned, in connection with all this, that he was considered a very bright person, a very strong Foreign Service Officer who'd been in the service for some time and who had come out of the Young Republican Movement. If I remember correctly, he was born in Wisconsin.

Q: Former Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird who had served for a long time as a Republican Congressman from Wisconsin, was Eagleburger's "sponsor."

GILLESPIE: Yes. Eagleburger had been active, as an undergraduate, in Young Republican affairs.

Q: In Wisconsin.

GILLESPIE: In Wisconsin. This all came out later. I think that I've mentioned that when President Nixon came to Brussels in February, 1969, there were at least half a dozen or more Foreign Service Officers accompanying the entourage who were going to be, or who already were, part of the U.S. National Security Council staff which Henry Kissinger (National Security Adviser to the President) had either inherited or was putting together. Among these people was Lawrence S. Eagleburger, although I don't recall whether he actually came to Brussels in February, 1969. He may or may not have come. However, what I did learn, through "scuttlebutt" or gossip, was that Eagleburger had some health problem, a heart condition or something.

Q: A heart shock.

GILLESPIE: Yes, something like that. He was very, very close to Kissinger. So people wondered what he was going to do. I was called in to the office of the DCM in Brussels at a certain point and told that we were going to have a new officer assigned as Political Minister. The fellow who had held that job previously whose name I could not recall earlier, was Ed Streater. He was a real, traditional kind of FSO. He was not a Mid- Westerner or from the University of Wisconsin. Streater was independently wealthy and socially well connected. He was scheduled to be transferred to another post - ceremoniously, not unceremoniously - and Lawrence Eagleburger was going to replace him. There was at least a two and maybe three rank

difference between Streater and Eagleburger. So Eagleburger got this job, a minister-level, supervisory position. As I had understood it, "ministers" were big-time Deputy Chiefs of Mission. So here was the number three-ranking officer in the Mission who would have this title. This was interesting in and of itself. There were several officers senior to Eagleburger in rank in the Political and Political-Military Sections. I mentioned Raymond Garthoff, a Soviet expert; there was a fellow named Gerald Helman, who was very knowledgeable about arms control and disarmament matters, as well as political-military strategy of all kinds; and there were several others, including a fellow named Meyerson. In a very personal way, when the word of Eagleburger's assignment to this position became known, the DCM told me, "Tony, we're going to have a problem. The Foreign Service doesn't really shy away from assigning more junior officers to supervise more senior officers, but we don't do it very often. In this instance, we're going to have some problems, so you should be aware of this and do what you can to smooth them out. There's probably not a lot that any of us can do, but we are being told to do this."

So when the news got around, several of these more senior officers after, I am sure, consulting with others, took me off to one side and said, "Look, this is unacceptable. We can't have this. This is wrong." I said, "Well, okay, what can you do? What do you want me to do about it, fellow?" They just wanted to talk. They wanted...

Q: This is often what people in administration can do, especially if you talk to people straight rather than as an apparatchik. You represent someone outside their system, so to speak, so they can come and bitch to you.

GILLESPIE: So they came. They bitched. They knew that my connections with the DCM and the Ambassador were good. They knew that my connections back to part of the management staff in the Department were good. Of course, the Foreign Service has all sorts of networks that function. The Personnel system is made up of career Foreign Service Officers, for the most part, so these fellows also had their own private snitches, their patrons, and their protectors to whom they were turning. As it worked out, everyone was taken care of. The situation was managed. Those who simply were not going to abide with this situation were taken care of. They found other jobs in other places and, in due course, moved on.

Lawrence S. Eagleburger eventually arrived in Brussels. Fortunately, I didn't have to give detailed support to these people, though I had to make sure that they received that support. It turned out that Larry, although very brusque on the exterior, had a less brusque interior which had some lighter parts to it. He knew exactly what he wanted in everything, or at least he gave that impression - whether in terms of policy or anything else. He was a very smart guy. He knew that he was working for the U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO and the DCM. He already had served, I think, as Consul in Skopje, Yugoslavia.

Q: No, he had been second or third-ranking Economic Officer in Skopje. Before that, I think that he had been Consul in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

GILLESPIE: Yes. So he had been overseas. He had served in various missions, and none of this was new to him. He knew how to play the game the right way. We had a couple of conversations, and he made no secret of the fact that he was a little in awe of the perquisites which came with

his job. He hadn't really focused on the fact that the Streater's had found a lovely, quasi-mansion which they had insisted that the Embassy lease for them. Larry Eagleburger found that he had that house, a car, and a driver. If he knew this before, I don't think that it had registered very much because we used to joke a little bit about that.

He turned out to be a rather pleasant colleague, as far as I was concerned. We talked a lot and did a lot together, though I left Brussels not long after he arrived. However, my sense was that he would rather not have been in Brussels. He would rather not have been at the Mission and he chafed at this, just as he chafed at and eventually disregarded the doctor's advice about things like smoking and eating too much, which he does to this day.

Q: He's got a bad case of asthma. He's been doctoring himself.

GILLESPIE: That's it. I knew that he'd had this heart event, whatever it was. Then I found out that Eagleburger had one of these asthma aspirators, or whatever they're called. When I met him, I smoked then, very heavily. What always struck me was that he almost always had a cigarette in one hand. Then he'd cough a little and pull out this asthma aspirator and pump himself something and go back to smoking. He had been hospitalized with this condition and had just come out of the hospital. I'm going to be with Larry a week from this coming weekend in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the Broadmoor Hotel. One of the things that he used to wonder about was whether the Broadmoor was a place where you could smoke. So he still smokes. He visited Santiago, Chile, when I was Ambassador there. He knew that I stopped smoking soon after I left the U.S. Mission to NATO and returned to the U.S. When he visited me in Chile, he kind of looked at me and said, "I hope you don't mind if I have a cigarette, Mr. Ambassador." My house is smoke-free by choice, but he then proceeded to light up a cigarette. I don't know if you'd like to know more about him...

ROBERT A. MARTIN
Arms Control and Disarmament Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1967-1969)

Robert A. Martin was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He received a degree in international relations from Yale University in 1954. He served in the U.S. Army from 1954-1956. His career included positions in Belgium, Vietnam, Iran, Germany, and Washington, DC. Mr. Martin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on September 8, 1994.

Q: Well, to move on, in 1967 you left EUR and where did you go?

MARTIN: I left EUR to go to our mission to NATO to replace a fellow by the name of David Aaron, who for a variety of reasons did not want to move with NATO from Paris to Brussels and wanted to come back to Washington to get into things more at this end of the line. He had proposed to Ambassador Cleveland that Cleveland might be interested in getting me to replace him, Aaron, and as it turned out, that is what happened. Cleveland did get me to replace Aaron

and I arrived in Paris before the move in the latter part of September and spent almost a month there before we actually made the move to Brussels.

Q: I just want to put in that you were in NATO there from 1967-69.

MARTIN: Let me tell one story about the move from Paris to Brussels. The reason for the move, of course, was because de Gaulle had opted out of the military side of NATO the year before and one of the results of that was that NATO had to move and would no longer be welcomed to be housed in Paris. So the decision was made to move to Brussels. As it turned out, NATO closed down in Paris the end of the working day of Friday, October 13, 1967 and Harlan Cleveland, our ambassador, being someone with a flare for the dramatic, arranged to have a telegram sent from US Mission NATO, PARIS at 1800 Zulu on Friday, October 13th saying, "US Mission to NATO has closed in Paris. We have lowered the flag, etc., etc." He also arranged that Mike Newlin, who was the number two in the political section, would be in Brussels to make sure that we would be ready to open in Brussels the next Monday. And one of Mike's tasks was to insure that from Brussels a message went out at 1801 Zulu announcing the opening of US NATO in Brussels and that the flag has just been raised, etc., etc. I thought that was sort of cornball, but Harlan thought that was great stuff.

Q: What was the feeling towards the French at that time?

MARTIN: Against de Gaulle there was not much of a happy feeling, but he could play the way he chose and he chose and that was it. The French delegation saluted and carried out whatever instructions they got, but they felt certainly a little pinched it was clear on many occasions. We did work very closely with them in the NATO context at NATO, delegation to delegation, on most issues and that was very harmonious and amicable. But they had their instructions and we had ours and frequently they were different enough that the differences would come out in sessions of the council. At that time, in following on behind David Aaron, what I was charged with was working all the security issues, all the arms controls, etc. and indeed as it turned out the most important issue was the initial consultations with the NATO allies within NATO on the preparations for the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, SALT. That kept me very, very busy during the couple of years I was in NATO.

Q: By this time you were an arms controls and disarmament person with a very narrow specialty weren't you?

MARTIN: Indeed. And the reason that I was that was because in early days in the sixties, the State Department did not have much of a group with any particular background in the arms control, disarmament, national security side of issues and the fact that I had spent three years involved in that with ACDA and then three years on the nuclear side within the Department in the European context, meant that I probably had more experience than most anybody else. So it would be a natural follow on until the Department got enough people with comparable relevant experience for me to continue doing that. And that is what I ended up doing the first half of my career almost entirely.

Q: What was Harlan Cleveland's mode of operation?

MARTIN: Well, Cleveland was a very, very shrewd, effective, bureaucrat. He had been brought into the Department initially as assistant secretary in the International Organizations Bureau because his prior experience in some measure had been related to the UN and some of the UN activity. Indeed, he had been involved in the Marshall Plan during the initial post-war period and setting that up in Paris, etc., so he was assistant secretary in the International Organizations Bureau. His deputies were Dick Gardner and Joe Sisco. In any event, something happened in the UN context and I can't recall precisely what that Lyndon Johnson, then President, found absolutely cutting across his bow and his instruction was to get rid of that man, Assistant Secretary Cleveland. Dean Rusk, thinking highly of Cleveland, and many others also, were able to get Johnson to agree that sending him to be our permanent representative at NATO would be far enough away and out of town so that Johnson could sleep more easily at night. That is how Cleveland got to NATO.

At that time, our ambassador in Paris was Chip Bohlen. I can remember both Cleveland and Mike Newlin, the fellow I mentioned earlier who was the deputy in the political section...one time when Newlin was in the car driving around Paris going to some meeting before we moved to Brussels, with Cleveland, they passed in traffic Chip Bohlen in his car and Cleveland made the comment that he felt so much more powerful and important than Bohlen because Bohlen only had one country to take care of and Cleveland had all of NATO. He was clearly the principal man in Paris at that time. Obviously Bohlen would have had a different view.

But it was an active time after we moved to Brussels. We were pressing ahead with the non-proliferation treaty and there was much consultation in the NATO context in that regard. We were preparing for the beginnings of the SALT process and that consultation was probably the most important that we had ever had within NATO. We were able, because we understood from the outset the need to insure, at least in the early days, that we were wholly forthcoming and fully looking to the dialogue with our allies to be a give and take and that we were really interested in their views and that they were important to us and that this was not a process such as had been the thought occasionally in the past where the US being the biggest kid in the block and owning all the athletic equipment was dictating the type of game and how it would be played. We were honestly looking as we began preparations for this really new step in the arms control process getting into the strategic side of the equation with the Russians, we were honestly looking for allied input in the most thoughtful terms they could muster to help us make a success of this activity.

Q: Did you notice any change when the Nixon administration came in which was January, 1969?

MARTIN: I can say several things. In terms of the effort in SALT, it intensified, in fact really got started then. In terms of the other arms control activity they were sticking to more or less the same substantial positions from the past. One thing that I did notice was that with the 20th anniversary of NATO upcoming in April, 1969, and the decision that that meeting would be held in Washington and the importance of it for many reasons, both substantively and symbolically, the new President, Mr. Nixon, had asked Ambassador Cleveland to stay on through that 20th anniversary meeting as the permanent representative to be replaced subsequently. They felt it was that important that Cleveland should stay through that period, which was delightful for all of

us in US NATO because we thought very highly of Harlan Cleveland. He had done an outstanding job. He really was a superb bureaucrat.

He would from the field figure out precisely how he wanted to proceed on any and every issue and would send in telegrams outlining all of this and mustering very forceful arguments to support the positions that he wanted to be directed to follow. He then would go to Washington to lobby and engage himself on the Washington end of the line in the process to insure that where he wanted things to come out was where they would come out. Having insured that, he would go back to Brussels and await the telegrams, many of which he had drafted in Washington, instructing him what he should do. He was a consummate pro in that regard. He always made clear that three months was maybe tolerable, but if you let six months go by without returning to Washington, you might as well forget it. So he made sure he got back three or four times a year to work the issues and insure that what he received in terms of instructions was consistent with the instructions he was supporting. And I had the good luck to come with him on a couple of those trips because of the SALT angle in one case and then in terms for need for support for the 20th anniversary meeting in another case.

In connection with that 20th anniversary meeting, there was a reception on the eighth floor in honor of all the delegates. Secretary Rusk being a relatively new civilian at that point of several months, was included, as he should have been. At the end of it, it turned out that a number of us were still there having a nice chat--Secretary Rusk and his wife, and Ambassador Cleveland and Mrs. Cleveland, and a colleague, Alex _____ from the NATO mission, myself and a few others I can't recall--I vividly recall one of the well known waiters coming by the Secretary, Mr. Rusk, and asking him as this conversation ensued if he wouldn't like another drink. Dean Rusk said yes he thought he would. The waiter said, "The usual?" And Dean Rusk allowed how that was the case. The man turned, having checked with other people to see what they wanted, if any thing, and as he was walking away Dean Rusk turned around and said, "Oh, gosh, I just forgot, cancel that, I can't have another drink, I have to drive home." The first time in eight years that he ever had to leave the Department of State and drive himself. His wife chortled and the waiter had the good grace to laugh too.

Q: As you dealt with your particular section of NATO, were there any particular problem areas, either because of country position or something? How did you view NATO, working within this environment?

MARTIN: Well, of course, for me it was extremely heady stuff. I was right at the center of all the consultation and prepared all the papers for the sessions that we had in the council and was involved in all the discussions that we had of various sorts and various sizes in our delegation with other delegations. I was involved with all the visiting firemen who came from Washington to lead the way on much of the substance and make presentations and so forth. I was charged to doing all the reporting telegrams. In fact that is how the acronym came to pass. I had to do these long telegrams and I took copious notes and ended up with 20 and 25 and 30 page telegrams so that we would get down every jot and tittle and it became very quickly clear that to put down "strategic arms limitation talks" time after time after time was going to break my wrist so it quickly became SALT. Ambassador Cleveland was not very happy with that, he thought it was a little much, but he didn't push too hard. I subsequently heard from Adrian Fischer, the deputy in

ACDA, that he had gone to a high level meeting in Washington during this period and was saying that we just can't use this cute acronym, it was a little much, it has to look serious. Whoever was representing the CIA at this meeting said absolutely not, we have set up our whole filing system based on SALT as an acronym. You are not going to destroy that now. At that point Fischer in the process gave up and SALT was enshrined forever.

So it was an intriguing period for me and indeed the successor to Harlan Cleveland, Bob Ellsworth, a former Kansas Congressman, a young fellow, was interested in the SALT process and realized how important it was. When the then Secretary General of NATO, Manlio Brosio, an Italian, a very esteemed and marvelous elder statesman, was going to make a visit in Washington early in July, 1969, not too long before I would end my two years at NATO, and whenever the permrep went to Washington he generally took one staff person with him. So Bob Ellsworth said that he wanted me to come to Washington and focus on SALT because that is the most important issue we have going. So I went with him on this trip. His reason for going was because Brosio was going on a visit. The morning after we arrived, they arranged to have breakfast with Ellsworth in the State Department cafeteria. We were chatting and he made clear that he wanted me to come to every session that he had. I saluted figuratively and thought to myself okay. And I said, "But you can't mean the Secretary's luncheon with the Secretary General." And he said, "Well, maybe not that, but the meeting in his office, yes."

So a day or two later I found myself waiting in the anteroom outside the Secretary's office. I had had the pleasure in March, 1962, of getting to know Millie Asbajonson, who was one of the great secretaries of the Secretary of State and in June, 1962 when Dean Rusk came back to Geneva principally to participate in a ministerial level session to end the Laos Conference and also taking the occasion to sit in on one of the disarmament conference sessions, I had met Jane Roth, another one of the legendary secretaries of the Secretary. So I knew those two esteemed ladies and we were chatting away very happily. All of a sudden the group comes out of the Secretary's luncheon and files into the Secretary's office. I file in too and one of the European deputy assistant secretaries, George Springsteen, sort of looked at me and wondered why I was there. He couldn't figure that out and wasn't happy at all. He was the one who had to go out and get another chair so that there would be enough chairs. We got seated and I was sitting caddie cornered across the long coffee table from Secretary Rogers, who had the couch at his left, Secretary General Brosio with Ambassador Ellsworth in the middle and the various others around. Bill Rogers looked up and saw me and didn't recognize me from Adam. Ellsworth understood that there was something wrong and said, "Oh, Mr. Secretary, I thought you knew Bob." And Bill Rogers bounced up and with this totally broad grin on his face reached all the way across the coffee table and I bounced up so we could shake hands. He said, "Of course, of course, I didn't know Bob was coming with you." And he sat back down. I almost split. I didn't make a sound. It was just really well done on the part of Rogers to take the sting out of that. I just happened to look at George Springsteen and he was just foaming. He just couldn't believe this. Anyway, it was sort of fun.

If you will in terms of Secretary Rusk to go back to that June, 1962 time when he came over for the purpose of ending the Laos Conference, I was at that point among others the liaison officer for the Italian delegation. And one of the things that was to happen after the morning disarmament conference plenary session, which the Secretary would attend, was for him to have

a meeting with his not quite Italian counterpart, Italian Under Secretary, Carlo Russo. This was just before the Secretary was to go off to the Soviet compound to have lunch with Andre Gromyko. The disarmament conference had not been a very stirring meeting, although it dragged on. It was not clear that there was going to be enough time for the meeting with Russo, so at the point when it seemed that that virtually was not going to happen, the man on the Secretary's party who was going to take the notes in the Russo meeting left and that left me there. At the end of the meeting, I went up to Charlie Stelle who was sitting behind Arthur Dean, who was sitting next to Secretary Rusk, and said, "Gee, what are we doing to do? Are we going to meet with Russo?" Stelle says, "Well, you had better ask the Secretary." So I said, "Mr. Secretary, do you really want to have this meeting with Under Secretary Russo?" He said, "The main thing I want Mr. Martin, is a drink." So I said, "Yes, sir," and scurried out looking for the bar. The bar was closed and Dean Rusk was unhappy. We did get together with Russo. The note taker was not there, I had to take notes. I had no paper so I took notes for about 15 or 20 minutes on the cuff of my white shirt. From that point forward, to this day, I never venture out without a small pad to make notes or whatever might be necessary.

Q: Going back to NATO and SALT, was everyone pretty much on the same line?

MARTIN: Essentially in the formal sessions there was no glaring divergence to the degree that anyone might have had special views that they were interested in making. For example, the British did on a number of occasions and they would do that bilaterally and privately. The sessions, when we were in the council in NATO...the allies generally took the occasion to make the most use of them from the standpoint of learning themselves and trying to get visitors from Washington with technical background and particular expertise to give everything they had an educating process to help a greater understanding of the whole effort. There were some very, very useful sessions both for us and clearly to the allies. And, indeed, occasionally they would have experts who came from capitals to participate in the discussion and that helped a lot too. You could not only have the benefit of the council discussion but it also meant that you could have luncheons or dinners around the edges of the formal sessions. Generally the case was that in the formal sessions there were not disagreements. The allies took the occasion to try to get the most nourishment from that part of it in terms of getting from us our thinking and trying to contribute to that from their perspectives.

Q: What were the major sticking points at the time you were there--1967-69?

MARTIN: That period was one where we were shaping our position and as with most efforts in this area the difficulties were much more manifest and much more deeply seated in terms of the interagency Washington scrum than they were with the allies, and indeed, frequently with the Russians. It was a lot harder to get something through Washington and into position to air "publicly" in terms of a particular negotiation, whether it was bilateral or multilateral, than it ever was to carry out the particular negotiation itself. That point had been evident from the early days in the Geneva disarmament effort that was far less important in large terms than SALT or any of the follow on strategic dialogue with the Soviets. With the allies there weren't sticking points. There wasn't much they could do other than to try and help shape our position. Clearly the British who are so dependent on us from the testing perspective, wanted to make sure that nothing was done, or were particularly sensitive to the possibility of anything being done that

would limit our ability to help them on the testing side. The French would have had a comparable concern from the standpoint of French testing but not any problem from the standpoint of our helping them because we didn't do that. To the degree that we provided them any help that ended very early days and it was our link to the British that was key. So there weren't any really sticking points. It was so new an effort, we were treading ground that just hadn't been involved before in any formal negotiating dialogue. The effort which finally ensured mainly in the autumn of 1969 to put together what would be the US position, was mainly the work, in the initial sense, of Ray Garthoff.

Q: Yes, he has been interviewed.

MARTIN: During the autumn of 1969 by which time I had left NATO and was back in Washington in the office of Political/Military Affairs working on SALT and all the strategic and arms control disarmament issues, in fact was the State staff person on SALT from the beginning, Ray Garthoff put together four different options which were overlays to some degree variations on a core of themes to be address by the interagency process and it was one of those four polished up in various ways that was finally put forward as the US opening position in SALT. His efforts singlehandedly really to put together those four discreet positions was an absolutely incredible performance.

Q: Did you have any feeling from CIA sources or others that the Soviets were having the same problems--the military saying they liked things as they are and the diplomatic side saying you had to come to some kind of agreement?

MARTIN: Over the years that I had been involved, it certainly became clear that a number of people that I had worked with on the Soviet side and got to know were true believers in the sense that they really did hope and were working toward agreement as opposed to disruption and insuring that no agreement would ensue and therefore be no limitations whatsoever on their country's activities. So, yes, indeed, there were evident, if you will, soft liners, those who were interested in trying to work towards an agreement that would not be inconsistent with the goals and the interests of their side, but indeed did want to see an agreement reached. There were equally evident hard liners who wanted to insure that every roadblock conceivable was put in the way and that no agreement could ever be reached.

We had the same thing on our side, both in the uniformed military and in the OSD, the civil side. Indeed, the hardest liners of all was on the civil side and curiously enough over time it was not unusual to see the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the arms control side of the equation as opposed to the other because of the fact that they understood, as did we all, that the pot was not limitless. There were limitations to the amount of resource that could be used in developing weapons and systems, etc. and where hard choices had to be made, the military might well want to see something not pursued because they didn't think it was sensible from the standpoint of limited resources that would be available. But, if you were interested in a full blown ABM system, countrywide, for example, and various things of that sort that many of the hard liners were pushing, you found that the uniformed military were occasionally taking a different position. I found it interesting when it happened the first time and would aim to try to use it occasionally in the future when it became apparent that the military might have a slightly different view. In the

end, they would make their case one way or other, but would obviously go along with the civil leadership because that is what they are trained to do. But at the lower levels it was frequently interesting in terms of the way the lineup developed on any particular issue.

MARTEN VAN HEUVEN
Legal Advisor, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1967-1970)

Marten Van Heuven was born in the Netherlands in 1932. He received his BA and LLB from Yale University and his MIA from Columbia University. His positions abroad included Berlin, Brussels, The Hague, Bonn and Geneva. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on January 31, 2003.

Q: Today is March 7, 2003. You're off to NATO in 1967. You were there from when to when?

VAN HEUVEN: 1967 to 1970.

Q: What was your job?

VAN HEUVEN: Let me back up for one second. I mentioned earlier that I was a civil servant in the Office of the Legal Adviser. I had a GS rank. When I went to Berlin, I became a Foreign Service Reserve officer. The reason was that at the time I entered the Department of State, I could not have become a Foreign Service officer because under the law and regulations one needed to have been a U.S. citizen for ten years. I had been naturalized in 1953. I came into Washington in 1957. Direct entry into the Foreign Service was not an option for me, so I didn't consider that. But by the time I got to Berlin as an FSR, it was 1963, and this restriction no longer existed in law. Knowing I didn't wish to go back to L - or to law for that matter - I wanted to stick with the Foreign Service. I applied for lateral entry into the Foreign Service officer corps. I thought that being a Foreign Service Reserve officer would make that a little easier. Indeed, during the last inspection we had in Berlin, the inspectors very kindly picked up what had been an application that hadn't been moving forward. When they went back to Washington, it did move forward and I was invited to take the oral. This happened at Embassy Rome. It was conducted by a panel of three, chaired by the then DCM in Rome, Frank Meloy, who as later assassinated in Lebanon. It was a short trip to Rome. The interview was easy. The results were positive. By the time I went to USNATO, I was an FSO. However, going to NATO didn't happen in the normal assignment process either. In my time as a lawyer for the IO bureau, the assistant secretary at the time was Harlan Cleveland. Since I often attended the IO staff meetings, I had somehow come to his attention. In 1967, Harlan was ambassador at NATO. The NATO organization had just gone through the traumatic experience of having been kicked out of France, which meant that the NATO military headquarters moved away from Fontainebleau to Mons, in Belgium, and the NATO diplomatic establishment moved from Paris to Brussels. In the course of that upheaval, the French action gave rise to a claim for compensation to the other members of the alliance and to the organization for the costs it had to incur in order to be able to make the move. Therefore, there was a process that involved both a NATO claim against France and also a

bilateral U.S. claim since there were a lot of U.S. forces involved. Harlan obviously was involved in that issue at a high level, and he needed a lawyer. He knew me because I had performed for him before as a lawyer. So, he was interested in having me join the delegation in Brussels in a legal capacity at least for the purpose of handling such legal issues as would obviously have to be dealt with by him and by the Council in connection with the claim. When I arrived at NATO, Bill Cargo, the DCM, took me aside and asked me whether I knew what Harlan intended to do with me. I had to tell him honestly I wasn't sure. It transpired that the NATO organization had also obtained the services of a lawyer, an American by the name of Peider Kunz, who was born and raised in a little village in eastern Switzerland, but who was an American. I know that some ambassadors on the Council wanted Harlan to assure them that he was not really a CIA employee and I know we gave that assurance. So NATO as an organization had this American lawyer and Harlan had me. In the event, I never did a great deal of legal work. The issues were handled elsewhere and eventually settled.

Q: Did the French ante up or not?

VAN HEUVEN: There was an anteing up. But there were complicated issues involving such concepts as negative residual value. In other words, the French would regain the use of an airstrip that had been used and maintained by American forces. So the demand on our part for compensation for the lack of use of such airstrip was met by a counterclaim for alleged French costs it would take to convert that airstrip back into normal pasture land. I don't recall the sums that eventually were involved, but some money did pass. But to a large degree, these claims and counterclaims in the end offset each other.

Q: What did you end up doing?

VAN HEUVEN: My initial assignment was civil emergency planning. NATO had a lot of committees. Some of them were main committees. Civil Emergency Planning was one of the main committees but it was outside of the mainstream of NATO work. But civil emergency planning was a set of procedures that had been codified into an entire body of existing structures and organizations that had to do with anything from provisioning of energy in terms of crisis, to providing transport in terms of crisis, to taking care of civilian populations, and calamities of any sort. This big structure of committees was handled under the broad hat of a Civil Emergency Planning Committee on which the representative from Washington, who came from the Office of Civil Emergency Preparedness, filled the U.S. chair at high-level meetings. During normal times that chair was taken by me, sitting in for my ambassador. The ambassador could always take the American seat whenever he wanted to. But there were at the time over 200 committees in NATO and the ambassadors didn't do that. So I operated with a bunch of colleagues, mostly at the second secretary level. Under the chairmanship of an Italian by the name of Devegilia, who was a NATO civil servant, we did our civil emergency planning work. I did this from a position in the political section, which was at the time headed by Ray Garthoff, and later by Ed Streator. I spent a year and a half learning something that was totally new to me but which did involve quite a few committee meetings and a lot of negotiations. At one point, we took the initiative - it was Ed Streator's idea - to organize a symposium. Basically, it was an unstructured meeting at high level to kick a lot of these issues around. I'll just give one more example of what civil emergency planning involved. Our whole CRAF [Civil Reserve Air Fleet] alert system was part of a wider

NATO system that would have done the same thing for the civilian NATO aircraft in other countries.

Q: The French were in and out of NATO. Were the French in this particular area?

VAN HEUVEN: The French were in the Civil Emergency Planning Committee. The French role was handled by a schoolmasterish but nice civil servant, not from the ministry of foreign affairs, who had the advantage of having been there a long time and the disadvantage of having been there a long time. He also sat on some other committees. He fancied he knew English better than he did. One of my colleagues from DOD, a civilian by the name of Joe Loveland, an enormous guy who was himself married to a very tiny Frenchwoman, amused us one evening when Ruth and I were at dinner at the Lovelands and our French civil servant colleague was there. Joe would affectionately address him as "Old Fart," a word which the Frenchman didn't understand. He thought it was a compliment. Of course, it caused us all sorts of problems in having to keep our faces straight during dinner.

Q: Were there any disasters or things that you had to mobilize for?

VAN HEUVEN: No, but it was all planning for what if. The planning was quite advanced and the structure was a good one, and it still exists today. It involved a whole pipeline system for petroleum in Europe because it would have had to provide for the energy for the tanks and trucks of the armed forces. It involved everything having to do with transportation and taking care of civilians. It did interface with a lot of different parts of the Washington bureaucracy. So it was quite bureaucratic. But it was important because this would have had to function had it become necessary.

I recall one other amusing thing. Occasionally, Washington would provide political input not just in terms of direction but also in terms of people. At one time I found myself having to deal with the then lieutenant governor of Texas, Ben Barnes, who somehow came over as a senior representative on the meeting of the Civil Emergency Planning Committee. Barnes was full of stories. The one I remember is the description of his mother-in-law as a "bad, long ride on a rainy road." Barnes later got into ethical difficulties back in Texas. They effectively curtailed his political career.

Q: What role did the Germans play in this? I would imagine that they would be right in the center of everything.

VAN HEUVEN: Well, yes, but so did the French, because the pipelines ran through France and the fighting would be in Germany. In fact, Germany was important. I don't particularly recall the German representative on the committee. But I do recall vividly the British representative, Tony Morgan, who many years later turned out to become the opposite number of my wife in Zurich where he was the British consul general. I also remember the Norwegian, Kris Prebensen, who later became head of administration in the NATO Secretariat, taking the place once occupied by Lord Coleridge. And I remember Marino Devegilia, our chairman, who had all the strengths and weaknesses of the caricature of an Italian. The Germans would have been the beneficiary of a lot of the work of the Civil Emergency Planning but not exclusively, since the assumption was that,

if the balloon went up, all of Europe would be affected and all European populations would have to be looked after and that would have to be done by governments.

Q: What was your impression of this segment of the NATO apparatus? I've talked with people who worked with the UN and particularly during an earlier period you had mentioned that at that time after the Cold War the UN officials had to show results but during the Cold War it was better to keep your head down and be a bureaucrat. How did you find the NATO organization?

VAN HEUVEN: The NATO organization was impressive, not because of the building we were in, which is the building they are still in, although there is a decision now to construct something new. It was an advanced temporary building. It was big, with a lot of wings off the main corridor at three levels. We occupied an entire wing at all three levels on the western side. The U.S. delegation for the Military Committee was right across the main corridor, on the other side.

The quality of the NATO staff, many of whom were seconded at senior levels from the national services of the members, was pretty good. NATO was important and countries saw to it that they sent good people to these jobs. So the various assistant secretaries - general were usually top-notch people, as were those working directly for them. I mentioned Lord Coleridge. I should also mention the NATO Secretary General at the time, who was an Italian by the name of Manlio Brosio, a diplomat of consummate skill whom I had a chance to observe a lot, because my role as a notetaker behind Ambassador Cleveland meant that every Wednesday I would be watching Brosio perform as chairman of the NATO Council. He did that with enormous skill. He was an old-fashioned diplomat. No raised voices. He knew his brief, he did his homework, and he managed wisely to sum up every discussion, so that the creation of the so-called decision sheet, which was in effect the decision of the meeting, would not be too difficult. I don't recall his making any mistake, although I'm sure he made some. It was really wonderful to see such a man in action, and to see the style with which he could manage this very difficult job. Of course, the NATO ambassadors were all prima donnas. They did, however, know their place. NATO never voted. In theory everybody was equal. The reality, however, was that each ambassador knew roughly what his country brought to the table and would tailor his role accordingly. Iceland or Luxembourg, for instance, would not speak on many issues, or if they did, would make their remarks very short. The major countries, on the other hand, were quite different. Occasionally, you would have an exception, but the discipline of the group - and it was quite a tight group; there were 15 ambassadors - usually had a salutary effect on any diplomats with tendencies to be outside of the norm. There was the Dean, Andre DeStaercke, Belgian, a bachelor and a man who never could get over the fact that he had to move from Paris back to his hometown of Brussels because he had a wonderful apartment in the Cinquieme in Paris from which later on he could watch from his windows the student revolt in '68. But DeStaercke also played a role in dealing with this issue of how the NATO Council should use Peider Kunz on the claims issues. I remember accompanying Mr. Kunz to lunch once at DeStaercke's apartment. He was an erudite man. Because he was Dean and because he represented the host country, he could afford to take as much time as he wanted and no one in the Council really ever cut him short.

Q: How did Harlan Cleveland work within the Council?

VAN HEUVEN: Cleveland, in my view, was a prince and was seen as such by his colleagues. He was not a professional diplomat. He was seen as more than that, as an intellectual of extraordinary imagination and drive, and a capacity of turning ideas into concrete action. As a result, he commanded huge influence with his colleagues, who listened very carefully to everything he had to say. Working with Harlan did have occasional downsides, not because it wasn't exciting - it certainly always was - but Harlan was so devoted to his job and so cerebral about all the issues that it never mattered to him which day of the week it was. I recall his calling a staff meeting once for 3:00 p.m. Sunday. Tommy Wilson, his personal choice as political counselor and also a political appointee, said to him, "Harlan, it's going to be Sunday" and Harlan in effect said, "So what?" We did spend a lot of time in the office with Harlan. I mean that literally. The hours at NATO were extremely long. We typically would find ourselves on Saturday mornings saddled with instructions - I'm slightly ahead of myself because this was not in Civil Emergency Planning, but on arms control issues - which Washington would have managed to disgorge late Friday afternoon and which would land in Brussels on our doorstep for execution Saturday morning. Our job was then to turn the cable into an actionable paper and get it around. Of course, we ran into the difficulty that about half of the delegations simply didn't staff on Saturday mornings, which meant that we often had to get ahold of their duty officers, or in some cases just slip the envelope under the door. I think that today they probably have a similar problem because there are five more countries and some of them are thinly staffed and they simply cannot afford to be there all weekend. It was damned hard work. But it was hard work with really terrific people. I have mentioned Garthoff, who was involved with Ambassador Gerard Smith in the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) and then START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) negotiations. I mentioned Ed Streater, who was a powerhouse and also very inventive. Bill Cargo and later, George Vest, were strong DCMs. Harlan had two right-hand men. One was Tommy Wilson, who was the POLAD, a job later held in my time by Larry Eagleburger. Tommy came from the outside. He was an author and a longtime friend of Harlan's. Tim Stanley was the personal representative of the Secretary of Defense. That meant that Tim basically commanded all the folks who were on the U.S. Mission staff from the Pentagon, on the third floor. Tommy handled the political work. Bruno Luzatto, another academic pal of Harlan's from World War II days in Italy, was the economic counselor. It was a tremendously talented team of erudite and worldly people who were quite comfortable in the very important roles that they had and who, by and large, worked very well together, something that is not always the case. There have been times at NATO when I've watched these relationships go pretty sour, but in those days they worked really well.

Q: The secretaries of defense from all these countries, minister and secretaries of defense have semiannual or quarterly meetings.

VAN HEUVEN: Twice a year.

Q: During your time, did this change the dynamics? They're a different breed of cat in a way.

VAN HEUVEN: Well, I remember Secretary Rusk coming for one of the meetings at ministerial level. In those days, we would always begin on a Thursday night with a non-NATO issue, namely, the Berlin group, which was traditionally convened in rotation by the bilateral embassies of the four members of the Berlin group in Brussels. These ambassadors normally had to do only

with Belgium, but when the Berlin group met they had to throw a dinner which very often they did not attend themselves. On that occasion when somebody asked Secretary Rusk the next morning how the dinner had been - it had been at the German residence - he said, "Well, they served rabbit and the rabbit is still running around in my stomach." There was, of course, always a tremendous bureaucratic run-up for these defense and foreign ministers meetings because there was the natural drive that they should produce some result. So there was always a premium on coming up with yet another idea. One of those ideas in the Cleveland days was the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, also known as the CCMS, not really directly related to NATO work, but Harlan made it so. The organization followed. We got a new committee called CCMS. I think it's still there. So, by accretion, the organization tended to grow as a result of this habit of periodic meetings. Nothing was ever subtracted. There was the usual frenzy of briefing papers and of course the exchanges with Washington to get all the ducks in a row. The meetings themselves would be the typical high-level visit with all the hassles that went with it. But it became so routine, and it is so routine today, that the admin staff in Brussels, which is actually located mostly in the embassy downtown, is completely at home dealing with those things. Things become different when the President comes. Then the magnitude of the complexity increases exponentially. But there's been plenty of experience with handling presidents at NATO as well. It just makes for hard admin work. Over time potential problems, like which ambassador gets to shake the President's hand first at the airport, got sorted out. Once the pattern was settled, that was it.

Q: While you were there, were there any civil emergencies or things such as earthquakes, floods, or things of this nature that challenged the organization?

VAN HEUVEN: Not that I recall. There must have been some. I did have to handle an emergency almost within a month after my arrival. It had nothing to do with civil emergency planning but it had to do with the fact that I was duty officer. It had to do with a potential outbreak of Greek-Turkish hostilities in November 1967. There was a very real possibility of war. On the evening of November 25, 1967, at Brussels airport, my job was to come up with 400 gallons of JP4 to fuel an aircraft to get Secretary General Brosio into the theater as soon as possible. The thought being that if he were there it would perhaps prevent war. War didn't break out and his timely arrival may have had something to do with it. Within 24 hours, Washington also provided Cyrus Vance to back up Brosio in the Aegean theater. The rest is history. But I remember being at the airport, not really knowing my way around, and knowing nothing about what JP4 looked like or how much it cost. But I did get it and we got the plane off.

Q: What was your observation of the Greek and Turkish delegations?

VAN HEUVEN: I draw a blank on that. In civil emergency planning they didn't really count, although maybe they should have. They didn't attend all the time. My other year and a half at NATO, I was taken off civil emergency planning and was asked to do arms control work. So I had a very different life. Even in that life I don't remember much about what was a virtually constant standoff. This was long before Turkey occupied Northern Cyprus. Greece was coming out of the colonels' period. Neither country had strong governments. Turkey was still pretty far away in everybody's mind, and simply not regarded as part of Europe. It was a NATO member,

to be sure, and it was an important NATO member, but I'm generalizing now. The specific answer to your question is that I had no direct experience with either of them.

Q: How were the Soviets viewed by the NATO members? Were they going to do something? Had we learned to live with it?

VAN HEUVEN: The Soviet Union was what NATO was all about. That was clear. By the time I got there, it had already been four years since the assassination of Kennedy and longer since his American University speech in which he held out the prospect of a better relationship with Moscow. Consequently, the mood was different from the mood that I recall from my time earlier at the General Assembly, where the Russians were always vetoing, and there was really no common ground that we had with them at all, and in Berlin. That is not to say that anybody felt sanguine about the Soviet Union. It was the Soviet threat, the threat of mass destruction, the threat of nuclear weapons, but also very much the threat caused by the huge conventional preponderance of the Soviet forces that absolutely riveted the attention of the NATO countries. Everything that was done was related to that. During my time at NATO, there was an attempt to beef up the individual military efforts of the NATO countries. It was the first of a number of such American initiatives over time to increase national defense budgets. The Mansfield Amendment was out there as a constant reminder that, if the Europeans didn't pull up their socks, the Americans might not necessarily stay. There was a lot of talk about burdensharing. At that time, NATO also was addressing nuclear defense. But by the time I got to do arms control, the doctrine of flexible response was in place. Member countries were becoming used - or reconciled - to the new doctrine, and became gradually more comfortable with the new NATO strategy. My occasional visits to SHAPE certainly reinforced the impression that this was about balance of power, that this was about readiness, that this was about a major political threat to the European continent and to the United States because of the nature of the Soviet weapons. There was a great feeling of solidarity within the Council, created not just by the common enemy but also by being together in one building for long, long hours on all these strategic and operational issues. Even though you might be hassling about individual details, being together and going through the same grinder produced very strong friendships. France was always a little bit on the sidelines of these things, not because it viewed Moscow differently but because the French were in an ambivalent situation. They were part of the political NATO but not part of the military NATO. So they were not part of the Defense Planning Committee but they sat on the Council. So they were either half in or half out. But everybody else was fully aboard and lived with that situation. Neither Harlan Cleveland nor his successor, Bob Ellsworth, worried overly about the French. Another PremRep, Will Taft, did years later. He made it his mission to see if he could really work with his French counterpart. But in the late sixties, most delegations had absorbed the shock of the move from Paris to Brussels.

Q: Speaking of the French, during May-June of '68, there was a lot of unrest in France, student revolt and all that. De Gaulle made a very famous visit to the troops stationed in Germany. Did that have any repercussions within NATO?

VAN HEUVEN: Not directly, although everybody in Brussels, certainly those who had just moved from Paris, were fascinated by this popular explosion on the streets of Paris that seemed to have taken its cue from Berkeley, but had domestic roots. The French traditionally like to go

to the streets whenever they feel strongly about something. French society in those days was still sufficiently inflexible so that the young people could feel that their only way out was to hit the streets and build barricades in the old tradition. But it was also a more basic challenge to the constitutional order of France at that time. Indeed it was the harbinger of the end of the Fourth Republic and the coming of the Fifth Republic. It made it easier for de Gaulle to institute the Fifth Republic. But the event as such did not produce direct political effects on other countries. There had already been in Berlin - and I had witnesses that in 1966-67 - a very vocal student presence around the Universitat. The students liked to demonstrate and some of these demonstrations turned violent. In one case after the visit of the Shah of Iran, a student by the name of Benny Ohnesorg was killed during a demonstration. For about 24 hours, Berlin was on the edge of serious instability. So, street riots were already a feature of Europe at the time and '68 in Paris was not anything new. It certainly was not an issue that the Council discussed in Brussels. But at NATO one could hardly not be aware of it.

Q: Was Vietnam a burr under our saddle while you were there?

VAN HEUVEN: It was one of these things that everybody knew about. Everybody had views about it. And the governments of NATO had strong views about it. It was not on the agenda. That is not to say that there was no discussion of Vietnam in the Council. I'm pretty sure there was because the conflict went on a long time and it was part of the established NATO meeting habit to have various committees deal with various issues affecting almost anything in the world. So we had at least yearly meetings of East European experts and of African experts and of Near Eastern experts. These meetings would bring deputy assistant secretary-level officials from capitals for a couple of days to talk together. Southeast Asia experts must have had their go at it as well. After the meetings of foreign ministers, there would have been a paragraph about Vietnam in it. But it was not an action item for the NATO Council. There was simply no question about NATO being involved. This was not in the NATO area and it was the other side of the world. There was little point in dwelling too much on an issue that was at the root of such disagreement, because it would be at the cost of disagreeing on European issues. So that was not done.

Q: When did you arrive in NATO?

VAN HEUVEN: I arrived the day the organization opened shop in Brussels. We entered the building through muddy fields. When we left that day, Belgian workmen had covered these areas with squares of grass.

Q: What month was that of '67?

VAN HEUVEN: In the early fall, in September 1967.

Q: So the Six Day War in Israel had been over. So that wasn't a factor? All these wars have a repercussion of NATO supplies and that sort of thing.

VAN HEUVEN: Again I have to plead ignorance on that also, because of the sort of stuff that I had to do right away.

Q: And I imagine the issue had worked itself out.

VAN HEUVEN: You have to understand the delegation that Harlan and, later, Bob Ellsworth presided over consisted of three floors of people. It became even bigger later on. And then across the main corridor, there was a four-star general with the U.S. delegation to the Military Committee. There were no large staff meetings the way other embassies have staff meetings. There were lots of meetings all the time, but it was always the ambassador and the DCM or the defense adviser or the political adviser with a few and that's how the work got done. You would see what was happening if you followed the cable traffic, which was voluminous. For one thing, NATO cables went to American embassies at all NATO capitals. And much of the traffic wasn't particularly restricted within the delegation unless it was EXDIS or NODIS. So if you just read your in-box in the morning you would be up to date on what the other parts of your very large group was up to. But that didn't mean that you were in on the discussions or necessarily knew much about the substance. NATO had over 200 committees. They were at different levels of expertise. The detail was staggering. So, if you were a generalist, it was impossible to keep track of that and there was no time to do it anyway. You had to do your own homework. But this absence of large staff meetings certainly meant that the delegation was a little stovepiped. There was also not as much contact as you might imagine across that corridor separating the ambassador from the U.S. Milrep. The U.S. Milrep took his instructions from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. The ambassador took his instructions from State. The Defense adviser took his instructions from the Secretary of Defense. There was an interesting protocolary point. The Defense adviser being the personal rep of the Secretary of Defense outranked every military person in Europe and was entitled to his own aircraft, which the ambassador was not. When we came to Brussels, one of the odd jobs that I was asked to do was to do the protocol list. We had Foreign Service officers, uniformed military, DOD civilians, and a few others as well. All of them had different pay scales and rank scales and got promoted at different times. No matter how you drew up your list on January 1, by February 1 it would be OBE, because one group had gone through the promotion cycle and the other one had not. Consequently, the list was a moving target. The interesting question for me came at the top. Obviously, the ambassador headed the list. Bill Cargo, the DCM, was two. But who was three? Was it going to be Tim Stanley, the DEFAD, or was it going to be Tommy Wilson, the POLAD? Well, the pay they drew happened to be identical. And the arrival at post was the same day. The traditional tests to rank-order didn't work. And there was no good index by which you could say, "Well, Tim goes first" or "Tommy goes first." So, I did the whole list, about five or six pages, single-spaced, because we had a lot of personnel, and left that one with a big question mark and sent it up to Harlan with a memo that he ought to decide it on the basis of looks. Shortly thereafter, someone else took over responsibility for the USNATO protocol list.

Q: Halfway through you moved over to arms control.

VAN HEUVEN: I did.

Q: What was the status of arms control when you arrived on that scene?

VAN HEUVEN: The U.S. was just beginning a long discussion with the Soviets on arms control. It was then called SALT. Gerard Smith was the U.S. rep. The negotiations were in different places but eventually there was a pattern where most of it happened in Helsinki. It was staffed by a complex delegation representing State, DOD, the Joint Chiefs, the White House, and people from Energy. Since what was at stake were nuclear weapons, each of these demands of the delegation had individual channels back to their principals in Washington, not an unusual pattern for large and sensitive undertakings of this sort. Ray Garthoff, my immediate boss, became the exec of that delegation. He came from State. His druthers were strongly in favor of the route that SALT eventually took toward START and agreed reductions by treaty. There were also bodies of opinion in Washington that were opposed to this whole idea. And so it was a tough and pretty contentious field to be working in. The big problems were generally your own people, not so much the Soviets. For the first few years the discussions did not much more than establish a basic common vocabulary between the Soviets and the Americans. This was necessary because there had never been such a discussion, nor was there a vocabulary with commonly understood terms. Each bureaucracy had produced its own thinking about nuclear weapons and its nomenclature. It was necessary to start merging these terms so that when you used a term everybody would understand what was meant by it. This became a highly esoteric exercise. In the end it was also of course a political thing. It meant a major step toward working things out with the Soviets even though they were still regarded as our enemy number one. I was the junior man on the totem pole in the group of three at NATO who worked these issues. It meant that I carried Smith's briefcase when he came to brief the Council. I once crossed the Atlantic in military aircraft sent to pick him up in Brussels. In due course we established a pattern of briefings to keep our allies in NATO informed of these discussions. The reward for that effort always came in the form of the NATO communiqué at the meeting of the foreign ministers, when there would be a paragraph about these negotiations. You can go back to the NATO communiqués and, if you string them together, you can get a picture of how these talks were going. At the same time, we were negotiating in Geneva in the so-called CCD, the Conference of the Committee of Disarmament, which at that time I think was an 18-country body, on a number of other issues. One was CW [chemical warfare]. Another was biological warfare. Still another was nuclear test ban. There were other subjects like cutoff of the production of fissile materials, but no treaty ever came out of that. But the kernel for later treaties were already there, and there was activity. Not all NATO countries were involved in the CCD, but representatives from allied countries at the CCD would come to Brussels and brief the NATO Council. And the NATO Council would also express views other than talks in the communiqués. The process worked in terms of getting the whole West used to the notion that the way to deal with these issues was through negotiation and treaties. That indeed was what was going on. It meant that I had to pay a great deal of attention to the cable traffic from all capitals on these issues. I had to read through the extremely lengthy reports of all the sessions in Geneva and be familiar with them. And it meant that I became part of a coterie of diplomatic colleagues on other delegations whose job was identical to mine. So I became part of a new fraternity - totally different from the civil emergency planning fraternity - and one that was very busy with major issues between East and West.

Q: You were there at pretty much the beginning of this whole process. Was there a feeling that something was going to happen? Did you feel that this was a political maneuver to keep talking while the old standoff continued

VAN HEUVEN: Pretty much the former and not the latter. I think those of us at NATO who were involved in it, right up to the ambassador Harlan Cleveland and, later, Ambassador Bob Ellsworth, who succeeded Harlan when Nixon became president - felt that this was the future. This was the way to go. We could deal with these issues in this way. We were not yet at the point at which we arrived many years later, and are in a way still now, at which people say agreements aren't worth the paper they're written on, that you can't verify them anyway, so what's the use? We operated with a sophisticated sense that verification would not always be foolproof. In fact, it was usually one of the last things we discussed when the treaty started taking form. But to get the basic principles down in treaty form and blessed by the United Nations was a long step forward toward setting rules that provided a yardstick for behavior by major nuclear weapons states and other states. That was regarded as a good thing, just as earlier my experience with human rights had been that converting the Declaration of Human Rights into treaty form didn't mean that people would all of a sudden stop torturing or stop misbehaving, but at least there would be a global standard that conduct could be measured against and a statement of what that conduct ought to be. That was a basic philosophy behind arms control. On a narrower but strategic level, the discussion with the Russians on nuclear weapons was thought to be a promising way to mitigating the danger of nuclear war.

Q: How did you find the Soviet delegation to these talks?

VAN HEUVEN: I was not at Helsinki and I was not in Geneva and there were no Russians at NATO, so I can't answer that question.

Q: Speaking of Soviets, you were with NATO in August of '68 when the Warsaw Pact moved in on Czechoslovakia. Did that send shockwaves into NATO?

VAN HEUVEN: It certainly did. It happened in the summer, in August, the way all European crises seem to happen in Europe in summer. We had been conducting a simulation exercise in the Situation Center with those of the staff who were not on holiday. Then this event occurred. I remember Harlan sending a cable - Harlan was at post - referring to the fact that the NATO ambassadors were on the beaches. Then for about a day and a half, we ran the exercise in the mornings and the real thing in the afternoon. Then we dropped the exercise and concentrated on the real thing. It was a traumatic event. It required strong U.S. leadership, which Washington provided and was executed masterfully by Cleveland with his colleagues. Those of us who watched it had a sense - was at that point still in Emergency Planning, but obviously I could watch - that here was somebody running the show at NATO who knew how to do it with a sense of confidence. On the other hand, it raised the old question that had been around ever since John Foster Dulles, namely, at what point does the West do something about these horrible situations that are within reach? The answer was nothing, but to express this outrage and take care of the refugees.

Q: The last time was '56 in Hungary.

VAN HEUVEN: Yes, and so it was in '68 in the Czech Republic. It reinforced the sense that the Soviets were a dictatorship. I don't recall any real discussion about "Let's go out and send NATO troops."

Q: Did this change the thinking at all in that maybe the Soviets... Was this considered a Soviet defensive thing or were the Soviets considered more of an offensive threat after that?

VAN HEUVEN: At NATO, the Soviets were always regarded as a potentially offensive threat. The whole strategy of NATO was built on concepts of defense, of absorbing the first shocks as much as possible, although it was realized that much of western Germany would be overrun at first. It would be the task of the Fifth CAV and the other army units to slow the Soviets down until the West could marshal a response. This is where nuclear weapons were a major part of the equation, because the Soviet conventional preponderance was enormous and the balance came from the fact that there was an American guarantee - backed by nuclear weapons - that was meant to keep this conventional preponderance in check. In conventional weapons, there was simply no question that the Soviets were preponderant. NATO really didn't have enough conventional forces nor territory to fall back upon. Even if you counted the Turkish forces, which were numerous but ill-equipped and not in the right place, the target would be Germany and Berlin. In that sense the good thing was that Berlin being a target would automatically trigger a serious American response. In retrospect, one might argue that perhaps that balance assured stability of sorts and peace in Europe for all those years.

Q: When you left NATO in '70, what was your impression of whither the SALT/START-type negotiations were going?

VAN HEUVEN: I became progressively more detached from them as I got more involved at NATO in the Geneva issues. But I think the widespread assumption in capitals and at NATO was that they were on track, although it was by no means clear what they would lead to in the end. This went very slowly. In a way, the agreement which the Senate approved just yesterday, March 6, 2003, is in line of direct succession to what was started way back then by Gerry Smith in the '60s, namely, an agreement with the Russians governing the size of the stockpiles and their use. A lot of things have changed, but SALT, and then START I and START II, was seen by the arms control community as the most promising way to deal with this issue among the superpowers. Today, it seems that, with the new thinking, all of these assumptions are being questioned again and have lost some of the certainty that surrounded them for so many years.

Q: Shall we move on to 1970?

VAN HEUVEN: I was transferred from Brussels because Jim Leonard, our ambassador to the CCD in Geneva and with whom I had been dealing, had tried to peel me away from USNATO. I resisted that and the Department was not particularly anxious to move me. The NATO delegation didn't want to lose me because my departure would have triggered the immediate problems of replacing me off-cycle. So in the first instance that effort failed. But Jim Leonard doesn't give up easily; In the summer of '70, he got the bureaucracy to decide that I ought to be moved to ACDA. So Ruth and I left a year before we thought we would be leaving and went back to Washington, where I came back as an FSO on loan to another organization, namely, ACDA, although it was

located in the old State Department building. I became part of an office, headed by Jim Leonard. The office had two branches. One dealt with the CCD in Geneva. The other dealt with the MBFR (Mutual Balanced Force Reduction) negotiations in Vienna. The MBFR office included a young officer by the name of David Aaron, who is still around in a much different capacity. I was part of the CCD branch. It was the more active part. We were backstopping the Geneva delegation at their two annual long sessions in Geneva (one in the spring and one in the summer). These sessions would last for about three months. Then the delegation would return home. We would take our leaves in August, and then all the CCD delegations would head for New York, where the CCD work was on the agenda of the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We would spend 6-8 weeks in New York. So it was a fairly peripatetic life for somebody based in Washington. And I became part of that merry-go-round. We divided up the office so that half of us would go to Geneva for one session and the other half would stay home. Then for the other session, we reversed roles. The only one who went all the time was Jim Leonard, the ambassador. His deputy in Geneva was either Pete Day in the spring or Alan Neidle in the summer. Neidle was head of the branch that I was a part of. There were about five or six of us. Half of us went with Day, and the other half with Neidle. It was a very different kettle of fish from NATO. First of all, we were Washington-based. I don't have to explain to an FSO the difference between being overseas and being in Washington. Our life at NATO was totally dedicated to the job 24 hours a day seven days a week. We were on call all the time, and in meetings much of the time. Our families were part of the active social round that went with it. Washington duty, in contrast, provided a dichotomy between work and home. The only problem with Leonard, Day, and Neidle was that they equated their notion of solid work with long hours in the office. It was the habit of Jim, and particularly Alan Neidle not to recognize weekends too much, although Sundays typically we were not in. But you would not want to be caught not coming in for a good bit of time on Saturdays. That would have been all right if there had been stuff to be done. But the style of Alan - and I'm dwelling on it because it illustrates a larger point - was that he liked endless discussions, and he liked to start them around 6:00 pm. For those with small children, that was not a good time. But we had no way of escaping. So getting home at 9:00 was the rule, and it was not appreciated often. I mention that because it was still possible in those days to exercise a sort of a style of leadership which in today's Foreign Service would not be sustainable. This is probably one of the better things about the new Foreign Service. Eventually, I learned that if you put your foot down you could get your way on the issue of office hours. I should have learned it even earlier. Anyway, it was a good lesson to remember not to ever do that to your own people. That said, the company of Jim Leonard and Pete Day and Neidle was extraordinarily stimulating because they were exceptionally experienced, thoughtful, and brainy. Alan was different from the others. The other two were FSOs. Jim had been the man who had come up with a solution to the capture by the North Koreans of the American spy ship. Later on, he became the deputy to the Egyptian-Israeli peace effort. Pete Day, later on, was Consul General in Jerusalem. I knew him from my Berlin days, where he had been head of the political section. They were accomplished FSOs. Neidle was an arms control expert and buff. So, it was a solid crowd. We were backed up in Geneva by other people who were good. Our delegation even had the old problem that different people had different channels back to Washington. The JCS representative was therefore not really under Jim's control; neither was the DOD representative. The Agency had their own people. One of the junior officers was John Negroponte, now U.S. PermRep in New York. So the work in Washington was a grind. Geneva

was also a grind, but of a very different sort. The CCD would meet only twice in the week, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

JOSEPH F. DONELAN, JR.
Comptroller, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1968-1969)

Joseph F. Donelan was born and raised in New York City. After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II he attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He joined the Foreign Service in 1955 and served in France, Japan, India, as well as Assistant Secretary for Budget and Finance and later Assistant State Secretary for Administration. Mr. Donelan was interviewed in 1989 by Charles Stuart Kennedy

Q: Let's move on to when you were a comptroller for NATO. How did this assignment come about and what were you doing? This was the assignment of going to Brussels as the NATO Comptroller.

DONELAN: Actually, more specifically, it was Comptroller for Infrastructure.

The Infrastructure Program, as the name implies, was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization oversight of all the physical facilities necessary effectively to commit the NATO forces in time of war. It included air fields, docks, warehouses, various communications facilities, missile sites, training facilities, etc. There was an Infrastructure Committee, a standing Committee of the North Atlantic Treaty Council, which had a fourteen nation membership including France, and of which the Comptroller for Infrastructure, was the Chairman. I was actually seconded by the Department to the position, which in itself, was an international civil servant position. (And no, in the case of NATO, by special arrangement, it is not a tax-free position). This was in July of 1968, after three years with ACDA and one year in the Foreign Service Inspection Corps.

My staff consisted of both financial and engineering personnel, the latter civilian experts on military facilities, weapons and equipment. I learned something new every day. Understandably the military requirements were determined through the NATO military chain of command, through the NATO Military Committee to the NATO Council for approval. Financial estimates were made as the projects moved up the line for acceptance, and the whole became a projected yearly program (a tranche) with that year's funding approved by the respective national representatives. As the projects moved forward to final acceptance and contracts they were subject to final engineering and cost review by the Infrastructure Committee, whose members operated under instruction from their own governments. The Comptroller for Infrastructure as the Chairman of the Committee was in a unique position, in that he controlled the agenda of the Committee and the flow of projects past the members, and no project went forward finally without the sign-off of the Infrastructure project engineer. The Committee met all day twice a week in all day sessions listening to engineering studies and hearing presentations by the national representatives as to urgency of their particular projects. Norway for instance might want a new

deep water dock in one of the fjords, with all sorts of electronics and provision for submarine nets, etc. Greece could be pressing for a new missile site which was a training site for NATO, and of course there was a lot of back scratching. The Comptroller was sort of in the middle because he had to try to negotiate some of these things out. So you spent as much time outside the council room, on projects as you did in the formal area.

Q: Can you think of any other examples?

DONELAN: It was simply a way of doing business as anything else, and I suppose this type of thing goes on everyday in the UN and no one thinks anything of it. But it was my first exposure on a multilateral or regional basis. I also noticed over my two years in that assignment that when there was an incident or some kind of international tension going on, some possible emerging threat, everyone became wonderfully more cooperative. When things settled down and were running more smoothly or quietly, the old competitive spirit came right back into play. But don't misunderstand me. This program was real, and I was very proud to be associated with it. It was the most real life thing NATO had going. You can conduct exercises and you can make plans and you can set up targets, but by gosh if you don't have those airfields and bases and sites, you had nothing to launch from and nothing to come back to.

Q: Moving to your last tour with the State Department. You had essentially a series of positions, didn't you?

DONELAN: Yes, two really.

Q: This was starting in '69. What was your job?

DONELAN: The first was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget and Finance, which was followed by a presidential appointment, Assistant Secretary of State for Administration. However I left NATO with great reluctance personally and amid a bit of a storm. On the one side was George Vest who was Deputy Chief of the US Mission to NATO and Manlio Brosio, a distinguished Italian diplomat, who was Secretary General of NATO, with whom I had developed a good rapport. Brosio was very irritated with the US cutting short my assignment (the job called for a five year assignment) saying that by doing so the Department was belittling the importance of NATO. George Vest supported Brosio, and I cheered unavailingly from the side lines, after having told the Department that I didn't want the assignment, and that I thought I could do more for the US by staying at NATO. I wasn't being simon pure, just that I was having a great time in a fascinating job.

What happened was that President Nixon came out to Brussels for a heads of state meeting; Frank Meyer who was at the time Assistant Secretary of State for Administration was with him, and I might mention just as a matter of interest, the now Senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan was also there in his capacity as an advisor to the President. But anyway, Frank and I were old friends and were having lunch when he told me that his Deputy for Budget and Finance was retiring and he would like me to take the job. I told Frank that I was flattered but I really didn't want to leave NATO. I felt the job was important for a lot of reasons; 39 cents of every dollar in the NATO budget was contributed by the US - and not being partisan, but just being

objective I could help to assure that we got our money's worth. The work was interesting; I even had taken one Committee trip where the group was hosted by the German government; we had been helicoptered along the border and then had landed and seen the Iron Curtain first hand. It was a fascinating experience and I was looking forward to other opportunities for travel to NATO countries to see some of these projects first hand. And not the least of it all, for the first time in my foreign experience, someone was giving me administrative support - the Embassy in Brussels. I had a lovely house in a suburb of Brussels, just twenty minutes from the NATO headquarters. The best of all worlds. I almost convinced myself that I had convinced him. Several weeks later I was with my family in Germany, at Garmisch, on a long planned visit, having dinner when the waiter told me I had a phone call -He said "Someone from Washington"!

So I came back as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget and Finance. It was a pretty busy two years, I thought, and then Frank Meyer retired in the spring of 1971.

RAYMOND L. GARTHOFF
Counselor of Political-Military Affairs, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1968-1970)

Ambassador Raymond L. Garthoff was born in Egypt in 1929. He received his BA from Princeton and his MA and PhD from Yale University. He served in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, was the NATO Negotiator on Brussels and was the Ambassador to Bulgaria. He was interviewed on June 22, 1989 by Horace G. Torbert.

Q: Now we probably better get back to Brussels and NATO. Or do you have something more to say about that period?

GARTHOFF: No. I had entered service with the Department in 1961 as a Foreign Service reserve officer, and was interested in entering the regular corps of the Service. Indirectly, I guess, this led me to be interested in assignment out of the kind of work I was doing in G PM. I did so on Harlan Cleveland's initiative. I got to know him when he was Assistant Secretary for IO, and when there were a number of arms control matters and various things that I'd come in contact and worked with him on. He was then our representative at NATO Council in Paris, and then after the fall of '67, Brussels. He asked if I would like to join his staff there as Counselor for political-military affairs, a new position in the staff. I was interested. That was, in due course, arranged, and I went there at the end of January 1968.

I had been involved throughout 1967 in our efforts to get under way negotiations that eventually became the SALT negotiations. In fact, in the spring of 1967, I had been slated as the State Department representative on a delegation that was formed on paper. It never developed further, because the Soviets never responded on readiness to sit down at any given time and place and begin those negotiations.

I mention this because it was to have quite an effect later in terms of my being borrowed away a good bit of the time from my NATO assignment in Brussels. Indeed, I had only been in Brussels for a few months when the Soviets indicated a readiness to begin those negotiations, in May and June of '68. I was called back to Washington to work in the preparations for the SALT negotiations. That was under way and, indeed, the positions had been decided on. We were on the verge of announcing a visit by President Johnson to the Soviet Union, at which time the SALT negotiations would begin, to begin on, I think, the date of September 30, 1968.

Literally the day before the announcement was going to be made, on August 20 Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia. Of course, the announcement was never made and the talks never began in that administration. There still was a desire by the President himself and in some quarters of the administration to see if those talks couldn't be started in a few months. No one wanted to do that in the immediate aftermath of Soviet-led intervention, invasion of Czechoslovakia. But at the same time, there was a feeling it was in our interest to have those negotiations, so the possibility of their going ahead at some point later was not abandoned. But by mid-September, three or four weeks after the Soviet move into Czechoslovakia, it seemed to me that it was absurd for me to be sitting around Washington, not doing anything particular, except waiting for what seemed to be the unlikely possibility that those SALT talks would get started. Meanwhile, there was a lot going on back in Brussels, where I was assigned and should have been, so I told them at one point that I thought I ought to go back to Brussels, and if and when they needed me, they knew where to find me.

So I went back to Brussels. Sure enough, of course, things were very active there in the aftermath of the Soviet move into Czechoslovakia.

Q: Just a bureaucratic point. Where were the preparations for the SALT talks centered? Was that ACDA or the Department? A little of both? Who pulled it together, in other words?

GARTHOFF: It was in ACDA at that point. At the very beginning, it had been in the Department, in early '67. Then during '67, it got shifted into inter-agency consideration, and very close cooperation throughout, incidentally, very good cooperation during all that period between State and ACDA. But during '68, then, it was very much in the normal channels of the Committee of Principals and the Committee of Deputies and so on, in which both State and ACDA and Defense had very active participation.

In 1969, after--well, I don't need to go into--

Q: Well, what kinds of problems you faced, NATO, of course, is basically a coordinating-with-the-Allies job, isn't it?

GARTHOFF: Yes. Exactly.

Q: This is what you do there.

GARTHOFF: Yes.

Q: Were there particularly thorny problems that you had trouble with, with the Allies, or whatnot, during that period?

GARTHOFF: One interesting area during that time was in the Nuclear Planning Group, which had been set up, I think in late '66 or '67, as a way of bringing the Germans, in particular, into an association with our nuclear planning in a way that had not occurred when the MLF had fallen through. And that was intended to partly assuage feelings of any discrimination within the alliance, since they were not a nuclear power, unlike the United States, Britain, and France, and in view of the Non-proliferation Treaty [which] was in its final stages of negotiation during that particular period. In any event, that led [Robert] McNamara to take the lead in proposing the Nuclear Planning Group, which then got under way. Because it had a representation principally, at the top, of defense ministers, and therefore for most countries, of Defense Department personnel, that was also the situation in our case, but it also involved an active State Department interest, we worked that out on the spot.

The principal representative at the staff level for the NPG working group that met between the semi-annual meetings of defense ministers was the senior Defense Department representative in the US NATO mission, at that time, Tim Stanley. I served as, in effect, his deputy. When he wasn't there, I sat in the chair. But it was a mixed Defense-State staffing, and working on the problem, which was, of course, entirely appropriate. After all, we were the United States mission to NATO, and it integrated State Department and Defense Department personnel. There were occasionally minor frictions, but it generally worked pretty well.

Q: I always found that US Government integration in the field was infinitely easier than it was in Washington.

GARTHOFF: Yes.

Q: I tried to struggle with both.

GARTHOFF: Yes. Another subject that came up for consideration at that time were the first studies that were made on mutual force reductions in Europe. Negotiations on that subject, the ill-fated MBFR negotiations, didn't get started until much later, 1973, but NATO first proposed such mutual force reductions in 1968. So we had to get under way some staffing on that, which had not really been done in Washington, and was then done to some extent in Brussels. Negotiations never got under way, so it was an exercise which didn't, at that time, lead to anything, but in a few years it would.

I might say that more generally, I think the coordination, certainly at that period, between the different elements, which is to say State and Defense, in the mission to NATO, worked quite well.

Q: Did you have Cleveland the whole time you were there?

GARTHOFF: No, Cleveland was there until some months into the Nixon Administration, when he was succeeded by Bob Ellsworth.

Q: *Ah, yes.*

GARTHOFF: So my time there was working under both of them.

I was, again, in the summer of 1969, back in Washington briefly, in connection with SALT, and when the SALT negotiations were then definitely scheduled for later that fall of 1969, I was called back to Washington again and named the executive secretary of the delegation, and was there for the preparations for that negotiation, and then off to Helsinki in November-December 1969. For that year, essentially, from the fall of 1969 through the fall of 1970, I was nominally assigned, still, in Brussels, and was occasionally there, but most of the time I was in either Helsinki or Vienna, where the SALT talks rotated for the first couple of years, or Washington, in connection with the preparation for them, and only intermittently back in Brussels.

Q: *Really, Brussels was just a place where you got your shirts laundered?*

GARTHOFF: Well, my wife was in Brussels, but I was just there sporadically.

JOHN W. KIMBALL
Executive Assistant, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1968-1969)

Political Military Affairs, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1969-1971)

John W. Kimball was born in California in 1934 and received his bachelor's and master's degree from Stanford University. He was positioned in Saigon, Sarajevo, Brussels and London. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 24, 1999.

Q: *You sort of moved around by this time. You had been in Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, and you had been in Vietnam and now you were in the UN. The system makes you try to get concentrated, were you thinking about that?*

KIMBALL: I liked being in Washington. I enjoyed being in so-called multilateral affairs. I was interested, in other words, in a truly generalist view of foreign affairs, knowing a little bit about a lot of policies. It wasn't until much later that it dawned on me that it might not be the best career route. My next post - USNATO - was in the same tradition. The bridge for me was the fact that Harlan Cleveland left IO and was appointed ambassador to NATO. His deputy in Brussels was Bill Cargo, also an old IO hand. Somehow I guess my name was recognized on the list and I was assigned to USNATO in 1968.

Q: *You were in NATO from '68 to when?*

KIMBALL: To 1971, three years.

Q: In the first place what was your impression of how Harlan Cleveland ran his organization?

KIMBALL: My impression was very favorable. I admired Harlan Cleveland. I learned a lot from him and I enjoyed working with him. I remember his saying once that the modern organization chart ought to be a circle instead of the usual hierarchy, the ladder type chart. Such a chart would permit the chief, especially at USNATO, to draw on one person's expertise quickly and directly without having to go through layers. My first year at USNATO was as his executive assistant. I sat right outside his office and frequently tapped the resources of the U.S. Mission on his behalf.

Q: Being in NATO from '68 to '71, you must have been caught up in the removal of NATO. Where was NATO then?

KIMBALL: NATO had just moved from Paris, and was settling into its Brussels headquarters. The military people had moved down to the new SHAPE headquarters near Mons, Belgium. The Harmel report had just been promulgated in 1967, and that gave everybody a fresh slogan to work with: "defense and deterrence." Harlan Cleveland really pushed very hard on this idea that NATO is not only a defensive military alliance, but also a political consultative mechanism. The North Atlantic Council is not there merely to discuss defense against the Soviets: it is also a mechanism for coordinating North Atlantic policy among NATO members. He later wrote an excellent book entitled "NATO - The Transatlantic Bargain."

Q: France was a member then?

KIMBALL: France was a member then and a very active member of the political side, the North Atlantic Council. It did not participate in the Defense Planning Committee. Nevertheless, the French military, within bounds, was also being cooperative with NATO military units, especially in the Mediterranean.

Q: You arrived there and shortly thereafter the Soviets with their reluctant allies moved into Czechoslovakia and squashed the Czech Spring. How did that hit NATO?

KIMBALL: Well, that was a very exciting period. There were a lot of meetings at all levels of NATO. Cynics will scoff at the idea of more meetings, but I think the meetings symbolized the concern among NATO delegations about the consequences of Soviet actions, and the need to consult regarding a common response. It was a hectic period with consultations within the Alliance and, for USNATO, between Brussels and Washington. There was a rather clear, if unwritten, assumption that like Hungary in 1956, the West could not, and would not, intervene in Czechoslovakia. But NATO had to be sure of Soviet intentions and be prepared in case the Soviets went any further than Czechoslovakia. In addition, the East-West public relations battle had to be won.

Q: What jobs did you have then?

KIMBALL: For a year I was Cleveland's staff assistant. The job title included Secretary of Mission, which was essentially a formal channel for paperwork to the NATO Secretariat, to other delegations, and to the front office from within our Mission.

Q: And then what?

KIMBALL: After that I was in the political-military section for two years. My main responsibility was the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee. It doesn't sound like much but it was a worthwhile effort to get NATO allies to coordinate their civil emergency planning, the activity that is now under the aegis of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the U.S. We were in the early stages of trying to encourage NATO allies to designate civil resources to back up any military efforts that we might need, especially in the context of the new strategy NATO had adopted in the Harmel Report, i.e., to prepare for periods of tension or conventional warfare rather than immediate resort to nuclear weapons. One example of this approach is the civilian reserve air fleet for which the U.S. had planned in conjunction with many U.S. airlines, to supply civilian air transport for military purposes in defined emergencies. We worked on a similar program as a NATO-wide tool.

Q: I think the planes were configured with doors that were of the proper size and all of that which I don't think the Europeans are.

KIMBALL: We encouraged NATO-wide planning to duplicate this kind of military/civilian cooperation that would provide extra resources in case of need. In the Committee, we tried to nail down arrangements that could be activated in such contingencies. There was inertia to overcome.

Q: I would imagine. How did you find for one the French and dealing with them?

KIMBALL: The British representative and I were the only foreign affairs people sitting on the committee. Other delegations had civil emergency or civil resource people on the committee, as did the NATO Secretariat staff. All were great people and easy to work with. The French delegate was very likable and outgoing, but clear that he was skeptical of the whole idea of planning ahead on a NATO-wide basis. The French had their own reasons for not wanting to work closely on this approach, but we talked around that and everybody else seemed fairly sympathetic. Of course, for the Europeans it was helpful to have the Americans planning to add resources to the defense of Europe, and we managed to get the right planning documents adopted by our Committee and endorsed by the NATO Council. Whether anything else was ever actually done, especially within individual countries, someone else will have to tell.

Q: Was the planning in case of a Soviet invasion or did it include earthquakes, typhoons, whatever?

KIMBALL: It was keyed to levels of tension or limited conflict. Those were the buzzwords, stemming from the conclusions of the 1967 Harmel Report. Obviously, it was not going to be all or nothing in terms of defending Europe; there might be some shades of gray and we needed to

assess what we could do, especially during periods of tension. This kind of planning and preparation could be very useful for responding to natural disasters too.

Q: How about the Germans? Did they play much of a role?

KIMBALL: Yes. The German representative in my day was a professional emergency planner and very knowledgeable. Incidentally, he was a nephew, as I understood it, of the famous baritone, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Also, I think it was in their national interest to be so active in this area.

Q: Yes, they were going to be the battleground.

KIMBALL: They had resources to work with and they seemed very interested in doing this. They were very helpful, as were the British and Canadians. Greece and Turkey didn't have many resources to work with at the time. The Dutch representative had very strong ideas. He was a very competitive fellow but also easy to work with. And I got a lot of help and inputs from the logistics experts at USNATO, notably Colonels John Policastro and Dick Rantz. The latter, I believe, returned after his retirement to work on this subject for the NATO International Staff. Wally Farrant, a British civil emergency professional, was very knowledgeable and a great asset on the NATO staff.

Q: Were we looking at a cooperative response or was it each one do their own thing?

KIMBALL: There was a very cooperative response. All seemed interested in the idea and its ramifications, and generally the right NATO documents were adopted. The concept was there but whether anything was actually being done on the home front was always a question. One of the problems in this business, as you well know, is that you don't always have the opportunity to learn what happened after your watch and I've never heard about it since that period. In 1971, shortly after my return to IO/UNP, EUR conducted an interagency study of civil emergency planning, trying to expand on many of the same thoughts. I was invited to participate and I contributed more drafts.

For a relatively junior officer it was a challenge to have one's own committee responsibilities. It was a peripheral subject at NATO, but very interesting work.

Q: How about the usual thing of the Greeks and the Turks?

KIMBALL: One had to be conscious of the sensitivities but we didn't have any problems in civil emergency planning, probably because both were relatively passive in that area. The Mediterranean issues, especially NATO training exercises, were different.

Q: The colonels were in charge then.

KIMBALL: In Brussels, there were no "knock down-drag out" fights. USNATO had a State Department contingent and a Defense contingent. The DOD officers had action responsibility for planning in the Mediterranean, including military exercises and relations with the NATO

commands in the Mediterranean. In my time, they were handled very capably in an office headed by Col. Jeff Davis. We in Pol/Mil looked over their shoulders. I guess NATO would not have been the place for either Greece or Turkey to berate each other, especially as both were represented by very capable and sensible Ambassadors. There were, however, political sensitivities. At the time, we were trying to get some things organized in terms of Allied naval forces in the Mediterranean, as distinct from strictly Sixth Fleet naval forces. You had to walk gingerly around it and the French problem too.

Q: It is interesting, when you got to the military and particularly the navy, the French were really onboard.

KIMBALL: Yes, they were.

Q: The Greeks and the Turks, the main thing was to make sure that you treated them equally and didn't get them into fighting each other.

KIMBALL: Right. You had to schedule your military exercises carefully and equitably. I remember that there was a lot of head scratching about just precisely how to arrange them, but they usually went ahead.

Another aspect of an assignment in Brussels at that time was to observe the parallel development of the European community institutions. Our mission to the EC was in Brussels, and George Vest came to NATO as DCM from the same job at USEC. George seemed to be open-minded about critical thinking. This inspired me over the slow Christmas season of 1969 to write nine pages questioning whether the U.S. really should encourage a separate European voice - an economic competitor, as it were, while we were picking up the tab for European defense. Would an integrated North Atlantic approach to economics be more consistent with the NATO concept and, incidentally, with long-run U.S. interests? George sent an appreciative note for my efforts, but, perhaps because the political momentum was so much the other way, no other recipient, including Larry Eagleburger, the Political Counselor, gave it the time of day!

GERALD B. HELMAN
Political Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1968-1973)

Gerald B. Helman was born in Michigan in 1932. He received a B.A. and an L.L.B from the University of Michigan and was a member of the Michigan Bar. After entering the Foreign Service in 1956, he was posted in Milan, Vienna, Barbados, Brussels and Geneva. Mr. Helman was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 8, 2001.

We're going back to 1968 and you're going off to USNATO. What was USNATO?

HELMAN: It's the United States Mission to NATO. That is the Mission that represents the United States on the North Atlantic Council; it then was headed by a Permanent Representative with the rank of ambassador, and Harlan Cleveland was the ambassador at the time. It was still under Lyndon Johnson. This was in the summer, early fall of '68 when I went over there. I knew Harlan Cleveland, he asked for me for that job in his political section. When I first knew Harlan Cleveland he was Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs while I was in UNP. I'd worked with him and we got along reasonably well. He went to the mission to NATO when it was in Paris and he was the U.S. ambassador who made the trek from Paris to Brussels when de Gaulle decided he didn't want NATO headquarters in Paris anymore. I joined USNATO a few months after it migrated to Brussels, arriving in November, 1968.

Q: You were in USNATO from '68 to when?

HELMAN: '68 to '73; it was a long tour. It was a double tour.

Q: It would be interesting. I mean being the new boy on the block in NATO just after they've made the move. Was there a feeling of resentment against the French? How would you say the attitude was at that particular point?

HELMAN: I think by the time I got there they had absorbed it as a "fait accompli." The French relationship to NATO always made them the odd man out because while they participated in the political activities of the North Atlantic Council, they did not participate in the integrated military structure which was at NATO's heart. There were sidebar arrangements which allowed some coordination in military activity and planning with the French, but generally the military work of NATO was conducted without the French, and France, on the political side, always had its own particular approach to issues and events. Same thing was true when I think NATO was in Paris. I don't know what it's like now but it probably has not changed dramatically.

Q: Were the effects of May and June of '68 in France - these were the months of student rebellion and all of this which eventually had de Gaulle leaving the government. Were these having any particular repercussions? Were the French rethinking or was there any thought that they might reintegrate their armed services?

HELMAN: Not really. Every now and then there was some discussion of that and some hint that the French in one area or another were willing to cooperate more extensively, but they never made the major decision to reintegrate their military forces and the other 14 NATO countries learned not to expect much change in the French position. The French always had their particular perspective on political issues and it was sometimes difficult to coordinate with France on a political level. I think the major event that had some impact on the France in NATO was not so much, at least as far as I know, the events on the streets of the '68 student rebellions, but the Soviet "pacification" of Czechoslovakia in '68 and the subsequent formulation of the "Brezhnev doctrine."

Q: Yes. This was August or September?

HELMAN: Yes, August or September; it was just about the time I arrived. I jumped right into the middle of it. It was a stunning event as far as NATO was concerned. It triggered a lot of the consultations and discussions and planning that NATO was designed to be the forum for. I wasn't involved; I was really very much at the beginning of the learning curve. But there were a lot of political discussions going on, and certainly military discussions, and I learned a lot about the process of trying to integrate the political and the military. It was a time of substantial policy trauma for the French. Of course this was a graphic demonstration that the French aim for a roaring détente with the Soviet Union - was hardly matched by the Soviets when the discipline of its bloc was at stake.

Q: You arrived at a time, looking back on it there must've been sort of a significant change of mindset within NATO. The French having shown that they were vulnerable internally with this student thing, at least, and also, particularly with the Soviets, showing they were not a benign pussycat letting developments happen within the bloc. They weren't going to allow any splintering off in the bloc at that point.

HELMAN: It's the good old Brezhnev Doctrine.

Q: In a way did you see almost a revitalization of NATO or something? I mean looking and saying, this is a serious thing, and that.

HELMAN: It's hard to say. It could be described as resulting in a revitalization but don't forget there was a third, and perhaps most important factor, which led to a lot of perturbations in the Alliance. The United States was in the middle of its own trauma with the Vietnam War, where a lot of U.S. military resources were diverted as far as the Europeans were concerned and diminished the strength of the U.S. as a European land power. It took years for US military strength to recover in Europe in the aftermath of Vietnam. And the United States was going through a very rough electoral period in which you had Richard Nixon running against Hubert Humphrey, if you recall, and the violence in the streets of Chicago during the Democratic political convention, and the sweep of the civil rights movement. It was scary for Europe; the Europeans had no better idea of where all of this was heading than we Americans. It was a time of very substantial trauma all the way around.

Q: What piece of the NATO pie did you have?

HELMAN: I was in the Political Section. I joined the Political Section when I first was there; Ed Streator was Political Advisor. I later became deputy political adviser when Larry Eagleburger came over to replace Ed. We dealt with those issues that came before the North Atlantic Council, generally how the alliance responds to political developments such as Czechoslovakia. The Council was the forum in which to coordinate the foreign policy of member states. Internal affairs such as those in the US and France were never on the agenda; but they were certainly lively topics of discussion in the corridor. But there were lots of Council discussions of Eastern Europe and the developments in Czechoslovakia, what NATO member response would be, what programs we would develop subsequently and so on. I'm trying to recall, at that time you had Willi Brandt in Germany and Egon Barr as his "eminence grise." I got to know Barr

subsequently fairly well. He was very influential and very smart and arguably the architect of Germany's Ostpolitik.

Q: Was there concern there about Brandt and the Ostpolitik (Soviet bloc eastern policies), or had that faded after the Czech business?

HELMAN: No, no, no. This to be said, there was a determination on the part of the Germans to sustain an Ostpolitik and they did sustain it in years to come. There was a fairly substantial discussion within NATO about Ostpolitik. The Germans used the Council to both inform and coordinate Germany's pursuit of that policy. There was an unwillingness to discard the détente concepts which were in fact part of the Ostpolitik. The ideas of a conference on security and cooperation in Europe and MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions), these were all themes that were constantly before the Council and were further developed and pressed in the aftermath of Czechoslovakia - in fact under the Nixon administration which came to power shortly after I joined USNATO.

Q: Was there any concern within NATO ranks, including within our own mission, about the ascension of Nixon to be president at the time?

HELMAN: Oh, yes. Some of us in the mission had some reservations about Nixon but we were all Foreign Service officers and we did our jobs, and did them I think reasonably well. In the corridor people would ask about Nixon and Humphrey and so on. You'd chat with them, but certainly not as a formal matter. They knew the U.S. was a democracy; they also understood the U.S. was going through considerable trauma at the time. We had our own riots in the streets, and demonstrations; we had Vietnam on our back. Vietnam,

Q: Was the weakening of the American military presence discussed?

HELMAN: In an indirect way, yes. It was in terms of how one met one's commitments to the integrated military structure of NATO to maintain one's strength and readiness and so on. But it was never addressed - in my recollection- in terms of Vietnam. Part of the reason is that the Europeans themselves were always a bit behind in meeting their commitments. Still are. *(laughs)*

Q: I was going to say.

HELMAN: I think it's that they were hardly in any position to criticize us. But of course they were worried when we couldn't maintain the level necessary to confront the Russians, should they decide to move militarily, and there was always apprehension in Europe that a weakness in conventional strength would prompt Soviet use of greater military pressure on the Europeans to which our response would be to emphasize nuclear retaliation and that would've been of course a very unhappy situation in Europe. No one wanted to see it happen.

Q: As a political officer, how did you operate? What were you doing?

HELMAN: I was participating, one might say in a dialogue between USNATO and the other members of NATO and NATO's professional staff on the one hand, and the State and Defense

Departments also, because the U.S. ambassador to NATO, the permanent representative, essentially worked both for the secretary of state and the secretary of defense. He really worked for the President, but the U.S. ambassador to France, let's say, took his instructions from the secretary of state, but the U.S. ambassador to NATO, given the particular nature of that institution, had to be able to talk to both SECDEF and the SECSTATE. So one participated in that dialogue; we had our own policy recommendations to provide, some of which were really quite thorough and quite extensive. This was both under Harlan Cleveland, staunch Democrat, and under Ambassador Kennedy - he was a banker from Chicago, as I recall. He lasted about a year or so. No big deal. But he worked at the job.

The North Atlantic Council used to meet probably once a week and then there were the Council's political committee, the political-military committee. They would each publish an agenda for which we had to prepare. I might have to prepare a briefing memo plus a statement for the Ambassador in the Council, meet in advance with other delegation members to discuss where we might want to end up on particular issues, and ferret out problems. We would send back fairly extensive reports on Council meetings, with comments, analysis and recommendations.

There were particular studies that were often conducted under either a political committee or the full North Atlantic Council, keeping track of what's happening, for example in Czechoslovakia, and how the Allies should respond, if at all. We tried to develop a general meeting of the minds so that each ally could feel comfortable that all the allies, on a political level at least, were moving ahead in a fairly - not so much a coordinated way, but working off the same script, the same outlook. We also worked closely with NATO's international staff whose members helped prepare drafts, chaired committees, did research, kept the files and often served as the organization's institutional memory.

Q: Did you develop the feeling that the center of power, as you might say in foreign affairs, had moved from the State Department to the National Security Council under Kissinger, or not?

HELMAN: Very definitely. Of course we always got our instructions from the same sources, but one was never deceived where the real authority lay. We read the newspapers too - read the New York Times and the Washington Post and so on - and we understood that Secretary Rogers was not the inside force - Henry Kissinger was - and a lot of the ideas on European strategy, détente, or initiatives in NATO, came from the White House and Kissinger, particularly when Kissinger started developing his own back channels to NATO governments, for example - to Germany in particular. Egon Barr was the Advisor to Chancellor Brandt and was the great strategist of the time and the guru of Germany's Ostpolitik. He was to Brandt as Hal Sonnenfeldt was to Kissinger. We used to joke that Hal was "Kissinger's Kissinger."

Q: I've finished interviewing Hal Sonnenfeldt.

HELMAN: Well, I'm sure he'd have a lot to say. By the way, his son is an attorney specializing in telecommunications. Very qualified. So it's a small world.

But sometimes we would hear that Kissinger would be conducting discussions by backchannel; for example with Barr. We would never find out what was said and done between the two

through our own channels, so what we would do was go to the German Delegation, explain the situation (they seemed to know in advance) and ask for their account of the Kissinger-Barr discussions). They cooperated.

Q: Or what they knew. (laughs)

HELMAN: Yes. My impression was there was a good deal more discipline, structure, within their service than there was often in ours. I did not have much to do with Secretary Rogers at the time; I got to know him quite well later on in the early '80s when he was back in law practice. Extraordinarily decent man. He put up with a lot.

Q: I was just going to say he was an extraordinarily decent man with Nixon and Kissinger, who one couldn't describe in those terms.

HELMAN: Well, they were in charge of American foreign and security policy. There was no question about it. The bureaucracy of the Foreign Service, State Department, I suppose to some extent the Defense Department had to accommodate themselves to those realities.

Q: Well, did you find any disquiet within NATO ranks or the people you were talking to, by the fact that it became obvious that Kissinger was having secret meetings in the Kremlin and going behind places? I mean this sort of thing. I mean there's nothing diplomats hate more than stuff going on that they don't know about.

HELMAN: Yes, exactly. And there was a lot of concern, curiosity, puzzlement. Everybody acknowledged the U.S. was indisputably the leader of the alliance. NATO, on the political level certainly, was primarily a forum for consultation, for exchange of views, for exchange of information, and coordination of policy and action. A forum where would, through mutual understanding of what the objectives were, coordinate foreign policies and activities on matters of common concern. And basically our ability to consult and work with our allies was limited because we didn't know what our own leadership was doing and saying back channel. Sometimes our instructions on what to say about developing events were available to our allies in the news - the New York Times or Le Monde or the International Herald Tribune or something like that. But they were as dazzled by Kissinger as everyone else was. In addition, they saw him as a "European" who was finally imparting some sophistication our foreign policy.

Q: Was there a concern at that time that perhaps there could be the devil's bargain in Ostpolitik, on the German side, that if Germany was united and became neutralized, this would really leave a tremendous hole in the alliance? Was this something that people were concerned about or was this just one of those things that just wasn't going to happen?

HELMAN: I think from the standpoint of the United States, one of the things that a Foreign Service officer dealing in NATO affairs learned very quickly is that our relationship with Germany, and Germany's future, and how we related, were absolutely central to our European and larger strategic posture. Germany was the heart of Europe; it was the strategic prize to be retained and to be extended. Everybody gave lip service to reunification; nobody really expected it to happen in our lifetimes. But Germany was all important and a lot of the strategy and politics

of the NATO alliance centered around Germany - much more so than France, much more so than the United Kingdom.

The possibility of German neutralization as a price for reunification was always out there on the periphery. It arose in the context of the Austrian State Treaty back in the '50s when, as I recall, Khrushchev dangled a bargain: a reunified Germany in exchange for German neutrality. Some Germans were intrigued. One of the potential risks of Ostpolitik was always that it would come at the price of German neutrality and thus Germany's loss to NATO. So the whole process of Ostpolitik and the negotiations that subsequently took place were extremely important to everyone conscious of the downside but willing to work with this strongly maintained German policy.

Jock Dean was, as I recall, our political counselor in the mid-'70s in Bonn. I thought he did an absolutely brilliant job of tracking what was happening. I think by that time I probably had left USNATO and I was deputy director of NATO affairs back in the Department. So Germany was always a major topic and central player. The German delegation to NATO was always a strong one. The U.S. mission itself was always a strong one and I think that probably was one of the most impressive and intimidating aspects of being in USNATO; you were challenged by top-drawer people in your own Mission.

Q: Who were some of the people then?

HELMAN: Well, when I was there this was going into the Nixon years. Bob Ellsworth and then Don Rumsfeld were my ambassadors for a while there. David Bruce followed, but by then I was in NATO affairs in the Department. Larry Eagleburger was political adviser and I was his deputy. Dave Anderson, later ambassador to Yugoslavia and Tom Niles who was ambassador to Germany and Greece were staffers. Ray Garthoff was on the Mission's pol-mil side as was Jim Goodby for a while...

Q: It's interesting, the old Yugoslav hands; both Larry and Tom Niles and David Anderson were under me as vice consuls in the consular section in Belgrade and I took Serbian with Larry Eagleburger. (laughs)

HELMAN: Well, Larry pulled these guys together, you know, and took care of them.

Q: He had his coterie.

HELMAN: They were superb. Of course they went on to establish highly distinguished careers. I'm sure I'll pull up more names. George Vest was DCM, so you were forced to operate at your best all the time.

Q: One of the things I find interesting is, and in a way almost continues to be, that here as you say Germany was central, not just geographically but in power too - industrial might, population, military, the whole thing - and yet it almost seems to have played a stealth role in foreign affairs. I mean you don't find a heavy German hand where you find a very heavy French hand. And I've

heard some people say that the Germans let the French do the heavy lifting and in a way work with the French, but keep a little behind them or something. Did you have any feel of that?

HELMAN: I'm not sure that was true in my experience in USNATO since the French weren't part of the military structure. Germany was a very important actor in the military structure of NATO which provided an organic connection to US strategic strength. France couldn't come close to matching this. The French didn't pursue anything as sophisticated as Germany's Ostpolitik, although they supported it and the Germans as far as I am aware didn't seek any advance clearances from the French. The French were the principal proponents of detente and they presented a strong rationale for détente. But the Germans always understood that fundamentally the success of an Ostpolitik, or MBFR, or a CSCE, indeed, of fundamental security, depended upon the US and Alliance military strength and commitment.

Q: This is an interesting thing because the CSCE, which later became the OSC, it became actually...

HELMAN: It became a very important vehicle for the eventual dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet empire.

Q: Unraveling. You know I'm trying to pick up sort of the attitude there. When you got there was this something that...when did this start?

HELMAN: I'm trying to think. My recollection is it probably started in the aftermath of Czechoslovakia.

Q: I would imagine. It would make sense because it started picking up during the Nixon time. I guess the idea being let's try to find a way to calm things down within Europe.

HELMAN: There was some of it, there was also, on our part, a desire to use it as - one might say a political propaganda weapon - that is to set the bar fairly high in terms of liberalizing actions such as free flow of information and other concepts such as that, speculating that these are concepts that the Soviet Union and its allies could not accept. And if they did, then they would be working with a set of principles and practices that were fundamentally contrary to their own political structure. These principles and the wording used were familiar to a large extent from prior UN practice. The Eastern Europeans knew that. I was one of the few on the US side that knew it - an example of where my experience with the UN paid off in NATO. The dynamic which this started up, which was understood by the Europeans and even many Eastern Europeans better than we understood it at the time, was intensely subversive to Soviet hegemony. The whole concept of CSCE and the dialogue that was initiated under that general umbrella increasingly provided the liberal elements in Eastern Europe with a device to achieve ever more wiggle room for liberalizing their civic life and easing the Soviet's heavy hand. It gave them a way of achieving a certain greater margin of flexibility in the conduct of their policies and internal affairs. I think the fair evidence is that over time - this is over time during the '70s - it did have the effect of considerably loosening some of the strictures internally within the East Bloc, and I think the Germans and the French and some of the other Europeans saw this rather more clearly than we did. Have you talked to George Vest at all?

Q: I've talked to George.

HELMAN: George did a brilliant job of managing the CSCE process.

Q: You're talking too about how Henry Kissinger sort of undercut him while he was there.

HELMAN: Oh, is that right? *(laughs)*

Q: You're shocked! (laughs)

HELMAN: Nothing every really shocked George. I used to ride home with him from work most days...

Q: George Vest was saying how Kissinger would denigrate the negotiations that were going on for the OSCE to the Soviet ambassador, Dobrynin, in these private meetings, would then inform his colleagues in East Germany, or they would be informed and they would inform somebody like the Swedes or something. And George was saying somebody would come up from one of our friendly delegations and say, "What's this about your secretary of state," or at that point national security adviser, "not paying much attention to..." I mean it was this type of thing. Rather frustrating. CSCE, the initials keep changing. It was Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

HELMAN: The initials kept changing but the concept was pretty much the same.

Q: The OSC later on. It's become an integral part of the whole détente process.

HELMAN: There were ten years of discussions roughly before the Helsinki meetings. Maybe not quite ten years but there was a tidal stream that gradually developed in the course of the '70s, leading to the CSCE.

Q: The other theme that was going on was the Mutual and Balanced Reduction of Forces.

HELMAN: MBFR, yes.

Q: How was that viewed? Was that viewed as going to happen or was it a good idea to have talks going anyway?

HELMAN: You had to look at it from two different perspectives. This was a subject that the Europeans approached with a certain amount of hope and a certain amount of trepidation. They certainly didn't want to see a reduction of U.S. capabilities in Europe; at that same time, from the standpoint of their own public opinion, the idea of reducing the perceived conventional threat to Europe was attractive. Europeans in those days well recalled what damage conventional war could do.

I should add I was not actively involved in the discussions of MBFR, but it was like the CSCE - it was a concept which one found it both difficult to support and to oppose at the same time. We played it both for the political advantage that one gained through a conceptually meritorious arms control concept, and yet develop over time a policy dealing with the actual reductions which was far more hard-nosed. In the end a lot of these issues conjoined. The whole debate back in the '80s, the reduction of medium-range missiles in Europe, was in a sense a resurrection of the BFR debate and involved some of the same concerns and considerations. But again this was not something had any responsibility for.

Q: Well, during the '68 to '73 period while you were in USNATO, on the political discussions, were the French fully recognized - the fact that they weren't military members, does this mean that in a way they were half in and half out?

HELMAN: Oh, I think the French were recognized for their particular position within NATO. They certainly didn't want to abandon that position in NATO; this would simply have left be the whole European security structure to the tender mercies of the United States and to some extent to the untrustworthy motives of Germany. France didn't want NATO to become at its heart simply a U.S.-German alliance. At the same time they recognized the value of NATO, I think, as a vehicle for U.S. participation in European affairs - which in part meant making sure that Germany was a force in Europe that the other Europeans could live comfortably with. We played that role very consciously. Some Germans recognized and I think valued it as well.

At the same time within NATO, members didn't worry much about the French because they couldn't help you much very often; they occasionally came up with a good idea - and they really were, except for the fact that things were done by consensus and this sometimes caused trouble every half year when we were drafting the communiqué that normally would close a NATO ministerial meeting. Twice a year the North Atlantic Council met at the level of foreign minister. And you always had your communiqué and its drafting gave the French an opportunity to negotiate the nuances and changes they considered would tilt it in their direction. But day to day they didn't contribute an awful lot; they didn't hinder an awful lot.

I was struck by the fact that they sent really first-rate people on the political side, in terms of their own Foreign Service. You had Francois de la Rose as ambassador there for a while; you had - I'm trying to think of his name; he was DCM under de la Rose. He was later the French ambassador in Washington. So they sent good people. It was a small delegation, as I recall, but then most French missions tend to be on the small side anyway.

Q: In our delegation, speaking of that, I've talked to people who've served on some delegations and say it's almost embarrassing because sometimes we send rather large delegations and often these are not unified delegations; half the delegations are sort of spying on each other to find out - you know, we're talking about State and Defense and maybe Treasury or something like this. Did you find that you had this type...particularly I would imagine Defense would be in there.

HELMAN: You did have some conflicts. I think that problem was not of any great concern when it came to the permanent delegation to NATO. That is, in the Political Section of the U.S. Mission to NATO and the Political-Military Section we were a part of the same team; it was like

an embassy and you did the bidding of your boss who happened to be the ambassador. And you paid attention to the DCM who, when it's George Vest, you paid attention to him anyway. And Larry Eagleburger could be relied upon to manage the whole process.

There was separate reporting to DOD on the part of some of the military members of the U.S. Mission. The situation was different when there was a foreign ministers' meeting, a ministerial meeting, when the delegation was larger but manageable, or when it dealt with a specific issue on something difficult and contentious, such as MBFR. Most often on arms control issues, the confrontations and competing interests in Washington were carried over into the delegation. In fact, I think the problem that you mention was found perhaps more frequently in the UN context or bilateral arms control negotiations where I've had some experience as well. We would send a delegation, let's say to an outer-space conference, or to a conference on the World Health Organization (WHO). There were lots of competing interests, including from the private sector. The phenomenon was often most acutely reflected in some of the large arms control conferences. It made it very difficult for an inexperienced head of delegation to manage things. I have seen discord result in competing positions being conveyed to other delegations. Such a breakdown of discipline is an example of how very difficult managing a delegation could be. There are ways of dealing with it if you know what your doing, but it's tough.

Q: We've looked at the French and the Germans, how about the British? How did you find them during this time?

HELMAN: The British were good solid members; we always maintained a very good dialogue with them. As a matter of fact, I think we had fairly good relations with most of the delegations to NATO; we were close to the Germans. I'd say the Germans and the Brits were the ones who had the strongest delegations and those were the ones with whom we had the most dialogue, most definitely.

Q: The Italians, their temperaments are never terribly strong.

HELMAN: The strongest Italian, and one of the greatest diplomats I've ever met, was Manlio Brosio, who happened to be secretary general of NATO for most of the time I was there. Of course he didn't speak for the Italian government, not directly anyway, but Brosio was superb and deserves a lot of credit for shepherding the Alliance through the very hard years of the late '60s and early '70s. With one exception, Italy never sent a strong delegation - but decent in my judgment. Brosio behind the scenes always made sure that Italy did the right thing. The exception was Rinaldo Petrignani, who subsequently was a long-time Ambassador to the U.S.

The Belgians were always strong, in part because of the personality of their perm. rep., de Staercke, who knew his country, who had been in that position for many years. He was Doyen, had almost total recall, and was utterly dedicated to the Alliance's success. He was a strong personality. De Rose of France was a highly sophisticated diplomat and so was, interestingly, Ross Campbell, who was the Canadian perm. rep. Very smart, very direct, highly respected by all of his colleagues in NATO. He contributed in a very substantial way. Interestingly, we reestablished our acquaintance in recent years on a business level. He represented Arianespace,

the French rocket launch company, in Canada. He claims he well-remembered me from NATO years. I was most flattered and prefer to believe him.

Q: Did the ministerial meetings more or less set the agendas? There would be foreign ministers and defense ministers and when they got together - did they get together, or?

HELMAN: No, separately. Every once in a while they would meet together but generally they met in different fora, each twice a year, and they had different agendas, the Foreign Ministers' largely political, the Defense Ministers' largely addressed issues such as force structure, command and control, infrastructure requirements, and the like. Usually the preparations for a ministerial would occupy our time for a month and a half, two months, sometimes longer, before each ministerial.

The Ministerials were where countries, members of NATO, used to present their big ideas. This was certainly true under Nixon and later when Henry Kissinger became secretary of state it was very much the forum in which new ideas were presented. So it was twice a year the centerpiece of a lot of our activities. The ministers used the NATO communiqués, as far as we were concerned, to frame the road map on specific policy matters for the Allies over the next six months until the ministers met again.

Q: Did President Nixon meet with NATO from time to time?

HELMAN: My recollection is that, while I was there, there was no NATO meeting at head of state level. Those were really quite rare in those years. Nevertheless, Nixon would address NATO issues in some of his speeches, and as I recall one of the initiatives that NATO adopted on environment - let's see, what was the committee called? - on the challenges of modern society or something like that, which became a regular committee pulling in environmental experts and those on other issues common to industrial societies. It was a Nixon initiative, an effort on the part the administration at that time to breathe new political life and meaning into NATO. Some were a little cynical in their description of these initiatives, which some would say were designed to divert NATO from its central theme so that Nixon and Kissinger could handle them bilaterally. Pat Moynihan, by the way, came up with the idea, and as I recall, Dick Lugar, then Mayor of Indianapolis, represented the U.S. at the Committee's initial meeting.

Q: Was there concern within NATO that so much was going on outside the knowledge of...I mean deals with the Soviets and elsewhere. Was this a separate conversation or corridors?

HELMAN: Yes. I suppose this was a matter of constant concern prior to Nixon and post-Nixon. It's almost built into the nature of our relationship to NATO, being, even then, a very major power and the only country in the West that could stand up to an aggressive Soviet Union. And the United States never allowed itself to be put into the position of uniformly withholding political or military action until a policy first passed through the NATO grinder. We retained a certain level of freedom of action and our allies understood that this was both desirable and inevitable. At the same time we tried to consult, that is inform and discuss some of our objectives with our allies, probably never enough to satisfy them, but probably a little more than we ever wanted to do and a good deal more than any other country similarly situated would have done.

So there was a healthy and usually workable dynamic. And, of course, while not unique, it may have been a little more pronounced under Nixon; I would guess it probably was, given the nature of the president and of Henry Kissinger, but it couldn't have been unique to Nixon's administration.

Q: Do you or your colleagues from other countries feel that sometimes you were getting instructions from Washington that really set your teeth on edge? That sort of thing got much more political later on, I think.

HELMAN: Occasionally we were surprised by Washington but much of the time we maintained a pretty active dialogue with Washington and fed Washington a lot of policy proposals and analysis. I should add that I was, during my career, on both sides of the water. I was deputy political adviser to the U.S. Mission to NATO, and subsequently I was deputy director of RPM, which was the Department's principal backstop for NATO. So I saw it from both angles. I would say that there was a pretty good dialogue. It was, in part, because of the dynamics of working in a multinational, multilateral institution such as NATO; and it was in part a matter of personalities, with strong and capable people.

If you had a strong mission, you had that mission probably writing its own instructions, and if you had a strong RPM, it was probably the other way around. It was a good dialogue. While I was involved with NATO affairs, the mission was very seldom surprised or shocked, maybe unhappy because we may not have always liked our instructions. Of course, if you had a strong ambassador, an aggressive ambassador such as Harlen Cleveland, Bob Ellsworth and Don Rumsfeld, if you had a strong DCM and a strong political adviser such as Larry Eagleburger, you had a powerful team and the Department, DOD and the NSC would listen. And later on, when David Bruce came along, we had a new level of authority.

Q: Sometimes I feel there's a dynamic that when you have an administration that, particularly at the National Security Council these days, it's possible to have almost separate little policies going on because some individuals grab the ball and there's nobody at the top to sort of supervise them or something. Ollie North being probably one of the worst examples, but there are other ones sometimes that...

HELMAN: My own impression is that as time has gone on, U.S. foreign policy has become increasingly fragmented into smaller power centers, each wanting to and/or in fact having an impact on foreign affairs. I don't know that that was inevitable, but I find, looking at it from a rather uninformed vantage point right now, I find that certainly in national security policy there are independent power centers in the NSC and DOD and State and different segments of DOD, including the uniformed services, or CIA for that matter. These power centers have proliferated overseas, with their own communications facilities, and it's hard to believe that our ambassadors have a clue as to what some of these agencies are doing in their countries. In foreign economic policy I doubt that State plays as significant role as before. You have the Trade Advisor, the Treasury, the NSC, Commerce and I suppose others. You now have offices within the NSC that deal with national economic policy. Environmental policy is all over the place, except State has its own assistant secretary for Oceans and Environmental Affairs and so on, but I don't know that it plays a very strong role in setting our policies with respect to many of those issues. And

now there is the growing phenomenon of the private sector organizing to influence foreign policy. The so-called NGOs - non- governmental organizations - were a familiar phenomenon in the UN context. Now they have spread into other areas, as have other more organized and better targeted corporate and private commercial and political interest groups. I know of instances in which a multinational corporation has had representatives on the delegations of three or four countries, including the U.S., at the same conference.

Q: Well, talking about the other side of the ocean, in '73 you moved back to Washington?

HELMAN: I actually had my mid-career sabbatical, went to Princeton for a year from '73 to '74.

Q: What were you doing in Princeton?

HELMAN: I went to Woodrow Wilson School and I spent a year reading. I enjoyed it. *(laughs)*

Q: This was the period of Watergate, too, wasn't it?

HELMAN: Yes. The whole period, I was really rather lucky to be living in Brussels, a rather calm environment, and then Princeton. Not so much because I had planned on it - we had three school-age children. And, certainly not by design, we were able to dodge some of the pressures of drugs and other activities that seemed to be overwhelming high school students in the United States.

Q: Your kids were in high school by this time?

HELMAN: Two of my children were in high school in Brussels. My older daughter completed her high school education at Princeton High and then went on to Smith; and my younger daughter completed hers at T.C. Williams in Alexandria a year behind my older daughter, and she went up to Michigan. And my son, who was a number of years younger, in time went to Yale. The point I wanted to make is that we were, in a sense, in very comfortable isolation from a lot of the temptations and traumas that seemed to be upsetting American education at that time. There was Watergate, but I was a reader of newspapers at that time just as everybody else, particularly when I was sitting in Princeton.

Q: At Princeton did you get any feel about how the intellectual community was looking at American foreign policy and all?

HELMAN: Critically. *(laughs)* At that time the faculty was certainly on the liberal side of the political spectrum and with the developments over Watergate and the traumas of Vietnam, "Nixon" and "Republicans" were dirty words. I don't recall anybody who wanted to stand up and support the administration, let alone most of its policies. There was a certain element of envy of Kissinger on the part of the faculty; they knew him as a fellow academic and were convinced they could do a better job as National Security Advisor. To the extent that anybody was interested in listening, I could speak with some authority on European policy and certainly I was capable of justifying what we were doing in Europe. In the aftermath of Czechoslovakia, Europe looked like a rather well-managed segment of our foreign policy. The Middle East and its

perturbations, captured much more attention, and of course Vietnam overwhelmed everything. As a foreign service officer, I was a “good guy.”

I enjoyed spending some time on subjects that didn't have anything directly to do with foreign affairs; I figured I could do the lecturing on a lot of foreign affairs issues rather than paying attention to the professors - several of whom became good friends - and I enjoyed meeting with the students and talking to them, taking classes with them. They were certainly bright. Boy, it was a good school. I was deeply impressed by the quality of the student body. My often stated conclusion was that the decision to admit women dramatically improved the competitiveness and quality of the student body.

Q: Then in '74 you came back to Washington.

HELMAN: Yes.

Q: And right back into the NATO bit.

HELMAN: Yes, deputy director. Ed Streater was director, I was deputy director. Jim Lowenstein was deputy assistant secretary who was responsible at that time for NATO affairs. I forget who was assistant secretary at the time.

Q: Well, you were there from '74 to?

HELMAN: I was there from '74 - I think I was deputy director for about two years or so and then I became director of UNP, UN Political Affairs. This was probably in late '75, '76.

Q: You came in just about the time Ford became president.

HELMAN: Yes.

Q: But Henry Kissinger was secretary of state. Was there any change really in our NATO policy outlook?

HELMAN: No, I don't think so. You also had another important development, as far as I was concerned. Don Rumsfeld became secretary of defense, and of course he had a very strong background and certainly, having worked for him for a year when he was Permrep, I was both blooded and trusted. So you had a very powerful team in support of Ford, particularly on European policy. Moreover, David Bruce became our Ambassador to NATO. He was one of the few people around that Kissinger respected, and certainly would never undermine or embarrass. I think there was one other factor that was very significant at that time; by that time, as I recall, we had finally extricated ourselves from Vietnam and almost, I would say as a matter of relief, turned central attention to the European theater. This was particularly true of our army. Vietnam no longer dominated our foreign and national security policy.

We were emerging from the trauma of Watergate; we had a president who was never elected trying to establish a credible administration, we had a fairly strong team in support of him. It was

my impression that they looked at European policy as sort of a refreshing area of U.S. initiative and confidence. No one contested its relevance. No one had anything bad to say about our European allies; our European allies were relieved that we finally were out of Vietnam.

I think there was one other element that at least I was able to discern, which was, I think, of fundamental importance; the U.S. Army in Vietnam had become severely diminished, if not almost psychologically disabled. It was a hugely traumatic experience for our Army - principally the Army rather than I think the other services - and they were able in the aftermath of Vietnam to adopt as a new vocation, the European theater and the defense of Europe; it gave them an area of activity which they, I think brilliantly, employed in order to resurrect reconstruct, reequip and recreate the U.S. Army. And of course the proof of how well they succeeded was in Desert Storm.

Q: Well, something I guess on your watch was Portugal. I think one of the very interesting stories in American diplomacy is Frank Carlucci going to Portugal, because correct me if I'm wrong, but Henry Kissinger, and I'm sure others, were really concerned about what was called Euro-communism. You had Belinguer and Italy who was presenting a new face of communism and then you had this officer revolt in Portugal which was a NATO country and seemed to be falling into the hands of the Communists. Was this in your watch?

HELMAN: I was senior enough so that I could follow some of what happened, but I was not directly involved. I do know that there was a lot of discussion, a lot of concern, by Sonnenfeldt, the secretary, that those who had taken power in Portugal, while not themselves not necessarily Communists, were more or less a Karensky regime which could easily be manipulated and overthrown by Communists. And it was Frank Carlucci who was able to stand up and to say not so. He stood up to a very powerful secretary of state. And he was right. *(laughs)*

Q: Oh, he was right. Oh, no, I think it's one of the sort of great stories of diplomacy, of here what a strong ambassador could do - because from what I gather Kissinger was almost ready to write Portugal off and freeze it out.

HELMAN: That was my impression.

Q: From your vantage point in the NATO thing, was Portugal a matter of discussion and what the hell is going to happen?

HELMAN: It was a matter of corridor discussion. It was hard for the NATO council itself to discuss the internal politics of a member country. It would have been considered wrong, potentially a NATO version of the Brezhnev doctrine.

Q: But this was more than that. This was a country that was slipping towards the enemy, you might say. If you wanted to play that clock...

HELMAN: My recollection is that it was more a matter of multiple bilateral discussions on the part of the United States than it was an effort to engage the Alliance itself; you know, what do we do with this potentially errant member? I recall that by NATO Council decision, Portugal was

cut off from some of the normal flow of classified information and reports from NATO. So there was NATO-related action that was taken. But I think the strategic issues flowing from the Portuguese situation were addressed in what we called “multiple bilaterals,” that is, through a series of bilateral discussions with other allies to develop a common policy. And of course we had our own dialogue with the Portuguese that we conducted through Frank Carlucci. In retrospect, one is impressed at how rapidly and forcefully the U.S. leadership grabbed onto historical precedent as a way of characterizing and predicting the course of events in Portugal.

Q: Well, I suppose too, we’re talking about a secretary of state who really thought in European terms.

HELMAN: Thought in European terms and was a genuine expert and master of European politics and diplomacy. Sure. I had several occasions to work with Kissinger and found him tough, smart but fair. I recall sending him a memo prepared by one of the people working for me on a fairly complex issue of nuclear strategy. The memo was somewhat contrarian, as I recall. To my surprise and to the pleasure of the officer involved, Kissinger, who was traveling, sent back a message of commendation. That didn’t happen very often. My last meeting with him was after his departure from government. He visited Geneva while I was Ambassador. He called and invited me to lunch with his son. It was a most pleasant event.

Q: He’d done the Congress of Vienna for his dissertation, I think.

HELMAN: After all, Hal was one of our outstanding experts on the Soviet Union. So this was a formidable team. They had a lot of experience and a lot of credibility in their judgments. And, of course, fortunately they were wrong in Portugal’s case. At that time also I think NATO began a dialogue with the Spanish to see if somehow they couldn’t be brought more into more of the mainstream of European thinking on politics and defense, could be better educated on some of the issues that were of concern to the Alliance. I recall we arranged for senior staff level briefings between NATO and Spain. It was an eye opener, with the Spanish seeing the threat as coming not across the Central European plain from the Soviet Union, but as a consequence of North African and Mediterranean instability.

RALPH EARLE, II
Defense Advisor, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1969-1972)

Ambassador Earle was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Harvard University and its Law School. He served in the US Army during the Korean War, after which he entered private law practice. His service with the US Government was primarily in the field of Arms Control and NATO matters, working with the Department of Defense and ACDA. In addition to serving as Principal Deputy Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, he served as Advisor to NATO (1972-1973) and was Alternate Chairman of the US Delegation to SALT. Ambassador Earle was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.

Q: What was the job you went to in Brussels, and what was the responsibility? You went there in '69 and you stayed until '72.

EARLE: Right, I went the end of June '69 and came home in November of '72. The defense advisor was an outgrowth of a job that had been, when NATO was in Paris, called DEFREPNAME. Now what did that stand for? Defense representative, I don't know... NATO, something. It had begun as kind of a hardware job (I think; this was years before), making sure that the NATO countries got their hardware from the US, and it became more of a political job.

When I arrived, they had just moved from Paris two years before. The US mission to NATO was about ninety people, of whom sixty worked for the defense advisor and the others were Foreign Service people. The defense advisor had been a civilian, Tim Stanley, as I mentioned. The deputy defense advisor was a two-star general. And we had people dealing with infrastructure; we had people dealing with defense planning; we had people dealing with communications-- the spectrum of NATO, if you will, military activities. The chiefs of most of my divisions were colonels and captains, although the infrastructure guy, who I think is still there, was a civilian.

NATO, like any multilateral organization, is composed of committees and subcommittees. NATO was then fifteen countries, but, as somebody said quite accurately, "We're all equal, but one is considerably more equal than the others." So we really played a very significant role in all of these committees, and of course we were the biggest contributor in terms of troops and dollars.

I inherited a very good group. Not quite as good a group as in ISA, which was also half civilian, half military. I mean, the people who worked in ISA have gone on to other things. Brent Scowcroft worked for us; he was an Air Force colonel at the time. And George Seignious, who became the director of the joint staff, was there, etc.,etc.

Q: It's sort of an honor roll of the defense establishment.

EARLE: Yes, ISA, really, the services sent their best people there. Because it was hot in those days.

Anyway, the people at NATO were awfully good. They weren't quite as good on the whole as the people at ISA, but there were some comers there, too.

Q: To understand this, the issues now... There were people sitting there saying that if a Soviet attack comes, we'll go at their left flank or their right flank--that was the military command.

EARLE: That's right. Well, really, out at SHAPE. Because, as I say, the military committee theoretically is the senior military body, and the chairman of the military committee is, in terms of protocol, the senior military figure in the alliance. But the guy who really counts is SACEUR, even though theoretically he works for the military committee.

Q: But your responsibilities were to give the proper support sort of on the supply-political side?

EARLE: It's a good question and difficult to answer. The military were the planners and the commanders, the tactical planners. The job that I had, it seemed to me, was to get these Europeans up to snuff in terms of their contribution to the military, whether it was through infrastructure, communications. We had something called NADGE, the NATO Air Defense Ground Environment System, which we were spending millions of dollars on, and the United States was paying more than the others. Well, that was natural, but we wanted cooperation and we wanted bigger funding. We just kept hammering all the time.

But when you would come to...well, take infrastructure again, which was a subject that I never fully comprehended; it was very complicated, with many formulae that are used. But our guy, Joe Loveland, who sort of invented infrastructure at NATO and, as I say, I think is still there after thirty-five years or so, he would go to meetings and he would try to devise schemes that would reduce the US contribution and would get bigger contributions from the others, or allocations. And of course where the money was going to be spent was also a factor.

Just recently, when they planned to move the 16th Air Force from Spain to Italy, NATO infrastructure for the first time was going to build a base solely for American aircraft. After twenty years of dealing with this, I was amazed that we'd had that success.

Regarding defense planning, we did a lot of work for the Nuclear Planning Group, which met twice a year and which, as you may know, had begun as sort of a McNamara nuclear educational program. He began it to educate his fellow ministers of defense about nuclear weapons and their use and so forth. They met twice a year: once a year in Brussels, and once a year at some other place, always exotic and usually pleasant. NPG became known as the "NATO Pleasure Group", because we went up the Rhine, to Hampton Court for dinner, and that sort of thing. But it was a very serious business, and we in Brussels spent a lot of time backing that up for Laird, those meetings. Of course, he had his own staff in Washington doing it, too.

I didn't go to many meetings. I was a delegator. I couldn't stand multilateral meetings--and I still can't. And fortunately I had enough good guys, that I'd send A to this meeting and B to that meeting. Then, as I'm sure you know, France had withdrawn from the military planning, so that the ambassadors, the permanent representatives, met formally twice a week: once as the North Atlantic Council, with France present; and once as the Defense Planning Group, with France absent. Whereas George Vest, the DCM, would back up Bob Ellsworth (the US perm rep) at the NAC, I, and sometimes George, would back him up at the Defense Planning Group. George and I worked very well together. We became good friends. He fully understood, again, sort of the transportation of this Defense-State conflict, if you will, that existed between ISA and State. He knew it could happen.

Larry Eagleburger came over. I'd never met him, I'd never heard of him, he'd been working for Henry Kissinger. The allegation was that he'd had a nervous breakdown. Actually, I think he'd had a tiny stroke and he was exhausted. And so they gave him the job as a political advisor at NATO. He came up to my office, and he introduced himself, and he said, "I'm told that you and I are not to like each other. As far as I'm concerned, that's bullshit. What do you think?"

And I said, "Me, too."

And we were friends from that moment on. He never tried to get into my business unless I asked him to, which was frequently. And I never tried to get into his business unless that was true, too. We worked together very, very well.

Poor Ray Garthoff was POL-MIL, and there was really no need for a POL-MIL when you had a defense advisor and a political advisor. Ray is a very good friend of mine, but he kind of annoyed both Eagleburger and me, because he didn't have really a charter. Then, fortunately for Ray, and fortunately for Larry and me, the SALT talks got started and Ray really became very involved in the planning at the NATO level and then left to be the executive secretary of the SALT delegation.

Now I had another role, which bothered, I think, Bob Ellsworth somewhat. Spain, of course, was not in the alliance. And Laird wanted me to keep the Spanish apprized of what was going on at NATO, because obviously in the long term, once Franco departed the scene...

Q: And we did have bases in...

EARLE: Oh, yes, we sure did.

Q: I mean, major bases, naval and air.

EARLE: Actually, before I ever went to NATO, when I'd been in ISA, I had been the chief negotiator for the renewal of the base agreement with the Spanish. I had been over to Madrid a couple of times, and they knew me and I knew them, so that it was a natural when I went to NATO that Laird would pick me to go down to Spain, rather than send somebody over from Washington. And I'd go down to Spain after every major NATO meeting and brief the high general staff on what had happened, and go and kick tires at Torrejon Air Force Base and so forth.

And I think it bothered Bob Ellsworth because I was not his guy when I went on these trips, because, of course, he didn't have anything to do with Spain. But I'd always brief Bob, and I think he finally came to the conclusion that I wasn't doing anything behind his back that I wasn't telling him about.

So I did have that, I forget, what did they call me? the senior civilian representative of the secretary of defense in Europe. That took about five percent of my time.

Q: Well, I wonder if you could give a little idea of how you observed things. At that time, how did you observe the Soviet threat?

EARLE: Major. When I arrived, I inherited as a deputy the senior major general in the United States Army, who had been Audie Murphy's battalion commander when Audie Murphy won all his medals, Gene Salet. He was a nice guy, but he talked about the Fulda Gap so often that...

Q: Fulda Gap being, I suppose, the place where the Soviets...

EARLE: Where the Soviet armor would come through and break...

Q: Near Frankfurt, in that area.

EARLE: Right, and break into Western Europe. And I heard the Fulda Gap, the Fulda Gap.

They were clearly seen as a threat, and I think they were a threat. I mean, Stalin was long gone, but Brezhnev at that time was an aggressive, younger Brezhnev. And of course we'd had the Czechoslovakian thing in the summer of '68.

I remember sitting in the command center in the Pentagon at three in the morning with Paul Nitze when that happened, because Warnke and Clifford were on vacation.

So the fact that they'd been able to invade Czechoslovakia, and they'd laid down so much chaff that we didn't even know they were doing it. We knew something was happening, but radar saw nothing... Yes, they were perceived, and I think accurately perceived, as a significant threat.

And, of course, the East German forces were considered highly reliable. Whether they really were, in retrospect, is a question.

So that we were concerned that... Now I was never one that thought the Soviets could get to the Channel in three days. I thought that was absolute baloney. At the same time, I didn't think we could nail them on the Czech border and keep them there indefinitely.

I subsequently had a briefing when I was at ACDA from General Don Starrey, who I think has one of the most impressive minds I've ever encountered. This was years later, but he was of the same conclusion, that somewhere in between lay the truth. You didn't want Western Germany blown up, and you didn't want to go to tactical nuclear weapons, which at that time I think was considered more than a theoretical possibility.

Q: I can recall atomic artillery rolling through the streets of Frankfurt. This was '55 to '58, when I was a young vice consul. I kind of wondered about it.

EARLE: And we had those atomic demolition mines on the Greek-Bulgarian border. I made a couple of trips around the Med with Dave Packard, who was the deputy secretary of defense, and going to QRA bases where the F-4s were sitting with the bombs on them, and the pilots in their flight suits practically in the cockpit ready to go. And there was no question that it was a real possibility.

Q: How did you see--walk through a little of these things-- Germany fitting into this?

EARLE: Well, I remember before I went, Gardiner Tucker, who was the assistant secretary for systems analysis, said to me, "Ralph, when you go over there, you're going to think that you're

the closest to the Brits because you speak the same language, but I think you're going to find attitudes are going to be more like the Germans, or the Germans are going to be more like you."

There's a certain amount of truth to that. One, they worked as hard as we did. NATO is a single building with a lot of wings to it, and the German mission was very close to ours. In the short Brussels days it gets dark early, and the lights that kept burning were the German and the American lights. The other lights seemed to go out a lot earlier than ours did.

I found the ones at NATO very high class. I mean, I think most European NATO members send their best diplomats to the United States and to NATO. I don't know whether it's true or not, I would say that the U.N. comes in sort of third, or at least it did at that time. And so the caliber of all the delegations was very high. The British delegation was composed of people who have gone on to bigger and better things, and the German delegation was the same.

We certainly saw them as partners, as allies. We realized, at least I realized, that NATO performed a very important function and it wasn't just to keep the Soviets out of Western Europe.

In fact, Admiral Zimmermann, who was the inspector general (which was the euphemism for the chief of the German general staff), said to me at one NPG meeting that NATO existed for two purposes: to keep the Soviets out of Western Europe, and to keep the Germans out of Western Europe. He thought that was a very good idea.

So there was always that consideration, that they were very good at making war, and efficient, but I never had the slightest problem about dealing with them as an ally.

Q: How about with the British?

EARLE: The British were also, I thought, fine. Again, bear in mind that this is a limited group of people you're talking to. They're at NATO and they are there to support NATO because that's the government policy. And so I'm not talking about the British foreign service as a whole. But, I mean, John Thomson was their DCM. He was later ambassador to the U.N. for them. And Michael Quinlan, whom I just saw in London last fall, is the state secretary for defense, was my counterpart. Good people. We were just talking about it at lunch today.

The Dutch defense guy, my counterpart, went into politics and became minister of defense and is now secretary general of WEU, Win van Eeklan.

Well, you asked me about the Germans, but the most cooperative were the British, the Germans, the Dutch...the Italians, pretty much.

Q: The Italians basically have always been there, haven't they?

EARLE: Yes, right.

Q: They're off to one side, but when you need them, they're available.

EARLE: That's right. Right, right. And they had good people, too.

The pains were the Danes.

Q: I was going to ask about the Danes and the Norwegians.

EARLE: From just the sheer defense point of view, the Norwegians were better than the Danes. The Danes were always looking for ways to get out of commitments, I thought. That was my impression. And the people they sent weren't as impressive. I saw a considerable distinction between the two.

It was nice having fifteen constituent countries to travel to. And since I was with the Defense Department, I always had a little jet available if I wanted to go places. And I did want to go places. And so I made a couple of trips to Norway and to Denmark, and the attitudes were quite different.

Of course, the Danish military *qua* military were fine, but they felt very constrained, and indeed were, by what you might call the almost pacifist attitude of their government.

But that wasn't true in Norway. At least that's not the impression I got. That they really believed in collective defense. One winter when I went up to the Finnmark, the northern part of Norway, looking across at the Soviets, I was accompanied not just by military people. Well, my military host was a brigadier general named Zeiner Gunderson, who later became chairman of the military committee.

But I just detected quite a different attitude toward the threat and the possibility of war and the willingness to fight it, in Norway than in Denmark. That may be unfair, because I didn't spend a lot of time...

Q: Let me ask you about the Greeks and the Turks. I might say, at that time, I was consul general in Athens. Obviously, the Greeks were looking at only one place, and that was Turkey. And it appeared that NATO was the convenient organization to get more equipment.

EARLE: Yes, I don't remember, while I was there, that there was a major Greek-Turk crisis.

Q: I don't think there was.

EARLE: There were two big blows that hit NATO while I was there. One was Qadhafi's seizure of the Libyan government and the termination of our rights. We had a bombing range down there, Wheelus Air Force Base. And the other was the election of Dom Mintoff as the prime minister of Malta, which really was perceived as, and actually I guess really was, a considerable blow to the Mediterranean defenses, because the Brits had to leave, and they had an extensive base in Malta. But I don't remember the Greeks and the Turks causing us a lot of problems.

Q: I don't think so, at that time. The Turks never really are that interested. It's only if Cyprus gets hot. The Greek colonels were consolidating their power, so they weren't poking the Turkish tiger at that particular point.

EARLE: That's right. I remember going with Mel Laird on a trip to Greece and dealing with the colonels--in person. Henry Tasca was the ambassador at that time. Was that when you were there?

Q: That was when I was there, yes.

EARLE: Well, sometime when the tape is off, I'll tell you a couple of stories about that visit.

Q: Is there anything else, any other crises that you can think of, or situations during that particular time?

EARLE: Well, the one that occurs to me, which shows...I don't know, either the fragility or the strength of the alliance, was this one year, I guess it was '70 or '71...

Each year, the NATO countries file what they call the defense planning questionnaire, the DPQ, which basically represents a commitment of forces for the ensuing year.

We had always committed two carriers to the Med, full time. And the powers that were, in Washington, wanted to pull one of those carriers out and send it to the Seventh Fleet and the Vietnam War.

We had been the strongest complainers when people didn't live up to DPQ commitments, or didn't get their DPQs in on time, because we always did it and we... (This is something we did a lot of, the DPQ--just to talk about what the staff did.) And it was a very embarrassing and difficult summer, because we weren't living up to our commitment either to get the paper in or, when the paper went in, it wasn't going to be what they wanted us to say.

And the alliance jumped all over us, and I thought that was kind of... It was annoying at the time for me, because I took the big brunt as well as the ambassador. But, in retrospect, it was pretty healthy that they weren't going to put up with the Americans having a double standard.

That's one of the situations where the country ambassadors were brought in. I mean, we were sending cables out, or Washington was sending cables to the ambassadors in the UK and in Italy and so forth, saying, you know: Explain why this is happening and so forth and so on.

It was an interesting team effort by the USG to make the best of a bad situation, and also of the NATO countries to kind of pummel us a little bit.

LUCIAN HEICHLER
Senior Officer Training, NATO Defense College

Rome, Italy (1970-1971)

Lucian Heichler was born in Vienna, Austria in 1925. He emigrated to the United States with his parents in 1940 where he later attended NYU and was naturalized as a US citizen in 1944. He served in the US Army during World War II. He entered the Foreign Service and held positions in Germany, Cameroon, Zaire, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium and Turkey. Lucian Heichler was interviewed by Susan Klingman in 2000.

Q: And then?

HEICHLER: Then I applied for senior training and was assigned to the NATO Defense College in Rome, which promised to be a more interesting experience in some ways than the War College because of the presence of students from at least 12 different NATO countries and a mixed faculty (see endnote 7). The NATO Defense College had been attached to NATO headquarters in Paris until the '60s, when de Gaulle forced NATO out of France. At that point the Italians invited the Defense College to Rome, while the Belgians asked NATO headquarters to move to Brussels. The school was given new and very elegant and comfortable quarters in a modern suburb (EUR), south of Rome. The student body varied between 50 and 60 officers, most of them military, from most of the NATO countries, with established quotas reflecting the importance and size of the member nation. The United States and the United Kingdom each had eight slots; other countries had respectively fewer. The American delegation was always made up of two Army colonels, two Navy captains, one Air Force colonel, one Marine colonel, and one Foreign Service officer. Have I got eight? I think I do.

Q: I think so.

HEICHLER: For the American Foreign Service officer and his family, Embassy Rome kept an odd little furnished apartment near the College, a great little Art Deco place full of funky furniture that seemed to have come from somebody's attic. That's where we lived and had fun for, oh, about six or eight months. Since we were not part of the embassy staff, my wife had no Foreign Service responsibilities and could enjoy Rome at leisure. In fact we had practically no contact with the embassy at all except for being allowed to use the commissary. Once I tried to pay a protocol call on the ambassador, thinking that it behooved me to do so. Apparently this was considered very strange, 18th century behavior on my part, and I never got an answer to my request.

Q: So you were essentially, then, under the NATO umbrella at that time.

HEICHLER: At the college we didn't learn much, nor did we work very hard there. We kept to a very leisurely pace. We started the day around 10 o'clock with a one-hour lecture, never given by a member of the faculty but always by a visiting lecturer. This was followed by an hour of discussion and questions. Then came a long, leisurely lunch to recover from our exertions. Then, naturally, everybody wanted to take a nap, but instead we were made to do so-called "committee work." We were broken up into eight different committees of mixed nationality -- a

psychologically clever move to break down national barriers and instead build a sense of friendly competition and rivalry among the committees.

Q: *All right.*

HEICHLER: Psychologically that worked remarkably well, with committees trying to outdo each other in the work they did.

Q: *So what were you working on in these committees - supposedly?*

HEICHLER: Supposedly - we were given the task to produce a major paper or two in the course of our time there - I think two papers. I remember one that we (or rather, I) wrote in my committee on Soviet political, economic, and strategic influence in the Middle East. I had a British naval captain, the only one of us in the committee who had ever been anywhere near the area, and he and I sort of cobbled the paper together. The others didn't do a heck of a lot; they didn't speak very good English or French.

The official languages of the college, of course, were the same as those of NATO - French and English, which most of the students were supposed to be able to speak. If they didn't speak these languages well enough, they were given the opportunity to study them. Those of us who were already considered reasonably proficient in both English and French were given a chance to learn Italian, of which I availed myself every morning. We had a small class of people (about four officers) studying Italian for an hour, which I found quite delightful and, regretfully, did not continue after the college experience was over. All four of us were in love with our teacher, the 25-year-old pretty and vivacious Francesca, fiancée of an Italian army *tenente*.

The high points of the whole college experience were two trips to the different NATO countries. As I was there during the winter term, we visited the so-called southern tier of NATO in Europe. We started in Brussels for briefings at NATO headquarters in Evère and then visited NATO installations in Germany, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. On our second trip we flew to Portugal and North America to visit installations in Canada and the United States, all of which was quite fascinating. In the United States we were flown all the way to Wyoming and Utah to see the Minute Man missile sites. We were taken to the joint U.S.-Canadian NORAD Command deep inside Cheyenne Mountain (supposedly immune to nuclear attack), to the then new Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, to the Martin Marietta aircraft factory near Atlanta, Georgia which produced the giant C-5A cargo plane -- the world's largest aircraft.

Q: *The trip of your NATO college class to the United States must have been very interesting not only to you, of course, but also to your colleagues from other countries. What kind of reaction did they have to these visits?*

HEICHLER: I think much the same as I. The visits evoked real interest and left a deep impression. For the American contingent it was psychologically a somewhat strange and ambivalent experience to be guests of our own country as members of a foreign delegation and at the same time to feel some obligation as Americans to play host to our foreign colleagues and show them what we proudly wanted them to see - the sights of Washington, for example, and

generally anything that seemed to us particularly good and interesting about the United States. But that little schizophrenic thing was just a small part of the entire experience. These trips were very comfortable, in that we had our own airplanes. This is no longer true today; today the College travels by commercial air. But on our first trip, the Belgian Air Force made a plane available to us which we kept throughout as our private plane. On the second tour, an old British Royal Air Force "Britannia" took us across the Atlantic and from there we flew in a U.S. Air Force C-140 cargo plane, unfortunately without windows in the passenger compartment.

Shepherding the 60 or 80 of us who took these trips was one American naval captain on the staff of the college who served as trip coordinator and worked terribly hard to keep this whole unruly herd together, keep them from getting lost, keep them on time and on schedule and so forth, and he did a fantastic job. He kept his promises -- or, rather, threats -- if a student missed a scheduled departure time, he flew commercially -- and at his own expense -- to catch up with the main body at the next stop.

We were fairly well housed, although a lot of the hotels left much to be desired because some of the poorer NATO countries like Greece and Turkey paid only a small per diem, and so the accommodations were tailored to what individual members could afford. If we had been, let's say, only Americans or Germans, we could have lived better, but that was all right. I remember staying in a terribly overheated little hotel in Ottawa where we could hardly sleep because of the heat. It was midwinter, and the temperature in the rooms must have been about 90. In Washington, they put us up in a hotel at K and 14th Street, on the edge of the red light district. But in other places the accommodations were beautiful. There is a hotel called The Antlers, in Colorado Springs, which is as luxurious and pleasant as any place I had ever stayed, so things balanced out. And we were treated everywhere with great attentiveness and hospitality by our hosts. The further west we got in the United States, the better that got.

Q: Were the representatives from the other countries primarily military, or were there some diplomats in your class from other countries?

HEICHLER: That depended on the size of the delegation. There were very few other diplomats. There was one Norwegian, who was, in fact, I think not a diplomat at all but some kind of non-military government servant. I think there were also a Greek and a German civilian, but for the most part, they were all military men.

Q: Did your class become involved in any of the issues that were being discussed within NATO at that time?

HEICHLER: Oh, yes.

Q: And what were some of those issues? This would have been 1971.

HEICHLER: Well, I can't remember specifics, but I can assure you they were principally Cold War issues - whatever was going on between the West and the Warsaw Pact at the time -- no longer the time of the great Berlin Crisis; that was behind us.

Q: *That was done.*

HEICHLER: Yes, that was done. The big new agreements between Bonn and Moscow/Warsaw and Washington and Moscow had been signed, finally regularizing what had been known as “interzonal trade” and the movement of people between Berlin and West Germany, and so that was off the table for the time being.

Q: *Did you ever have discussions about the U.S. commitment to Europe? There always seemed to be that underlying anxiety that when the chips were down perhaps the U.S. might not come to Europe's defense. Did that ever surface?*

HEICHLER: Oh, yes.

Q: *Wasn't that - yes.*

HEICHLER: It did. What we discussed depended primarily on the lecture of the day.

Q: *Okay.*

HEICHLER: I think as a group we were mentally rather lazy otherwise. We did our committee work; we enjoyed ourselves at lunch; we drank entirely too much. Our ample lunches in the College dining room were washed down with the nice dry white wines of the *Colli Albani* and followed by Sambuca - the popular Italian anis liqueur which is always served with an uneven number of coffee beans floating in the glass.

Q: *You made good friends?*

HEICHLER: We made good friends, yes.

Q: *Which is useful, potentially.*

HEICHLER: Very good friends with a Norwegian colonel and his wife, with a British Royal Marine colonel with whom we stayed in touch for years after. We lost touch with the Americans rather quickly. There was a lot of partying, a lot of visiting back and forth, and the College also arranged regular cultural visits for us within Rome. At least once a week we were bussed to the Colosseum or the Pantheon or whatever, and we had--every NATO Defense College course has or had--our audience with the Pope.

Q: *Do you have lasting impressions of that?*

HEICHLER: I have this one great photo of Pope Paul VI surrounded by NATO Defense College children, all angling to get a papal medal out of him, all appropriately dressed in little white mantillas. My pushy Episcopalian daughter pressed herself forward and managed to snag a papal medal, which she still has.

Q: *So, a memento of a special moment.*

HEICHLER: Yes.

Q: *All right.*

HEICHLER: I have one special photo album containing all the publicity pictures from Berlin, the big glossies I used to get from the city government protocol office that showed me with the Kennedys and God knows whom all else, you know, and I have the picture of the Pope with our delegation in there as well, along with other mementos..

Q: *Okay.*

HEICHLER: They are nice mementos to have.

Q: *So I assume the NATO Defense College is still in existence.*

HEICHLER: Yes, it is, and every year it holds a reunion of its alumni, called *les anciens du collège*, and I did attend one while we were in Bern, not too far away to go. The British colonel I just mentioned (then posted in Brussels), his wife, and we drove down to Rome and attended the reunion and had a good time. But that was the only time I ever went back. I still get the occasional letter in French and English inviting me to the next reunion of the college. I'm still considered an *Ancien* of Course 37 of the NATO Defense College.

Q: *Well, perhaps you will get there again some day.*

HEICHLER: That's possible but not likely.

Q: *So it sounds like it was a very interesting and relaxing year, but still, I would say, worthwhile.*

HEICHLER: Worthwhile, yes, I did learn something. It was an interlude not to be dismissed as entirely unserious, although we all could have worked a lot harder. I don't know how much harder they work at the War College or the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. I suspect they work a little harder than we did, but probably not all that much.

PERRY W. LINDER
Deputy Administrative Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1970-1973)

Perry W. Linder was born and raised in California. He attended San Jose State College and the University of California at Berkeley. He entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and held several positions in Germany, Jamaica, Honduras, France, Benin, Belgium, Jordan, Greece and Spain. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1996.

Q: Okay. And when you finished in Dahomey, what was your next assignment? This would have been about 1970, I think.

LINDER: I went to the US Mission in NATO, and I was the Deputy Administrative Officer.

Q: In the mission.

LINDER: In the US Mission. And the Administrative Officer by tradition was a military officer, so a Colonel headed the administrative operation there, and I was his deputy.

Q: And you had a large administrative section, or did you rely on the embassy to some extent for administrative support?

LINDER: We relied on the embassy, but we got a lot of support from the military too. We had a large joint communications section, joint in that it was staffed by both State and military communicators.

Q: And you were physically located at the NATO headquarters?

LINDER: That's right.

Q: You had a lot of visitors to deal with.

LINDER: Sure, twice a year the Secretary of Defense would come out there and then we had others.

Q: Secretary of State would come sometimes.

LINDER: The Secretary of State as well. We had lots of visitors. That was handled through the general administrative section of the embassy. We were involved, of course, but the JAS provided the bulk of the support.

Q: And besides the embassy, there was also the US Mission to the European Community.

LINDER: Yes, the US Mission to the European Community, and within NATO, you also had the US Defense Committee, which was headed by a general, and was a DOD mission. It was a very large mission, not a component of the US Mission to NATO, it was separate.

Q: With probably mostly Defense Department...

LINDER: All Defense Department. The US Mission to NATO was a mix, Defense and State Department.

Q: Headed by the US representative, who was supported or came from the State Department, probably.

LINDER: That's right, with the title of Ambassador.

Q: Who was the US rep when you were there?

LINDER: I can't recall; maybe as we talk it'll come to me. There were a couple of them while I was there, we didn't just have one. I was only in the US Mission to NATO for one year. Then the colonel managed to convert to Foreign Service, and became a Foreign Service Reserve Officer, and remained in the position.

Q: Retired from the military.

LINDER: Retired from the military as a colonel, became an FSR2, which is the equivalent of an FE-OC today, and when that happened, I had to go, because the top position was now State Department, and my position had to be filled by a military officer. So I went over to the embassy as Personnel Officer. I was Personnel Officer in the embassy for two years; I left Brussels in '73.

Q: And you worked for the Administrative Counselor at the Embassy.

LINDER: Yes, I worked for the Administrative Counselor.

Q: But you dealt on personnel issues, I suppose, with the other missions as well, the missions....

LINDER: Yes, the Personnel Officer is responsible for the US Mission to NATO, USAU and the Embassy.

Q: And that would be FSN's and other personnel matters.

LINDER: Mostly FSN's, but other personnel matters as well. While I was in the US Mission to NATO, I sat on two NATO committees, two housekeeping committees, one of them dealt with the cafeteria, a big issue at the time.

Q: At NATO headquarters.

LINDER: At NATO headquarters, yes. And that was interesting; that was my first experience representing the US at AU an international organization. There was a chairman, translators, and the French always spoke in French....

Q: You sat behind a sign that said, "United States of America".

LINDER: Exactly. And reported on what went on in the meeting, although I'm sure it wasn't of much interest to anyone outside of the Mission.

Q: Well, it was of interest to anybody who ate at the cafeteria.

LINDER: Right. NATO had its own employees, its international staff. We used to get involved in the placement of Americans in staff positions. The Security Officer there was always an American.

Q: At the international staff.

LINDER: Yes, and we had Americans in other key positions. The appointments were made through the Mission and the State Department.

Q: When you moved over to the embassy, was there a large administrative section? I mean,...

LINDER: Oh, a big operation, yes; an Administrative Counselor, an Administrative Officer who was a senior officer himself, plus all the usual sections. The embassy had very good local employees; many of them were British. They had come over there during the war, married Belgium girls and stayed on and become part of the embassy. We were beginning to use different automated devices at that time, 1970, Brussels was in the forefront in the use of computers. It started in handling visits. We had so many visits we had an office there that just did that, arranged visits, and so forth, and of course a lot of that stuff is repetitive. I mean, you did the same stuff every time, you got to keep track of a lot of people, a lot of names, a lot of numbers, vehicles, movements. And we had a fellow, I think he was British, working in that office, and he began to develop computer applications for that sort of thing, and I think that was one of the first places it started.

Q: Besides these various activities in Brussels itself, was the embassy administrative side, personnel side, did you have any Europe-wide, western Europe-wide regional responsibilities, or not?

LINDER: Not that I recall. I can't recall that we did.

Q: Was there a consulate in Antwerp at that time?

LINDER: Yes, there was, and I filled in down there. The consul was off on home leave and I went down there for maybe a month or so as consul. As I recall, it was a two-, maybe three-person consulate.

Q: And there's pressure at that time.

LINDER: There was pressure at that time to downsize it.

Q: This was all quite a contrast with Cotonou, where you did everything yourself, the entire post was small, the country was small. Of course, Belgium is small, but ...

LINDER: In terms of the administration, it was a big operation. It was an eye opener to me, particularly all the visits and how they were handled, and the personnel operation was much more sophisticated--you were dealing with a much more sophisticated workforce. You were also dealing not only with a European workforce, but with a European labor code. It's very different

from what we have in the United States, and something that in my subsequent career was very helpful, because I had other posts in Europe, and I had a lot to do with personnel issues and labor law and labor problems within the European community. In those days we used to do our own wage surveys. That was the last time I ever did a wage survey, after that State had teams that would come out from Washington and do them. But it was interesting. I interviewed the personnel officer at the European Commission headquarters of the European Economic Community.

Q: Well, it was probably still called the European Economic Community, and the Commission was the kind of headquarters staff.

LINDER: Yes. What a good arrangement those employees had...it was a great place to work; they had so many benefits. They really looked after themselves. I'm sure it is the same at the UN, but maybe not as generous as the European Commission.

Q: And they were able to avoid some of the disincentives, maybe taxes...

LINDER: I know they didn't have to pay taxes, and they got all of these allowances, and special arrangements, and of course vacations. In Europe everybody gets at least a month vacation, and trips home and all of that. I also interviewed IBM and other international companies. That was interesting; these big American companies had very few Americans working for them; actually the whole staff was often European.

Q: And Brussels had already become quite a center for American companies headquartered in Europe, based in Europe. Anything else we should talk about in connection with Brussels, or are you ready to go on to your next assignment, which I think was to Amman, Jordan, in '73. So you're in Brussels about three years between these two different assignments.

LINDER: Yes When I got there, John Eisenhower was the ambassador.

Q: To Belgium.

LINDER: To Belgium, yes. And he was replaced by Strausz-Hupé.

Q: Robert Strausz-Hupé?

LINDER: Yes, an interesting man. He liked to play tennis, and he'd call me out regularly to go play tennis with him. He was a real gentleman, and an interesting person. It was said that he was a vice consul in the Austro-Hungarian Empire's foreign service; I don't know. But a courtly gentleman with very definite ideas about NATO. And actually, he later became US representative at NATO.

Q: Now, was Belgium his first time to be ambassador?

LINDER: He'd been to Ceylon; Ceylon was his first ambassadorial post.

Q: And later he was in Morocco and Turkey and at NATO, and maybe somewhere else.

LINDER: I think from Belgium he went to Sweden. It was interesting that Matthew Looram, the ambassador in Dahomey, was slated for the Swedish slot, he was going to be ambassador in Sweden, and he didn't get it because of Strausz-Hupé, and he quit the Foreign Service at that point and went with his wife to Austria. They had a big property there and a chalet and they opened up a big ski resort.

Q: Small world.

LINDER: Brussels was a fascinating assignment. Again I learned a lot, and a lot of things happened there. I left there in 1973 and went to Jordan.

THEODORE WILKINSON
Political-Military Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1970-1974)

Theodore Wilkinson was born in Washington, DC in 1934. He received his BA from Yale and his MA from George Washington University. He served as a lieutenant in the US Navy from 1956 to 1960. He entered the Foreign Service in 1961, and his postings include Caracas, Stockholm, Brussels, Mexico City, Tegucigalpa and Brasilia. He was Interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 11, 1999.

Q: So in 1970 you were assigned, what, to NATO?

WILKINSON: In early 1970, I got a letter from a friend saying that he was leaving his assignment in the American delegation to NATO, and he wondered if I'd be interested in succeeding him in his job. And of course I immediately went into full-court press to try to get that job, and in the end, I don't know, I think there were some other people that were interested, but I was lucky enough to get it in the assignment process. That's the first time I really pushed for an assignment and was able to get it. Previously, my assignment requests didn't seem to have much relation to the assignments I got. Lee and I, our son "T" and the twin girls, Becky and Jenny were to go be transferred in mid-summer. I had been taking more graduate courses in the last four years and cleared the decks for Brussels by taking comprehensive field exams for a doctorate. Although I passed them all, I never found time afterwards to do the thesis.

Q: You were doing the NATO job from 1970 to when?

WILKINSON: '74.

Q: '74. Where were you stationed?

WILKINSON: Brussels.

Q: *Brussels. Obviously, what you were doing was turning you into a political-military officer.*

WILKINSON: That's right.

Q: *Was there such a field at that time, or was it -*

WILKINSON: Absolutely, absolutely. In fact, I think the field of political-military officers thrived particularly during the cold war. I'd sensed that since 1990 the embassies' political-military sections and the role of political-military officers has probably diminished from what it was in the days when almost everything we did was colored by optic of whether it had an equal and opposite effect on Soviet involvement in country X.

Q: *Well, in NATO, you had four years there?*

WILKINSON: Yes.

Q: *What was your particular responsibility?*

WILKINSON: Well, at the time, our mission to NATO, our civilian mission to NATO, had a political and a political-military section. The Political Section did issues of policy coordination in what - for want of a better word - could be called our *Ostpolitik*, how one dealt with the countries of Eastern Europe and how one dealt with other political issues of concern to NATO, sometimes on a more cosmic level, such as the Middle East crisis and the Cyprus crisis. And the Political-Military section did issues of disarmament and related political-military problems that were more clearly defined in scope. Larry Eagleburger was the political counselor at the time, and my boss was a man named Vince Baker, and there couldn't have been two more different people, Larry Eagleburger being outgoing and, of course, at the beginning of a very illustrious further career, and Vince Baker being an older "Wristonized" person who really didn't ever want to go abroad and had never previously served outside of the United States, but was an expert on disarmament and political-military issues from the European Policy Bureau. So under Vince's supervision, I did arms control work, and there were three of us. The other person who was working with us at the time was Arthur Woodruff, who was senior to me and did whatever specific issues came up. But the general work on disarmament as it involved NATO was mine, and that included being assigned as the American member of a group which was just being formed to design mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe. So I had an interesting new job, which was to represent the U.S. in a working group of NATO to design a plan to reduce forces bilaterally in Europe, for the NATO side to be reduced and for the Warsaw Pact side to be reduced in a balanced way. At this point in 1970, there was no agreement to have such negotiations with the Warsaw Pact, but NATO hoped there would be one.

Q: *Well, when you arrived there, what was the attitude towards several elements, but about the mutual and balanced reduction of force in Europe? Was there a feeling that this could possible fly, or the Soviets were still sort of in our dog house as far as after Czechoslovakia went?*

WILKINSON: That's right. The West basically, the United States in particular, was already feeling the economic pinch of supporting American forces in Europe. We wanted our allies to

pick up more of the burden. We wanted them to share the burden, contribute more to their own defense, and for the U.S. to maintain fewer forces in Europe and spend less. But we didn't want to do this unilaterally because we felt it would be an invitation to Soviet meddling in Western Europe, that the withdrawal of American military, the winding down of American forces... As I recall there were something like 200,000 ground troops and maybe 100,000 others, navy and air force, in Western Europe, and the burden of supporting this large a contingent was pretty heavy.

Q: We were beginning to have balance-of-payment problems, I think. At this point they were beginning to become apparent.

WILKINSON: Yes, I think it was 1971, when we went off the gold standard, so that was driving us to look for ways to find a balanced reduction of forces in Europe. And the Germans had a sort of parallel interest in promoting a more peaceful, a more permanent situation in Europe. We were still living in an armed camp, which didn't seem necessary 25 years after World War II. It seemed like it was time to move on to a more permanent and peaceful, less tense, confrontation in Europe, so they were pursuing what they called the *Ostpolitik*, which was basically a policy of detente.

Q: Now this was Willy Brandt's-

WILKINSON: It was Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr and a German Social-Democratic policy basically, but one that was adopted and followed by the Christian Democrats as well. The Soviets, in turn, wanted reassurance that Germany basically would not seek revenge and change frontiers that had been established at Yalta and Potsdam, and what they sought was a conference that would ratify the new status quo - division of Germany in two parts, the Russian seizure of parts of eastern Poland and the eastern tip of Czechoslovakia, that these borders wouldn't be changed, or at least that there would be no attempt to change them by force, some reassurance that Germany would not once more attempt to impose its will on Russia. So they were seeking a so-called European Security Conference. And it was Kissinger who, in the early '70s, met with the Soviets and Western Europeans and put together the compromise that eventually prevailed, which was that both of these initiatives would go forward in parallel, the mutual and balanced force reductions to satisfy the West and the European Security Conference to satisfy the Russians. I don't remember the exact date - I believe it was in 1972 - that this compromise was first reached and formalized and publicized. And it was agreed that the two conferences would begin in 1973, and in fact they did.

Q: This was the beginning of what became known as the Helsinki Accords.

WILKINSON: The beginning of the European Conference on Security and Cooperation - "Cooperation" was added because the West felt that it shouldn't be limited to just security issues and then in parallel, the Vienna talks on mutual and balanced force reductions. The CSCE, as it was called, actually met in preliminary sessions, all but the final session, in Geneva, and I ultimately was at the last round of that conference before the final act was signed in Helsinki in mid-1975.

Q: Well, could you talk a bit about the dynamics within Western Europe and the United States from your perspective on these Geneva talks, I mean, before and up through.

WILKINSON: Well, let me talk a little bit first about designing a position for going into these talks with the Soviet Union on mutual and balanced force reduction. Within the mission, really, the political-military side handled the preparations for mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR), and the political side that worked for Larry Eagleburger worked on the European Security Conference. Ultimately we were all amalgamated into one section under Larry later in my tenure in NATO. But MBFR was an effort to define a simple formula for force reductions in Central Europe that would leave the West protected against an overwhelming Soviet land power and at the same time satisfy the Soviets that their security was not diminished. Trying to find formulas that would do this was not easy. NATO's forces were positioned to block an invasion of Western Europe through the north European plains. In exchange for Soviet reductions in Eastern Europe, NATO would reduce forces in Germany, Netherlands, and Belgium. The French said, "We don't want to have anything to do with this; you're not going to reduce forces on our territory." Therefore, France was ruled out from the start. France had already departed from the integrated structure of NATO in 1965. They in effect said, We're in NATO for political purposes and not for military purposes. Count us out when you're talking about NATO-Warsaw Pact, bloc-to-bloc disarmament and military initiatives. And on the Eastern side, we talked basically about reducing Soviet forces basically in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. And there were innumerable discussions about what the formula for reductions would be, what kinds of ceilings had to be put on air power to make sure that air power wasn't used to make up for what was reduced in terms of land forces, and we debated these issues among ourselves at NATO *ad nauseam* for the three years between 1970 and 1973 until we actually entered the negotiations in Vienna. When we did enter into negotiations, the allies also insisted for negotiating purposes, that Hungary be included on the Eastern side. And the Soviets said, "No, Hungary isn't part of Central Europe; Hungary's in Southern Europe." Strategically speaking they said, it's part of our "southern" group of forces. And we had a lovely argument about the geography of Hungary. Although I wasn't there, Vlad Lehovitch told me that he found a Russian lexicon defining Hungary as "a country in Central Europe." But in the end it was agreed that Hungary would not be included in the area of reduction.

Q: How about within our delegation and as we worked on this? I would have thought that you would have found a rather sharp divide between our military members and our civilian members.

WILKINSON: Indeed. That's very perceptive. The military, of course, did not like the idea of either (1) reductions or (2) (even worse) post-reduction ceilings. Of course, if you're going to have reductions, it's meaningless if you can move forces back in the next day, so you have to have some kind of a ceiling that is agreed to for the period after reductions. And the military said, Well, that restricts our ability to reinforce when there's a political crisis and restricts our exercises and our maneuverability, and we don't like this. We don't want to have anything to do with it. But the motive for MBFR always was political and economic, to the extent that it was necessary, and in the end it proved scarcely necessary, because the Soviets were reducing faster than the agreement could decree. At the time it seemed that it would be necessary and that our military would just have to swallow it, but there might well have been ratification difficulties.

Q: What was the perception at that time, during the early '70s, of the Soviet military threat?

WILKINSON: Well, it was still the perception of the West that the Soviet army, which numbered in the millions, several million ground troops, was the overwhelming military reality of Europe, that the West, while much better equipped and technically more advanced, simply could not withstand the crushing numbers of the Soviet military if the Soviets had been motivated to roll through Northern Europe. And to the classic argument that the defender has an advantage that requires the offensive nation to invade or attack with a three-to-one or two-and-one-half-to-one advantage in order to win an engagement, came the obvious military reply; "Yes, but you can't be sure, and that's not a genuine formula because leadership matters, etc. So don't assume that we can defend Western Europe without keeping our forces at our current level unless you have very strong reductions on the Soviet side and very firm limitations afterwards" - and even the NATO military people don't like it because those limitations would also apply to us.

Q: Well, I would think that also, looming over the whole thing, would be the fact that the Soviets have a land border and they can step back a little ways, and we've got an ocean. It's pretty apparent when we come in, and they can sort of slip people in without making as many waves as we would.

WILKINSON: Absolutely right. That was always an element in any equation, that the costs and logistics for our reinforcements were vastly more difficult than theirs.

Q: Now we have this annual - what is it? - "Reforger" exercise of bringing troops from the United States. We did it every year to keep the sinews in exercise.

WILKINSON: Right, exactly.

Q: Was there implicit, when the people were talking about a war in Europe, that somewhere along the line somebody was going to use a nuclear weapon if it gets out of hand, one way or another?

WILKINSON: Well, there is even today a debate with the new German Government, which took office a few months ago, the Schröder Government, proposing that NATO adopt a no-first-use of nuclear weapons policy to reduce further the risk of nuclear war in Europe. But in the past, it's usually been the Soviets who wanted such an agreement. NATO resisted it because nuclear retaliation was a major element of our "deterrent."

Lt's finish with these European disengagement action talks - which I worked at through mid-1973. When our delegation actually entered negotiations in Vienna we had a higher-level negotiator, Jock Dean, who came and became the chief negotiator for the Vienna force reduction talks. And the site of discussions moved from the preparatory stage to an actual negotiation on the site, where both sides were meeting in their separate seats, NATO in Brussels and the Soviets in the Warsaw Pact context. And so that was the end of the preparatory phase. And then we entered the phase where the security conference met in Geneva and the arms reduction talks were meeting in Vienna.

Q: All right, well, we'll pick that up, but first one question: was the Mansfield Amendment floating around at this time, which was to withdraw many of our forces.

WILKINSON: Absolutely, absolutely, and one of the principal efforts of the U.S. delegation in Brussels was to find ways to deflect the Mansfield Amendment, because we felt that any unilateral withdrawal, any kind of unilateral disarmament, would be destructive of our defense relationship and our basic security interests in Western Europe.

Q: Well, did the fact that you had this Mansfield Amendment, which every administration had opposed, but still, did this have the effect of making the Western European allies take our presence in Europe more seriously and realize that they'd better sort of shape up themselves?

WILKINSON: Absolutely, it had exactly that effect. It forced the pace for our allies, some of whom were more interested in MBFR than others. The Germans always were willing to go along with us on MBFR. Some of our other allies were very concerned about it, particularly the flank states, like Norway, and the southern flank, the Greeks and the Turks, felt that if we reduced forces in Central Europe, the Russians would station more forces on their borders and their security interests would suffer. So we had to wave the Mansfield Amendment flag all the time, on the one hand, to show our allies that we meant business when we talked about force reductions, and then go back to Washington and say the opposite, Defeat the Mansfield Amendment because it will break our alliance.

Q: One further question and then we'll stop. What about, was there a certain amount of disquiet within our representation about Brandt's Ostpolitik in Germany?

WILKINSON: I think the Republican Party never was quite sure. Certainly the more conservative elements in the Washington establishment were worried about the *Ostpolitik*. They thought it would lead to a *rapprochement* of Europe too fast and stimulate pacifism in Western Germany at a time when we were hoping that the West Germans would bear a greater defense burden, so it wasn't universally welcomed in Washington. I don't think Henry Kissinger saw it as necessarily a great policy, although he was clever enough to be able to work with it and manipulate it to our own satisfaction.

Q: Well, we'll pick this up the next time, really about 1973, and we've talked about what you were doing in NATO and on the mutual and balanced force reduction; but you said that in your last year you were doing something different. If you would just put it on tape, and then we'll know where to start.

WILKINSON: Right, let's talk the next time about how we handled the Middle East crisis, the Cyprus crisis, and some other issues of European defense cooperation that I got involved in in 1973, because I was frankly bored with MBFR and wanted to do something different.

Q: Okay, good.

Today is the 11th of February, 1999. Ted, so, we're in 1973, and let's talk about the Middle East and other things you were doing with NATO.

WILKINSON: Let's talk about NATO, and then, if we can, I'd like to go back and add few footnotes to some earlier stuff, because I could pick up some things we had missed before.

Q: *Absolutely.*

WILKINSON: And I was in Brussels at NATO for four years from 1970 to 1974, and during those four years, the post went through three ambassadors and a chargé. The ambassadors were Bob Ellsworth, a kind of interesting fellow who did all his work standing up, never sat down at a desk in his office (he would stand up and wrote a lot of his own speeches; he was a very independent kind of guy); then David Kennedy, who had been the Secretary of the Treasury and came to NATO and thought he would turn NATO into an economic cooperation organization and really never caught on as a political coordinator for our policies to Europe; then George Vest, who served as chargé until he was called back by Henry Kissinger to be his press spokesman - a great FSO, but not a success as a press spokesman. (Kissinger wanted him to tell lies, and he just never got the hang of it.) Don Rumsfeld, who saw working at NATO as a stepping stone to the presidency, I think. He was convinced of his place in history, one that he certainly legitimately occupied soon afterwards as Secretary of Defense, later as a Nixon-Ford Chief-of-Staff, and still a major political force. At the time Rumsfeld kept his personal memoirs every day: oral history, so to speak, into a machine daily, which was a very smart thing to do. Interesting kind of guy to work for.

I mentioned these because each of the ambassadors sort of cast our participation in NATO in a different way.

You had also mentioned, what was it like working with Larry Eagleburger? Larry Eagleburger was the political counselor there, and working with him was kind of interesting. Larry was on the cusp of being a political person even then because his mother was a national committee woman.

Q: *Republican, wasn't it?*

WILKINSON: Yes.

Q: *With Melvin Laird...*

WILKINSON: Eagleburger didn't like pretense. He rarely drafted anything. The only time I ever saw him write a telegram, he wrote a brilliant telegram in about 10 minutes - very short, but very to-the-point. And he had to deal with Ed Streator, who was the director of RPM and sort of his counterpart in Washington, whom he referred to as "Bubblehead." The two of them would yell at each other on the telephone for half an hour or an hour. I moved to Larry's section in 1973, and at that time I left what I had been doing before, which was mutual and balanced force reductions, as we mentioned, and started doing more political issues. Larry left at close to the same time, and I worked with Jim Goodby and Jerry Helman as the political counselor and deputy, with Rumsfeld and with Gene McAuliffe, who was the deputy chief of mission. And the reason I

asked for the change of duties was that the scene of action for the MBFR negotiations had shifted to Vienna, where we had a delegation headed by Jock Dean and including Reggie Bartholomew as the Defense representative. They took over the policy-making aspect, wanted to do it their own way, and really didn't want to hear anything from NATO headquarters, particularly from our allies. Having listened to our allies and trying to accommodate their interests for 3 years and then seeing them almost completely disregarded by Washington was a little frustrating. So I was happy to get away from it, and to pick up another aspect of our participation in NATO, which was more broadly political, and in that time frame to see us, as we have frequently since, try to expand the role of NATO as a policy-coordinating body to extend beyond Europe. And the first example of that was our assistance to Israel during the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, when we were hoping to be able to send supplies. We were concerned that Israel might be forced to the wall and tempted to use nuclear weapons, and the ramifications of this would be serious for the whole stability of the Middle East. And in order to make sure that didn't happen, we wanted it to be supplied with military supplies, and we asked for overflight privileges and didn't get them from most of our NATO allies. Washington was not happy with our allies during that period. The others, I think, didn't feel that it was likely that Israel was going to be overrun.

Q: There was, of course, the threat that if Israel started to get overrun at that time, that they probably, we were pretty sure that they had nuclear weapons, I mean, maybe one or two, something like that, and if they were going to go down, they sure as hell would drag everybody else down.

WILKINSON: Yes, well, of course, I don't think the United States ever encouraged Israel to develop nuclear weapons. We had done our best to avoid that becoming an issue, and we'll get back to that when we talk about my role at the UN in the late '70s, but by the same token, the U.S. wouldn't want Israel to be overrun or to be forced into using nuclear weapons because of the ramifications of both eventualities.

Q: Were you at all involved in talking to people at different levels at this point on the Middle East, within NATO?

WILKINSON: Yes, but it really only became an issue for NATO during the 1973 autumn months when we were talking about resupply for Israel. There was an additional dichotomy because U.S. Forces in Europe, if they ever came into play, were NATO. We would have had to consult with NATO about using those forces in the Middle East in a mission that had nothing to do with the collective defense of the North Atlantic Treaty area. But that issue didn't really arise then or as far as I know until Desert Storm 20 years later, and then of course some of our allies also sent European theater troops. This is not to say that others objected to being kept informed - and to some extent even "consulted" - about issues outside of NATO. NATO, at the time, and I think subsequently even more so with the expansion, first to include Spain (1982) and now Eastern Europeans, made a regular practice of discussing major foreign policy issues even if they aren't directly related to the NATO defense, bringing distinguished policy makers or others in. I remember, for instance, while I was there we had Geoffrey Jackson, who came and addressed the council on his experiences when held captive by the Tupamaros. The British ambassador was held for a year underground in Uruguay, and talked about what is it like to be held captive by a Communist or a Marxist insurgency in Latin America - nothing directly to do with NATO, but of

broad interest to members. (I had met Jackson many years earlier in 1949, on one of the Queens, when he was en route to a post in Colombia and I was returning to school. We sat at the same table and exchanged letters for several years.) Similarly, we were briefed in the NATO Council [NAC] about Vietnam, not because we wanted to coordinate the council to take any particular collective action, but because it was in our interest to influence the member governments in ways that would help our policies. I don't think we were as expert at manipulating the Council as some of our smaller allied friends, to whom the NAC was perhaps the best way for them to pursue their national interests - Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Scandinavian allies, who really had no clout in capitals, but if they could make a big show in the NAC, they'd get it reported back to all the other allied capitals. And people did read our reports Washington. So the Belgian, André de Staercke, who had been there for many years, whom I got to know fairly well, admitted to me that he play acted when it suited his purposes. He was able to make his face get red by holding his breath, to make a great show of anger. In fact, he had been an actor by profession earlier in his life, so he would pound the table and practically take off his shoe and behave like Khrushchev in the UN General Assembly. And then you'd see him five minutes later, and he was all smiles, so it was a complete act. As an example of the readership of our reports, Political-Military Counselor Ray Garthoff did a parody of a NAC meeting with such permanent representatives as Obfuscare (Portugal) and Da Folie (Italy) uttering standard national bromides. It was actually transmitted by mistake when the NAC Ministers were away, meeting in Ottawa. I was told that Rogers was shown a copy and was not amused. Once when Rogers was in Brussels at another NAC ministerial, the seats behind him - maybe 20 - were filled with his traveling court, the assistant secretaries and special assistants from the Department. Rogers wrote a note with a question about his meeting with the Danish Foreign Minister in Copenhagen the day before: something cryptic like "What did the Dane say?" The note passed through all the hangers-on and came to rest with me in the last seat, present as the supporting officer. I went out and called the chargé in Copenhagen. The next day there was a beautiful ample cable report from Embassy Copenhagen to USNATO slugged: "For Secretary Rogers and Ted Wilkinson."

Henry Kissinger used to come and also do a little play acting too in the NAC, but then when it was over he wanted verbatim reports, and I remember once when he briefed on SALT. He'd just come from consultations with the Soviets, and this was in effect his first recounting. Even people who had been with him didn't know what he had actually said in the one-on-one meetings that he had just finished until he reported about it in the NAC. And he talked for two and one-half hours. I was sitting behind him, and one other guy, as the note-takers, and at the end of it somebody came to me and said, "You've got to report this verbatim." And I said, "How the hell can I do that?" First of all, I could hardly understand the guy. I'm sitting directly behind him, hearing only every other word, spoken with that inimitable German accent. And second, I couldn't have transcribed it all even if I had been an expert stenographer. Well, I complained about this to Jack Maresca, who was the chef de cabinet with Luns - the secretary general's personal assistant - and he said, "Well, you know, it's against all policy to tape record a NAC meeting, but the Secretary General does it anyway for his personal use, and I'll let you review the tapes." So I was able to actually reconstruct everything Kissinger said and send back a verbatim report, and Washington was quite surprised and happy at the detail that we submitted about what Kissinger had accomplished in SALT bilaterals with the Soviets, because nobody else really knew.

Well, let's see, what else? One amusing recollection was when we were talking, as we often did in NATO, about the follow-up for the European security conference, the CSCE, when it would eventually take place; i.e. what kind of organizations would exist to implement CSCE decisions. For whatever mythological reason - I don't even remember particularly what the reasoning was - NATO did not want any permanent institutions to be established by the CSCE. So the Canadian, Ross Campbell, at one point ended up his peroration on the CSCE in the NAC by saying, "And furthermore, ladies and gentlemen, I do not believe it is fitting to leave this conference with a permanent standing organ." And there was silence. And then there was raucous laughter. And then Campbell compounded it by turning bright red, realizing what he had said, and then looking around and seeing a couple of ladies, he said, "Excuse me, ladies."

Q: Did you find, when you were dealing with the political side of NATO... I would have thought that there couldn't have helped but be an overlapping and a certain amount of jostling and sharp elbows between NATO and the emerging European Community.

WILKINSON: Well, this was an issue that I was going to turn to, that I grappled with a good bit in that last year at NATO, because at that point I felt I'd been there long enough to understand some of the more underlying issues that we were struggling with dealing with Europeans, and of course the core issue for American security in Europe was how many troops do you have to keep there, what kinds of American forces do you need to buy for yourself in Europe to discourage any kind of renaissance of adventurism on the part of - who knows? - it doesn't have to be a German or a Russian; it could even be an Italian or a French or some other power, e.g. Greece vs. Turkey, who wants to regain its lost territory or put back its people that speak its language under its control from its capital. What kind of presence does the United States need to leave there, and how do we balance that with the constant cost-cutting pressures? There was balance-of-payment pressures first of all, which caused us to devalue and go off the gold standard in 1971, when we were just spending more on Vietnam and elsewhere abroad than we could afford and losing dollars every year and trying to find ways to cut back on expenses abroad; and second, our budget-cutting pressures. We were after the allies even then, as we continued to be for years and years and probably even today, to share more of the burden of defense in Europe. So the Europeans began to respond by saying that they would cooperate and they would buy the same kind of equipment. They would produce tanks in one country and airplanes of a special type in another country. They had one aircraft they were proposing to build called the "multi-role combat aircraft," abbreviated as MRCA and sardonically nicknamed the "Military Requirements Come After," because the politicians, as always, insisted on their own requirements first. And that was really the lesson that I ended up drawing from all of this debate, even in the '70s, and I don't think it has changed that much, that defense cooperation among the Europeans would come at the very bitter end of the political union process, and I don't think that they've arrived at that even today with monetary union in sight. The idea of specializing so that one country develops antiterrorism forces and another one does Green Berets and a third one does the Air Force and a fourth one builds this kind of ship. They're still too concerned about their individual security and too jealous of their individual prerogatives to be able to really cooperate, and certainly weren't able to do it then, and one wonders if they're even ready for it now.

Q: Well, you know, if you were to do a little ranking, which members, from what you gather, were the serious members in NATO, who really were working at it as an instrument as opposed to one just really in their own short-term national interests?

WILKINSON: The Germans certainly considered NATO to be the core of their national security. It was their way of keeping the United States engaged in Europe so that neither Russian revanchism nor rivalries influences among the Europeans got out of bounds. Germany at that point was significant militarily, but was not in any way capable of withstanding a threat from the east. France, having left the militarily “integrated” part of the NATO alliance, did not participate in even military exercises or joint logistics planning, was interested in NATO more as a way to influence and coordinate others politically but not as a linchpin of its security policy, which was to be prepared for “tous azimuths.” The British tended to work very closely with us and with the Germans. And of course, interestingly enough, the flank countries, the northern flank, the Scandinavian countries, and the southern flank, Turkey and Greece and Italy, were reassured by the fact that because they were exposed geographically they could count on the security and military assistance from the United States and the rest of Western Europe. Now when key national interests diverged, as they did between Greece and Turkey in the Cyprus crisis, in the spring and summer of 1974, then you really tested their allegiance to NATO, whether they would or could suppress what they saw as this key national rivalry, particularly in Cyprus, and cooperate in NATO was a serious question. And what happened in July of 1974 was a coup and a decision by the Cypriot government to set in train the process of *enosis*, or union of Cyprus with Greece, that caused the Turks to say: “This can never happen. We will have to send military force and to invade or reinforce the Turkish part of Cyprus and declare its autonomy.” And this was one of the great failures of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State because he was preoccupied with other issues, particularly in the Middle East, and simply ignored advisers who tried to get him to focus on the Cyprus crisis in the period when American intervention, in terms of interposing a military cordon or some action to prevent either the Greeks or the Turks from taking any precipitate action, might have prevented that step, which has embittered the Cyprus situation seriously and prevented any solution to this day. And there was a period when we reported daily from NATO that this was driving the two countries to the brink of war, but we got no action and no replies at all. Finally, Kissinger sent Joe Sisco, then under-secretary for political affairs, out to explore the situation, a week late. The Turks had already sent an occupation force into the Turkish sector and declared autonomy for it. Rumsfeld took me with him flying to London to meet with Sisco and to describe the situation in NATO as Sisco was on his way to Ankara and Athens to deal with the situation down there, but it was too late. The steps that we could have taken simply lapsed because Kissinger’s attention was not focused.

Q: You left when?

WILKINSON: The summer of ‘74, shortly after this.

Q: Shortly after that. Because that was on July 4th or something.

WILKINSON: I believe it was July.

Q: It was July; I just can’t remember, maybe it was July 14th.

WILKINSON: I think July 14th sounds more like it. I worked on that issue and then left, maybe in late August or something like that.

Q: How did you find the Greek and Turkish representatives - not just this time but before this, as far as members of NATO?

WILKINSON: I found them very congenial but I didn't think that they were perhaps the top caliber diplomats of their countries one might expect. They were average to good, but not really good. I remember at the time in one of the early NAC debates there was an action in which a Greek ship was sunk, and it appeared at the time as a result of fire from Turks, and there was very angry exchange of charges in the NAC, with both permanent representatives calling each other names, and we practically had to intervene physically, until we learned some time after the council meeting - as is so often the case, the first report was wrong - and that the Greek ship was sunk by friendly fire.

Q: In the summer of '74, when you left NATO, where did you go?

WILKINSON: I went from there back to Washington. I had been lured into working at the Pentagon with the promise that - at that point I was an old FSO-4 - and I was told that I was going down to be a special assistant to the director of International Security Affairs (ISA) for Europe, into an FSO-2 job. That seemed to be a step toward promotion, and I accepted. Several people said, "Do you really want to go to the Pentagon to work there? It hasn't worked out very well for a lot of other people." And I said, "Well, I think I know what I'm getting into, and I think I want to do it." I was bitterly disappointed when I got there, and the people that told me that I shouldn't go there had proved to be right, at least at first, because the office that I had expected to occupy had been taken by somebody else and they had no place for me to sit, and they didn't have any portfolio for me. They hardly expected me at all, and didn't know what to do with me when I got there, so I had to create my own job. Of course, we all have to do that from time to time, and it ended up being quite an interesting assignment, but only because I looked around for things that weren't being done and took them up and started doing them.

THOMAS M. T. NILES
Deputy Chief of Mission, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1971-1973)

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

Q: Where did you go in 1971?

NILES: I was supposed to go back to Washington. I was assigned to EUR/RPE in Washington. But sometime in June 1971, I received a call from George Vest, who was the DCM at U.S. NATO, then. He asked if I would be interested in coming to replace David Anderson at U.S. NATO. David was going off to work in the Political Section of Embassy Bonn. I said, "Sure, why not? It sounds interesting." I swung by Brussels and had a few days there, and got a little bit of a feel for Brussels and U.S. NATO. Then, I came back on home leave, and we arrived in Brussels around the 1st of September.

Q: *This was 1971 to when?*

NILES: September 1971 through October 1973.

Q: *I think we have time to do that, don't we?*

NILES: Probably, not all of it, but we can start.

Q: *All right, then let's start. Tell me, what did United States mission to NATO do, at that time? What was it?*

NILES: It was a large political/military mission. When I got there, we had no ambassador, and were without one for a good part of the time I was there. Robert Ellsworth, a former Congressman from Kansas, who was a close friend of President Nixon, left in August or so of 1971. Larry Eagleburger, who was the Political Counselor left to go to the Department of Defense, where he was a Deputy Assistant Secretary, working for Warren Nutter, who was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Jim Goodby came to replace Larry Eagleburger as Political Counselor. George Vest was the DCM, or frequently, the Charge d'Affaires of the Mission. U.S. NATO did essentially two things. On the one side, we had the interaction of the other Allies on political issues, particularly east-west relations in their various aspects. Then, we had the military relationship. There was a separate section, headed by a civilian with the title "Military Advisor," which worked in the Military Committee of the Alliance, interacting with all the other allies except the French on the military cooperation among the 14 members, as we put it, of the Integrated Military Command. That was everybody except France. France was involved on the political side, but not on the military side. It was a large Mission. We also had a small Economic Section which to participated in the Economic Committee of the Alliance and people working on emergency management issues and various other issues.

Q: *I would have thought you would have been paralleling the European Economic Community, it went through various changes at that time.*

NILES: Well, the E.C., at that time, was in the process of its first enlargement beyond the original six. At the end of 1972, the UK, Ireland and Denmark joined. In 1967, they merged the various communities: The Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), EURATOM, and the Economic Community (what we called the "Common Market" into the European Communities, headquartered in Brussels. It is interesting that you say that though. You raise the parallel

between NATO and the European community. While I was at USNATO, the European Community began, for the first time, its work on political issues, what they called European Political Cooperation. It focused on what ultimately became the CSCE. We were working on CSCE, too, and as Jim Goodby has written, the largest part of what became the western position in Helsinki was produced in USNATO. The initial CSCE negotiations started in December 1972. All that work was done in the Political Section of the U.S. Mission to NATO, under Jim Goodby's direction. Jerry Helman was involved. Leo Ready was the principal author of much of this stuff. He did some terrific work. I worked on it, too, but I didn't do anywhere near as much as Leo did. Ted Wilkinson worked on the political/military side. The work of the USNATO Political Section became the western position at Helsinki, focusing on human rights issues, including the freer movement of people, and on confidence-building measures in the military area was really of enormous importance. We didn't realize at the time how important this was. Subsequently, it turned out, that this was one of the elements, perhaps not the most important, but one of the key elements in the ultimate end of the Cold War and the destruction of the Soviet system.

Q: It gave that wedge, particularly between the Soviet Union and its eastern bloc allies.

NILES: It's a classic example that you have to be careful that you will get what you want. The Soviets were the major proponents in a European security conference because they wanted to ratify their conquests in Eastern Europe. They wanted to get Western acceptance of the borders in Eastern Europe, particularly the division of Germany, but also the situation in Czechoslovakia, and so forth. We wanted to create a more fluid situation in Europe where we could use our strengths, particularly the attractiveness of our way of life, our democratic societies and free economies, to undermine their system. It was clear as day what we were trying to do. They knew what we were trying to do. We knew they knew what we were trying to do. Everybody knew what everybody was trying to do. There were no hidden agendas. We didn't stand up and say that they wanted to undermine the Soviet system, and the Soviets did not say they wanted to ratify the accomplishments of the Red Army, but in fact, that was what was going on. In the end, of course, we accepted, more or less, the accomplishments of the Red Army, except for the occupation of the Baltic States. Obviously, we are not going to try to overthrow those accomplishments, at least by military means. But for the Soviet Union and the Communist governments of Eastern Europe, CSCE turned out to be a very difficult process to manage. Ultimately, they were unable to do it. Within a couple years after the Helsinki summit, which was in July 1975, we began to see reverberations in Eastern Europe of the positions on human rights and fundamental freedoms that those countries accepted. Courageous people in countries like Czechoslovakia, Vaclav Havel, for example, with the "Charter 77," said to Gustav Husak "Hey, you agreed at Helsinki, Mr. President, to respect these fundamental rights and freedoms, how about in our country?" It really started the ball rolling. We didn't realize at the time what a tremendous ball we started rolling.

Q: I have an interview with George Vest, who talks about when he was dealing with these in Helsinki...

NILES: He did a fabulous job.

Q: That Henry Kissinger kept trying to undercut him because Kissinger would tell Dobrynin, "Don't pay too much attention to that. The real business is SALT," or whatever he was working on, "This other thing is a side show." Vest would hear, say, from the Swedes, "We're talking to the East Germans." Kissinger didn't think much of what he was telling them.

NILES: Not only that. We heard directly from Secretary of State William Rogers, or from Assistant Secretary for EUR Martin Hillenbrand, "You guys have really stirred something up." It was a fascinating process. George Vest was the key person in Helsinki. I was there with him for a good part of the time when he was head of our delegation to the preparatory talks from December 1972 through June 1973. The last day there, George and I went to dinner with Lev Mendelevich, the more flexible of the three Soviet negotiators, for dinner at the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki. We reminisced about what had happened and thought a little bit about what lay ahead. It was clear at the time that Mendelevich understood at least to some extent, whereas others didn't, that we had laid some interesting groundwork here for the future in Helsinki. George Vest was a superb negotiator, totally unflappable, and did a marvelous job in shepherding this process along.

What happened in Helsinki? Well, let me go back, just a minute, to talk about what happened in Brussels, because that was really important. This was the period from the fall of 1971, until the fall of 1972 when the preparatory talks opened in Helsinki. NATO had essentially accepted that we were moving toward a European security conference, a long-time Soviet goal, but we had set two key conditions: the successful conclusion of the quadripartite negotiations on Berlin and the opening of MBFR.

Q: MBFR?

NILES: Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations. MBFR would be separate, in our concept, from CSCE, but it had to be a parallel process to get at the heart of the military confrontation in Europe. The Soviet Union was unenthusiastic about this and never accepted the "M" in MBFR, which was our way of saying that if we withdrew 100,000 American troops from Germany and sent them to Fort Riley, Kansas, you have to take more than 100,000 Soviet troops out of East Germany. This was because the Soviet troops would presumably be in one of the western military districts of the Soviet Union, from where they could be back in Germany in 10 days. The Soviets never accepted that concept. They accepted "Mutual," but they never accepted "Balanced." The negotiations were always "MFR" negotiations with the Soviet Union, and for us "MBFR." The French never accepted the linkage between MBFR and CSCE and never participated in MBFR, which they rejected because the negotiations were designed to be on a "bloc- to-bloc" basis. In their concept, CSCE was a "non-bloc" process.

The French did agree that beginning talks on a European Security Conference was conditioned on concluding a Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin. They loved those negotiations because they gave France "great power" status and relegated the Germans into a subordinate position. The Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin was signed in September of 1971. Soviet agreement to start the MBFR talks was achieved in the summer of 1972. Henry Kissinger managed, I think in August of 1972, to sell them on that. Meanwhile, we were working on papers in NATO, which were to become the basis of the western position at the CSCE talks. This was when we found

ourselves, for the first time, in the middle of the extraordinary interplay between the European Community and NATO. The EC at that time was in the process of moving from 6 to 9 members. Right up to the end of the enlargement process, we assumed that the EC would become a 10-member body, but the Norwegians said, "No." The British, Irish, and Danes joined the first of January in 1973. So, it moved from six to nine. In 1971, the European Community began what they called "European Political Cooperation," which was focused almost exclusively on CSCE. At the same time, in NATO, the same six countries were working with the other Allies (the US, the UK, Norway, Greece, Turkey and Portugal) on the same subject. In NATO, we put together papers on principles for interstate relations, human rights, on economic cooperation and confidence-building measures in the military area. As a consequence, you had this parallelism where the six EC members were working in NATO and at the same time working separately among themselves. The French, as always, were very keen on doing things outside NATO. How did we manage to hold this whole thing together? Well, we did it in a very unusual way. In September 1972, we passed our finished papers, so-called "Issue Papers" to the EPC (European Political Cooperation) through the Belgian Delegation to NATO. We had done most of this work in the U.S. Mission to NATO. The EC members then took those papers, as if they were a European Community product and approved them. They then passed them back to NATO, and NATO then approved them. It was a very unusual charade that we went through. The reason we did this was to keep the French more or less on board a common Western position. Had we refused to go through that process, the French had threatened to go on their own in Helsinki. But, basically, all the material that became the Western position at Helsinki, and was ultimately adopted, as well, by most of the European neutrals, was developed in the U.S. mission to NATO. As I say, Leo Reddy, Jim Goodby, Jerry Helman, Ted Wilkinson and I did this work. But, Jim Goodby and Leo Reddy were the principal creators.

Q: Was there much push from the Washington side?

NILES: Washington was largely uninvolved in the substantive work. I think we deliberately did not formally Washington what we were up to. Every now and then, we would ask for instructions. To a degree, EUR/RPM was involved through Arva Floyd, who saw the process through RPM. RPM at that time was headed by Bob McBride, who ultimately served as Ambassador to Mali, I think. Ed Streater was the Deputy Director. They understood what we were trying to do. Outside RPM and certainly outside the European Bureau, there was very little interest in Washington in what we were doing at USNATO, which was good, because if we had tried to get instructions, particularly if it had required NSC involvement, we would have never been able to do what we did. We just started plowing along and did our work in NATO, under George Vest's guidance and Jim Goodby's management.

Once the scene shifted to Helsinki, we not only had the support of the other NATO allies, except on occasion the French, for our positions, but very quickly the European neutrals came on board. The Finns, because they were hosts and due to their interpretation of their geographic realities, tended to be very careful. The Irish, literally for the first time in their independent national experience, became involved, and because as of January 1, 1973, they were members of the European Community, began to play an active role. The Austrians, Swedes, Swiss and Yugoslavs were also helpful. For the first time, those countries began to play an important role in an East-West event. In general, with the initial exception of our proposals for military

confidence-building measures (CBMs), they looked at our proposals and said, “Hey, this is great, we like this” and joined the party. Later, they became strong proponents of the CBMs once they realized that those measures complemented rather than compromised their neutrality. This was a major setback for the Soviets and significantly complicated life for them. Indeed, the Soviets hated most of this. They hated the CBMs; they hated the “basket three” items, the humanitarian and human rights issues. They liked some of the principles, which we had put forward, particularly the principles which tended to recognize the immutability of the established frontiers, which for them particularly meant the border between what we called “the two states in Germany.” We managed, however, to gain acceptance in the CSCE principles the concept of peaceful change, so that you could change frontiers peacefully, by mutual agreement. The Soviets initially said, “No, the frontiers can never be changed.” Obviously, that was ridiculous, and eventually even they accepted that if both parties agreed, then you could change frontiers.

Sometime in January or February 1973, the Soviets realized that they might be in for some tough times in Helsinki. What did they do? Among other things, they went to Washington, particularly to then-National Security Advisor Kissinger, and said, “Your guys in Helsinki, George Vest and company, are out of control. They are proposing all sorts of crazy things that we will never accept.” Dobrynin told everyone he could find that, “People in Moscow are very upset because of what you guys are doing in CSCE. They are never going to negotiate SALT II with you if you continue forward these ridiculous proposals on human rights and confidence-building measures. Get off this stuff.” So we began to receive instructions from Washington saying, “Hey, be careful. Kissinger is unhappy. Dobrynin is raising hell. You may have gone too far.” But, by that time, it was no longer under our control. The other members, most of them members of European Community, plus the European neutrals, had embraced our proposals. George Vest would send messages back to Washington and talk to Assistant Secretary Martin Hillenbrand on the telephone and say, “Hey, what can I do? It is not a unilateral move by the United States. We couldn’t withdraw these proposals if we wanted to because they have been endorsed by the other Allies and the neutrals, and they think they are great.” In the end, the Soviet Union bit the bullet and accepted the largest part of our proposals, obviously believing that they could find some way around most of them. There were a few things that fell by the way side, including one that I had developed on the basis of my Moscow experience which called for “Free Access to Foreign Establishments.” This meant that a country could not prevent its nationals from entering a foreign embassy to apply for a visa, which was standard procedure in the Soviet Union. The Soviet police regularly beat people who tried to apply for visas without official authorization. We gave in on that one. But, basically, the Western position on humanitarian issues won the day. It was very important.

Q: Was George Vest aware that, generally, he had started something, but was sort of hiding behind the fact that these were the Europeans?

NILES: There was some of that. George Vest was absolutely aware of what was going on. Before going to Helsinki in December 1972, we had hoped that Dr. Kissinger might see the Helsinki talks as a lower-level version of the 1815 Congress of Vienna, which he had written about. But, no such luck. He thought it was a big waste of time and a diversion from the main issues.

Q: To me, it sounds like, this wasn't his thing. In other words, he wasn't in control. You kind of wonder if the role of ego...

NILES: Well, I don't know that it was ego. I think he thought it was a waste of effort that wouldn't ever amount to anything. In addition, he had some really legitimate concerns. The US and the USSR had signed SALT I in May 1972. SALT II negotiations had begun. This was really important. There is no question that in terms of international peace and stability, in the short-term at least, SALT II was much more important than getting this European security process under way. Ultimately, I think CSCE turned out to be of great importance. But, also, there is no question that SALT was important. So when Dobrynin came to Kissinger and said, "My guys are going crazy because of what your representatives are doing in Helsinki. It is going to have negative impact on the SALT negotiations," Kissinger had good reason to be concerned. In the end, all the implied Soviet threats to abandon the SALT process turned out to be so much hot air. They weren't going to walk away from the SALT talks because it was in their interest to have SALT II.

Q: Well, maybe we ought to stop at this point. I will put down here that we have talked, at some length, about your time with NATO on the Helsinki accords. I would like to talk to you a bit about what else you were doing, besides this, the next time. Also, about both Helsinki things and the role of the French. I think this is always interesting.

Today is August the 4th 1998. Tom, first, why don't we stick with the Helsinki accords when the French were involved. What was their perspective, their approach to these?

NILES: France had a unique approach to CSCE among the 14 NATO Allies. During the 1960s, they were much more positive than the other Allies toward proposals for a European Security Conference, which was originally a Soviet, or Warsaw pact, proposal. This became NATO policy at the December 1967 Ministerial when the so-called "Harmel Report" - "Detente and Defence" - was adopted. The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 20, 1968 put a hold on any developments in East-West relations. But by the fall of 1969, we were really back into it again. The French position was always somewhat different from that of the other allies. They were more positive toward CSCE and less enthusiastic about working with the other allies to develop a common position on CSCE. They were ready to discuss CSCE bilaterally with the Soviet Union and the other Eastern Europeans and less inclined to put conditions on holding a CSCE. There was one exception to that which was very important to the French position in Europe. They agreed fully with us, the British and the Germans that a Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin was a precondition for the CSCE. Of course, that was different for France because their position as one of the occupying powers in Germany and in Berlin was a key part of their claim to great power status.

So, the French agreed with us on that particular condition. Once we were at the Helsinki preparatory talks, which began in December 1972, the French were extremely difficult on matters of coordination at the site in Helsinki itself. In fact, they consistently refused to participate in meetings in the NATO caucus there, insisting that the CSCE was no a "bloc-to-

bloc” negotiation. They would coordinate positions at NATO Headquarters. In Helsinki, they did meet regularly with their European Community colleagues. They were very active in developing what came to be known as European Political Cooperation, which began with a focus on CSCE in 1970. So, it was difficult with the French. NATO coordination with them could only take place at NATO headquarters, and to the extent we coordinated with the French in Helsinki, it tended to be bilateral. George Vest, or one of the other members of the delegation, would talk with our French counterparts. It wasn’t so much that the French disagreed with us on the substance of CSCE. It was really much more on the form. At the heart of the French position was the fear that the United States would somehow dominate the action. They claimed not to like the idea that CSCE could become a bloc-to-bloc negotiation, which it really wasn’t, because one of the most important things about CSCE, was the role of the European neutrals, who as I said emerged for the first time in a security-related negotiation.

Q: *Austria...*

NILES: Finland, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland. At Helsinki, the Swiss, led by Edouard Brunner, who later served as their Ambassador in Washington, became active in European diplomacy for the first time. The Vatican was there, as was Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was part of the caucus of European neutrals in Helsinki. It is always a challenge to work with the French. Oft times, you cannot do whatever you want to do without them, but sometimes you cannot do it with them, either. I might say that we are not the only ones who have trouble with the French. They frequently drive the other members of the European Union to distraction, too.

Q: *Tom, you mentioned something that never occurred to me. I have done hundreds of these interviews. Berlin has come up many times. While the French seem to deviate all over the place with us, we were always having problems with the French. I guess the French were maybe always having problems with us. I never heard it mentioned with Berlin. It seems as though on Berlin, the Soviets were never able to use the French as a wedge in Berlin related issues.*

NILES: No, as a general rule, they were not able to do that, although they tried constantly to do so. The French were generally good partners as far as responsibility for “Berlin and Germany as a whole” was concerned. The Soviets would try on all sorts of ploys, but they were never able to get the French to play what would be considered a typical French role in the Berlin context. I think the reason is very clear. France’s position in Berlin and as one of the four powers involved with questions about “Berlin and Germany as a whole” was an important component of its international, its great power standing. Why is France a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council? Today, you can ask that question quite logically. But in 1945, France was one of the victorious powers, and their occupation rights in Berlin were a key part of that position. So, Berlin issues were always watched very, very carefully at the *Quai d’Orsay*. Although we would disagree from time to time on some tactic, I cannot remember disagreements on substance with the French on Berlin issues, and it was, relatively speaking, quite easy to work with them in that context. I cannot recall occasions, for example, in the Quadripartite Negotiations on Berlin, which successfully concluded in September 1971 and opened the way to the convening of the multilateral talks in Helsinki in December of 1972, when the French really left the reservation. They could be difficult, but on Berlin issues, they were good partners. The

other key condition that we set for beginning the CSCE preparatory talks was agreement to begin the MBFR negotiations. The French didn't like that because they didn't participate in MBFR

Q: Could you explain what that is?

NILES: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions. For the United States, certainly for Secretary Kissinger, or then-National Security Advisor, Kissinger, CSCE was not a prime objective. This was not something that he was inclined to see as very useful from the United States point of view. I think he saw MBFR as a more useful mechanism to advance our security interests because it could, if we were successful, address some of the disparities in force levels that caused us anxiety, particularly the overwhelming advantage that the Soviet Union appeared to have, and probably did have, in armored forces, particularly in the central area along the frontier between the two states in Germany. Where we at USNATO differed with Kissinger was that we believed CSCE could also help. The United States objective in MBFR, by the way, which was adopted by NATO, was to reach agreement with the Soviets on what we called a "mixed package," under which we would trade off reductions in United States tactical nuclear weapons in Europe for withdrawals of Soviet tanks. We never reached such agreement, but developments took care of both the preponderance of Soviet tanks and the United States tactical nuclear stockpile in Western Europe. That was our objective at the time in 1971/1972, at least at the U.S. Mission to NATO. The French refused to participate in MBFR, reflecting the fact that they were not part of NATO integrated military structure and claimed not to believe, in principle, in what they called "bloc-to-bloc negotiations." They deeply resented the fact that the United States was successful in getting the other allies to agree that convening the MBFR talks was a precondition for convening the preparatory talks on CSCE. As I recall, it was only in July or August 1972 that Kissinger was able to secure a Soviet agreement to convene the MBFR talks. That removed the last impediment to beginning CSCE preparatory talks, which opened in Helsinki in December 1972. George Vest was named head of our Delegation and was replaced as DCM at USNATO by Eugene McCauliffe, who until then had been the Political Advisor (POLAD) at SHAPE in Mons.

Q: We've talked extensively about the Helsinki accords. This is during the Mission to NATO. You were with the Mission to NATO from when to when?

NILES: August 1971 through October 1973.

Q: Was this pretty much all consuming or were there other issues with NATO?

NILES: Well, no, there were many other important issues. I wasn't involved in them because I was working primarily on CSCE and related issues. But USNATO was very much involved in all sorts of force structure issues, efforts to maintain the levels of NATO military commitments by the individual members of NATO, and trying to maintain our own military commitment to NATO. This was the time, as you recall, of the so-called Mansfield Amendment.

Q: The Mansfield Amendment was what?

NILES: As the name implies, it was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana and called for a unilateral reduction in United States forces in Europe from 317,000 to

around 200,000, as I recall. It reflected a combination of economic problems in the United States, the impact of the war in Southeast Asia, and the sense was that we were spending too much on European defense. As I recall, the vote in the Senate on the Mansfield Amendment in the spring of 1973 was something like 47 to 46, or 48 to 47. To a certain degree, MBFR was a response to the Mansfield Amendment, the argument being that it would be crazy to reduce our forces in Europe unilaterally when we might be able to get something in return through MBFR, namely reductions in Soviet forces in Germany. As it was voted in the Senate, the Mansfield amendment was really a Sense of the Congressional Resolution. I do not believe that the Mansfield Amendment itself had direct budgetary implications to reduce for the NATO commitment in the Defense Appropriation Act, but it was designed to pressure the Executive Branch to reduce the level of our forces in Europe, our commitment to NATO. It was also a signal to NATO that the United States felt that the burden sharing within the alliance was not satisfactory and the Europeans should spend more. That was a position that was generally accepted in the Executive Branch, in the State Department, Defense Department and U.S. NATO. We were constantly pressing the Allies to do more, to spend more on defense. At one point, we got a commitment from the Allies, which was never really met in practice, to spend a minimum of 3% of GDP on defense. Very few Allies actually achieved that. So, these were ongoing discussions. The Mansfield Amendment, I would say peaked in 1973 and gradually diminished after that with the passing of the Southeast Asia crisis, the end of our Vietnam involvement, the end of Watergate and the Nixon Presidency, and so forth. But while I was at USNATO, there was a real concern that the United States Congress might force us to reduce our NATO commitment significantly. That was a major concern on we were involved with the other Allies, working on ways in which we could demonstrate to the American people and to the United States Congress that NATO really was a collective defense organization and that the Allies were pulling their weight, which largely, they were. The reality was that the United States wasn't in Europe to defend Europe. The United States was in Europe to defend the United States. We just redefined the United States security perimeter. That was a point that we stressed in our own public affairs activities at USNATO with a very large flow of visitors from the Congress and from the private sector who came through NATO. Today, people raise the question why we are in NATO since the Cold War is over and the Soviet Union doesn't exist. Then, of course, the Cold War was at a high level and the Soviet Union very much existed but there were still people in the United States who said, "Hey, the war ended in 1945. What in the world are we doing in Western Europe with 300,000 troops?" This was a logical question, but I think we had a logical answer for it as well. So, we worked on those issues. We were also very much involved in the Berlin question. The Quadripartite Negotiations, of course, were conducted by our Embassy in Bonn, but they included an important NATO. It was important that the United States Mission to NATO, with the British, French, and German missions, kept the other Allies informed of what we were doing, not on all the details, and aware of the state of the Quadripartite Negotiations. We really needed their support and understanding of what it was we were trying to accomplish with the Soviet Union. In the event there were a breakdown in those negotiations, we would want to have the support of countries like Norway, Italy, Turkey, and the others. There was also the link NATO established between the successful conclusion of the Quadripartite Negotiations and the opening of a European Security Conference. We needed the support and understanding of the other Allies to maintain that linkage.

Q: An attack on West Berlin, was that an attack on NATO?

NILES: Absolutely. We had our Berlin Brigade in West Berlin. There were analogous troops there from Britain and France. All three Allies saw those troops as essentially trip wires which would lead to the full engagement of all our forces should the Soviets use force against West Berlin. I mean, nobody thought that our Berlin Brigade plus the British and French troops were going to be able to fight off the two Soviet tank armies that were essentially deployed around Berlin, but obviously, they would be able to give a good account of themselves should there be hostilities. That would be a signal for a general conflict in Europe between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and almost certainly a thermonuclear war between the United States and the USSR.

Q: When you look at Berlin, 1945, the thing started, we are talking about a period not quite 30 years later, one would have thought that most issues would have been talked about, agreed to, and that it would have been business as usual.

NILES: That is true in a way. Really, from the time of the end of the Berlin blockade and the airlift in the spring/summer of 1949, Berlin was fairly calm, right up until the time of the building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961. There were serious disorders in East Berlin in June 1953, after Stalin's death. There was considerable tension at the time of the building of the Wall in August of 1961. But, basically, the interaction between the three Allies and the Soviets in and around Berlin was fairly smooth, broken from time to time by "crises" around Berlin when the Soviets attempted to change the routines that had developed. Khrushchev regularly announced, beginning around 1958, that if the Western powers didn't do such and such, and he was going to sign a peace treaty with the G.D.R. and turn responsibility for Berlin over to the G.D.R. As we now know, this was a bluff on the part of the Soviets. They regarded their rights in Berlin and Germany very much as did the French: a symbol of their Great Power status and of their triumph over the country they feared and respected most – Germany. There was no way they were going to give up those rights as long as they could maintain them. Our response to Khrushchev was that he could sign anything he wanted to with the G.D.R., but Allied rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole continued until we, together, signed a German peace treaty. We also told him that whatever he signed with the G.D.R. was between him and the G.D.R., which we didn't recognize. There were many bluffs from the Soviets. The Soviets found the existence of West Berlin a very unsatisfactory situation because of what it did to demoralize the East Germans and make life difficult for Walter Ulbricht and then for Erik Honecker. But, of course, the construction of the Wall in August 1961 and partially solved that problem for the Soviets. It stopped the bleeding for the GDR and stabilized the situation in Central Europe. In retrospect, it established the basis for the peaceful reunification of Germany in 1989-90, although we did not see it that way at the time. Ulbricht and then Honecker, and, of course, all the Soviet leaders referred to the wall as a bulwark of peace and stability. We, of course, ridiculed that contention and said that the Wall was a sign of the weakness depravity of the Communist system. Everybody used that as an example of how the Soviet system, and the Communist system had failed. Ironically, both of us were right. All of our criticisms were absolutely true. But, at the same time, and in a peculiar way, so, too, were the Soviet and East German protestations about how the wall was a bulwark of security and stability. Once the Wall was built, it created a sort of stability. It imprisoned 17 million people in the G.D.R., but it did guarantee, in its perverse and obnoxious way, a sort of stability in a potentially unstable area. I happened, just by chance, to have visited Berlin in July 1961, just before the wall went up. It was chaos, as I remember it.

People were streaming out into an enormous refugee camp set up by the Senat, the West Berlin government, and the F.R.G. with help from us and others, in the area not too far from Checkpoint Charlie. There was a sense of impending crisis, and it was a dicey situation. 2,000 to 3,000 people a day were coming across the line into West Berlin. That was obviously not sustainable. The people in the GDR had gotten wind that something was going to happen. They didn't know what it would be but they believed, correctly, that this was their last chance to leave the GDR. The Wall put a stop to all of that in a tragic, inhumane way. Nevertheless, it did provide stability.

By the time I got to NATO in 1971, we in the West, including the FRG, had come to terms with this reality. Willy Brandt's accession to the chancellorship in 1969 after the fall of the "Grand Coalition" that ruled Germany from 1966 to 1969 under Kurt-Georg Kiesinger was the watershed event. The SPD and the FDP formed a coalition government in 1969 with Brandt as Chancellor and Walter Sheele as Foreign Minister. That government ultimately negotiated the "Eastern Treaties: with the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia and the inter-German agreement with the G.D.R. It ultimately recognized the existence of the repulsive government in the GDR, and we finally followed suit. By the way, the GDR really was a dreadful entity. We didn't realize at the time how dreadful it was. We didn't realize at the time all the things the Ulbricht/Honecker regime was really up to, ranging from Stasi support for terrorism in the West and a massive state-run campaign of misusing performance enhancing drugs on their athletes. I recall that we wondered where the Baader-Meinhof people went when they weren't killing German officials and German businessmen. We now know that they went to the GDR, and were taken good care of there. That was a repulsive government. But, Willy Brandt was a great figure for his time. Say what you will about his personal life, but he was a great statesman. He recognized reality. Under his leadership, the Germans established a new set of relationships in central Europe. As part of that process, the three "occupying powers" negotiated the Quadripartite Agreement (QA) on Berlin (the Soviets always called it the Quadripartite Agreement on *West* Berlin). Jonathan (Jock) Dean was our chief negotiator, assisted by David Anderson. Kenneth Rush, a former CEO of Union Carbide, was the Ambassador at the time, but Jock Dean really was the negotiator in Bonn. The QA codified all the practices that had grown up in and around Berlin, the movement of people and goods, and Allied officials into and around and through the city. It was enormously complicated. It was one of the most complicated negotiations in the postwar era because it described the ways in which we got around the anomalies of continuing occupation regime and the fact that we did not recognize the existence of the GDR, insisting, for example, that GDR documents didn't exist. It was amazing.

Q: Don't lower your tailgates, and that sort of thing?

NILES: It was really a question of finding ways to document the movement of people and goods through this system of railroads and canals that interlocked and ran throughout the Berlin area. We had all kinds of anomalies. For example, the fact that the East German railroad, the Reichsbahn, ran the railroads in West Berlin. The place was nothing but anomalies. If you scratched below the surface of Berlin, you found all kinds of strange things. These were aspects of the situation that had to be covered in the QA, which was designed to codify existing practices and to anticipate problems in the future so that we would not have Berlin crises. To a very substantial degree, it succeeded. If you think back, from September 1971 up until November 1989, which is a period of 18 years, there were basically no Berlin crises. We did have problems.

I remember in 1984 or 1985, the Soviets, for reasons that weren't entirely clear, began to impose unilateral restrictions on the flight paths for airplanes, going into Tegel. (Tempelhof was no longer in use for commercial airlines). They decreed that airplanes had to come in at a certain height and then almost dive bomb Berlin. Instead of going through a lengthy descent, which would begin halfway between the zone border and Berlin, you had to go at a height above 13,000 feet almost up to the border of Berlin and then begin a very steep descent into Tegel. The airlines, PanAm, TWA, Air France and British Airways felt that this was dangerous. It wasn't altogether clear why the Soviets were doing this at that particular moment. Perhaps they felt we were using the flights for intelligence purposes, which I am sure we were. Perhaps it was probably a Soviet way to send this little message saying that if we were uncooperative, they could pull our chain on Berlin issues. Berlin aviation was always sensitive, of course, because it reminded people of the blockade and the Airlift. But, basically, the QA was a success. It established a pattern for interaction among the three Allies and the Soviets and it complemented the "Eastern Treaties" between the FRG and the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well the Agreement between the "two states in the Germany," the FRG and the GDR. It was a great accomplishment, and there was a key role in it for NATO and for US Mission to NATO.

Another important thing we did at NATO was conduct a very active political consultation process. The Political Committee of NATO would meet every week and share information about what was going on the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact countries. We received all the telegraphic reporting from our Missions in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union, and we shared much of that with the Allies, who shared what their embassies reported. We were always the major contributors of information, but the others came up with very interesting material from time to time. One reason we were so generous with our reporting and analysis was we to encourage the others to come forward with their information. In addition to the value of the information exchange, per se, the process was very useful because it supported the spirit of common interest and common purpose. The NATO Political Committee was an important part of that, as was the Economic Committee, which did a lot of work on Soviet and Eastern European economic developments.

Q: In these things, I'm trying to focus on what you were doing, even what you were observing, if you were not the principal.

NILES: My principal work was on CSCE, Berlin and German issues and the Political Committee. We had a large Political Section. Larry Eagleburger was the Political Advisor until the first of August, 1971 when he left and was replaced by Jim Goodby. Ambassador Robert Ellsworth, a former Congressman from Kansas, left at about the same time. We then had a lengthy interregnum with George Vest as Charge d'Affaires before Ambassador Kennedy, who had been replaced as Secretary of the Treasury by John Connolly in July 1971, came out as Ambassador in April 1972. He spent very little time at USNATO, and simply disappeared around the time of the November 1972 election. It was rather surprising, and somewhat demoralizing for us, that Ambassador Kennedy spent much more time working on non-NATO issues such as negotiating restraints on shoe exports to the United States than on NATO business during his time as Ambassador. Our Allies shared that sense of disappointment.

But, in any case, Jim Goodby replaced Larry Eagleburger in August 1971. Gerald Helman was the Deputy Political Adviser. We had a large Mission, with what I thought was an excellent Political Section. There was a separate Political/Military Section under Vincent Baker, which included Ted Wilkinson and Art Woodruff. The lines of responsibility between the Political and Political/Military sections were somewhat vague, and on issues such as CSCE, this was a problem.

Q: I would have thought that would have been a peculiar thing, because your NATO was much more than a bunch of troops sitting there, as you say, political, economic and all. At the same time, you are having this new organization (not new, but it is changing all the time). It was called the European Union, at that time, or what was it called?

NILES: Well, after 1967 it was called the European Community.

Q: It had other members, but how did these two organizations exist?

NILES: Coexist. They coexisted somewhat warily, I would say, rather like two dogs that meet while they are out walking, smell each other, and circle each other. When I got to NATO, the six were in the process of expanding, first 10, and then back to nine, when the Norwegians decided in a December 1972 referendum not to join the EC. At about that time, specifically in 1970, the European Community began the process of European Political Cooperation (EPC). EPC began, interesting enough, in connection with preparations for CSCE. That was the subject on which senior officials of the Foreign Ministries of the six original partners began to meet regularly. Gradually, the consultations spread out to encompass a wide range of political issues. From the very beginning, the appearance of EPC and its concentration on preparations for a possible European Security Conference (CSCE) created a delicate situation because as far as the United States was concerned, NATO was the place where we should conduct those consultations. The French, in particular, essentially hate NATO and insisted that the EPC was the place where this work would be done. Eventually, we were able to come up with a series of pragmatic compromises that maintained Western unity. Perhaps the most remarkable compromise of all occurred in the fall of 1972, just before the Helsinki Preparatory Talks began around December 1, 1972.

Both NATO and the EPC had been working on CSCE preparations, and the Belgian Delegation at NATO was the formal link between the two. We at USNATO had developed a very extensive set of proposals for CSCE - issues papers, as we called them - and by and large they were acceptable to the other Allies, including the EC members. But because of the French position, we could simply approve these papers in NATO. In the French view, that approach suffered two fatal flaws: it gave primacy to NATO, which they hated; and the papers had been largely done by the United States, which they also hated. By October 1972, when we had agreed to begin the Helsinki Talks around December 1, the question came up of how the Allies would reach formal agreement on this great mass of material, which included what became the Western proposals for in the four CSCE issue areas: 1) principles of interstate relations and confidence-building measures (CBMs); 2) human rights, or humanitarian issues as they came to be called; 3) economic issues; and, 4) the possibility of some "permanent machinery." As I said, most of the basis work on those "issue papers" had been done in the U.S. Mission to NATO with

contributions from other Delegations. But, overwhelmingly, it was our product. It was not a U.S. government product because Washington basically wasn't involved. EUR/ RPM was consulted from time to time and cleared the papers. But, basically, the papers were all drafted and in our Mission. As I said, Leo Reddy and Jim Goodby were the principal authors. Leo must have drafted as many as many as 20 papers. The question arose as to how were going to reach agreement among the Allies on those papers given the fact that the EPC, consisting of the original six members plus the four applicants (UK, Ireland, Denmark and Norway) were also working separately on the same papers. In the end, we worked out an agreement under which the NATO "issues papers" were passed to the EPC via the Belgian Delegation to NATO, approved en bloc by the EPC, passed back to NATO by the Belgians and approved by the NATO Council around November 15, 1972. All of this procedure, I repeat, was developed solely to satisfy the French position which was based on a profound dislike of NATO and of the United States, at least in so far as we were an actor in European affairs.

In any case, in December 1972 the CSCE Preparatory Talks began in Helsinki. George Vest left his position as DCM at USNATO and was replaced by Eugene V. McCauliffe, who had been the POLAD at SHAPE. Leo Reddy and I alternated as members of George's team in Helsinki, which also included an officer from Embassy Moscow, either Mark Garrison or Stape Roy, an officer from EUR/RPM (Arva Floyd) and an officer from ACDA. Theoretically, the head of our delegation was our Ambassador to Finland, at that time a former Governor of Nebraska Val Petersen. He was generally harmless. The Finnish MFA provided the secretariat, and several of the members were old friends from the Finnish Embassy in Moscow, Matti Hekkanen and Arto Mansala, both of whom subsequently became very senior Finnish diplomats.

It was a fascinating experience, particularly for elements such as the interaction of the two German states and the tentative steps by the other members of the Warsaw Pact to assert some small hints of independence from the USSR. It was also, as I noted, a very sensitive exercise in Alliance management, in particular the relationship between NATO and the European Community. George Vest handled that with real skill. But again, even recognizing that Irish neutrality might have been a small problem, the real obstacle to fruitful coordination in Helsinki was France. The French would not participate in NATO caucus meetings in Helsinki, although they would discuss the same issues at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

We concluded the talks around June 5, 1973 with agreement on the "Blue Book," which was essentially an annotated agenda for formal negotiations which began in Geneva that fall. I went back to USNATO, and learned to my surprise that the Department had decided to send me back to Moscow after little more than two years away.

Q: *Why did that happen?*

NILES: The period of so-called *detente* between the US and the USSR led to a major increase in the size of Embassy Moscow, and they simply did not have enough people with Moscow experience and Russian language skills to staff it. They needed me, or so they said, to head the new Commercial Office, which was located outside the Embassy and was assigned the task of promoting US-Soviet trade.

The remainder of my time at USNATO coincided with Ambassador Rumsfeld's first months at USNATO. He left the sinking ship of the Nixon Administration in March of 1973 and came to USNATO as Ambassador. It was his first real exposure to national security policy, but he was a very quick study and did a very good job as Ambassador. He was particularly adept in my time with him during the Yom Kippur War of October 1973 when we went to DEFCON III and may well have been on the brink of a war with the USSR in the Middle East. That required a great deal of careful management at NATO, and I thought Ambassador Rumsfeld handled it very well. He was a tough boss, but it could be fun to work with him. I introduced him to squash while we were in Brussels. He was a fierce competitor.

JOHN BRAYTON REDECKER
Executive Officer; U.S. Mission to NATO
Brussels (1972-1974)

Mr. Redecker was born in Germany of American Foreign Service parents and spent his early years with his parents abroad. He was educated at Williams College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After serving in the US Navy and with the Aluminum Company of America, he joined the Foreign Service in 1964. Mr. Redecker served in Washington, dealing with trade and management issues, and Foreign Service posts abroad, where his assignments concerned economic, trade and a variety of other matters. His foreign postings include West Berlin, Brussels, Rabat, Madrid and Frankfurt. He also served as Diplomat-in-Residence at his alma mater, Williams College. Mr. Redecker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: You were in this NATO office from when to when?

REDECKER: I was from 1971 to '74. I first started out as a XO. The XO function...

Q: XO means Executive Officer.

REDECKER: Executive officer receiving deputized activity from the DCM to clear cables from the military side of U.S. NATO. A concern of the State people was that the defense organization, much larger than they, a defense advisor would be putting out documentation to the Defense Department which the State Department would have opposed. The way to solve that was to have control of everything that went out of the mission to both SecDef and SecState. We had a control that could be monitored if necessary. The individual that performed that somewhat boring function after a while, was the XO. I performed that job. It was interesting. NATO was a whole new world for me. Manuel d'Ambrosio was the secretary general. I was finding my way back into what was called "substance."

Q: Who was the ambassador to NATO?

REDECKER: I will have to get that for you. ...who did not last too very long, and George Vest who was DCM, was chargé for a very considerable period of time when I was there. I talked with him and said the XO function is interesting, but my goodness, is an introduction to what you are going to be doing, but as a permanent type of activity, it's really rather monotonous and not very intellectually stimulating and not very creative. He understood that.

I don't know if you know a fellow by the name of Arthur Woodruff. He was my predecessor in that job. He moved into the political section afterwards and was delighted, like Atlas giving Hercules the orb to carry on his shoulders. He was delighted to pass it on. He said, "Bray, this is interesting to start with. You've never been around this unit. It's very special. NATO is a very special universe, but you don't want to stay in it. You want to do something."

I worked with the division chiefs -- the advisors -- and Larry Eagleburger who was political advisor. He left and was replaced by Jim Goodby who was a wonderful man. I really communicated with Jim Goodby. He was one of the most wonderful people I ever met. I explained my situation to him, and he said, "I understand completely. We'll have to find a way to deal with this," and he dealt with it by eventually putting me into the MBFR negotiating seat.

Q: The MB...

REDECKER: The Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, the longest negotiations intended never to go anywhere ever to be mounted by anybody. It involved our mission in Vienna; it involved all of NATO; it was a very exciting business. The political committee and senior political committee decoded, both of them, they don't want to deal with this on a day to day basis. It's too absolutely mind-bending and soul destroying. They created a working group -- the MBFR working group -- to deal with this on a regular basis. The allies that had forces in Germany were participants in this MBFR meeting. It was a low-level venue, but it actually transacted quite a bit of business that eventually ended up in the senior political committee. Ted Wilkinson had done this job and was being replaced. He said, "It's very interesting. You can make a name for yourself." So Goodby said, "Yes, I'd like to put you in there."

So I became an MBFR U.S. rep to the MBFR working group, and I spent two years doing that, happy to be out of the XO job. Somebody else received the orb to carry on his shoulders, but I had two very, very handsome and interesting years. We were engaged in fairly serious negotiating procedures with the allies. The purpose of the working group was actually to work out arrangements of who would cut what out of their forces that we could justify and that we would have allied consensus in NATO of the force reductions that we would be prepared to offer the Soviets in the Vienna venue.

Q: You were negotiating within the allied...

REDECKER: That's correct. The allies, of course, were very suspicious at the time that the Americans wanted to find some sleazy way to reduce their troop levels without really telling anybody and still maintaining the facade *vis a vis* the Soviets by urging the Soviets to reduce their forces. There was an asymmetry in the forces so that the Soviets were required to take out

two to three for every one we took out. To argue which one of our side was to be taken out was the raging debate around this working group.

Q: I would have thought in this working group there would have been an urge to cut. This was one of our big things ____ being the Europeans haven't carried their weight vis a vis...

REDECKER: That was, indeed, going on at the time. But they were saying the Americans want to do a fast number on us. The whole question was not the principle of it. It was the accuracy of the numbers. What was the order in battle on the Soviet side? What were the forces? What kinds of forces were we asking them to reduce to compensate for our losses. A blue uniformed air force person is not the same as a combat Joe in the trenches. How did you work this? It was enormously complicated but largely political undertaking, but I made a very nice name for myself and pleased the Defense Department by protecting the American position and not getting it down too terribly much. I think they wanted to get two brigades out, and we wanted to see what we could get for the three brigades.

Q: I would have thought that the feeling would be that nothing was really going to happen on this thing.

REDECKER: Yes, that was it all the time. MBFR and CSE was another. There were two multi-lateral negotiations going on with the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union it was, first of all, CSE and MBFR.

Q: CSE, the Conventional...

REDECKER: Central Security in Europe.

Q: This is the Helsinki Accord.

REDECKER: Precisely that.

Q: I don't know if you picked this up, but I interviewed George Vest who was saying that Henry Kissinger was red hot on the arms negotiation and was denigrating the CSE which George Vest was trying to run. Did you pick up any of this?

REDECKER: Oh, yes indeed! MBFR was seen as a political undertaking to take care of what they thought was the transitional problem and probably a problem that would resolve itself technologically rather than numerically, that there would be reductions anyway because the force configurations opposing each other would find it in their interest to reduce their number of troops because the technology would have advanced. CSC was seen as something up in the air. Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe. They said this was fine, this is how we want to do this, but there isn't any hard stuff in there. The steel balls are not in the CSE rifle. But that was my business, and it was a very interesting business, and I performed reasonably well in it.

Q: Did you get any feel for the personalities or positions of some of the major allies in this?

REDECKER: Yes, indeed. The views of the allies was, "We are very suspicious of American intentions. We think that for numerous reasons, deployment reasons, budgetary reasons, the Americans want to reduce and are trying to find a way that will reduce and cook the books of the Soviet sides to justify the American reduction."

The question was, "How do we minimize the American political imperative to reduce the number of troops in Germany?" That was basically the question. I had to talk in those discussions around the table with the six MBFR allies with beautiful, articulate instructions both from principally Defense. I was able to try and demonstrate as well as we could that we were not in that business and we were going to seek, for whatever we took out, double to triple equivalent removal on the Warsaw Pact side.

Q: Did you feel that we were dealing straight?

REDECKER: We were *not* dealing straight. No. There were competitive reasons even within Defense. I became almost a Defense spokesman. My principal backup in Washington was not State but was the Defense Department. They said, "You have to have a State person, not a Defense person," so ___ as Wilkinson had been before. They were good boys, and we got patted on the head by Defense for protecting their interest. There was great tension inside of Defense and, indeed, the DOD had a committee -- MBFR committee -- in the Pentagon giving us instructions and later locked in all kinds of battles as well.

Q: The French weren't in this. You had basically Germany, Britain, and Italy were your main.

REDECKER: The Germans were not in it because the Germans weren't reducing. It was the NATO allies with troops assigned that were in, as I recall. As I recall, the Brits were there, and we had some other allies. The Dutch, of course, were there, and the Belgians were there. I guess perhaps the Germans didn't seem to me a very major factor. I can't remember at this point whether they were in it or not.

Q: The British, Dutch, the Belgians. Were there battles with you?

REDECKER: Principally with the United States. Again, it was something of a repeat of what was going on in the Pentagon as to which forces could be offered up for reduction. What combat capable forces might be reduced which is what made the other allies nervous, especially the British. What are the Americans doing? Are they actually going to take out combat troops? The Russians said, "You've got to take them out if you insist on us taking them out." Then in Vienna, John Dean -- the American negotiator there -- with his boss. I was on the phone with John Dean all the time. They were dealing with the Russians but with the allies as well. What we were trying to do was to try to create a uniform NATO allied position for the delegations there to work from that they wouldn't start arguing among themselves in Vienna.

Q: You were there from when to when?

REDECKER: '72, '73, and the beginning of '74.

MARK C. LISSFELT
Assistant Director, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1973-1976)

Mark C. Lissfelt was born in Pennsylvania in 1932. He received his BA from Haverford College and his MALD from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1959. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1956. His foreign posts included London, Tel Aviv, Bamako, Brussels, Bonn, Berlin and Paris. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 22, 1998

Q: You know, INR has sometimes been a springboard. I know somebody like Leon Furth, the Vice President's national security advisor, used it as a platform over the years, and you, too, emerged from it to a plum assignment at NATO; and thinking that you had previously been in NEA and AF and then INR but never EUR, how did you land that?

LISSFELT: My first assignment was overseas London, so I had this wonderful geographic spread that the Department said they wanted in their personnel, not to mention this wonderful substantive spread from being an economic-commercial officer to being an intelligence specialist to being a political officer - you know, the usual thing. But I was told by people in Personnel then that I was so far just right, that I was just what they said they wanted, you know, a mile wide and an inch deep.

Well, I was considering in - it would have been - '71 the next stop, and I had decided that I wasn't going back to the Near East Bureau or to that region overseas because of reasons that I have already alluded to, specifically the fatigue of dealing with the Arab-Israel problem, especially after seeing one day a vignette I'll never forget: Roy Atherton, for whom I continue to have great respect, being humiliated by an Israeli, the DCM, name of Shlomo Argov (who went on to be the Israeli ambassador in London and was shot, not dead but senseless, by an Arab terrorist on the streets of London). He humiliated Roy and complained that the U.S. was not doing enough to get back Israeli pilots that were still in the hands of Egyptians from the Six Day War. He wiped the floor with Roy in Roy's office, and I witnessed it, and I couldn't stand it.

Q: In a public setting?

LISSFELT: No, in his office, in an office call. And I went to Roy later at the end of the day, after writing this up in a reporting telegram, and said, "I just can't stand it, Roy. I've never seen anything like that. How could you take it?" And Roy sort of shrugged in his wise, rather tired, way, and that was the end of that day. I thought to myself, I need to get out of here. Hence the desire to get back to the European Bureau, which happened quite by chance, through the efforts, I think, largely, of a guy named Bill Bodde, a friend over the years, who was making European assignments in Personnel and had the chore of putting together a list of candidates to go to NATO headquarters to be the *directeur adjoint du cabinet* - that's the deputy-director of the private office of the secretary General then, Joseph Luns.

Well, when I heard about this, I learned that he'd put me on the list to replace Jack Maresca, who'd been very successful there. I was not keen. I'd had my share of staff and staff assistant type work. I thought, my Lord, I'm getting into a rut, and they're helping me stay there. But it was too late; they had put me forward. The Secretary General came to Washington in the spring with the director of his private office, Paul Van Campen, a very special individual, who interviewed me along with people like John Kelly and a few other FSOs. I'll never forget the interview, and I think what interested Van Campen most in me was my Israeli experience, because he was a Jew and a Zionist with a horrendous experience himself at the hands of the Nazis in Amsterdam, when he was saved, almost by a miracle, from being caught and killed, as was most of his family. That relates to a story I'll tell you later about the Israeli connection. Anyway, when my interview was all done I went back to the office, and the phone rang a few minutes later. It was Van Campen calling. He'd forgotten to ask me if I knew any French, important because the two official languages in NATO are English and French. We had a short conversation in French, and I told him that I'd studied French at the Sorbonne. I had a pretty good accent from my year there, frankly, and that seemed to clinch my assignment.

Q: *Didn't you work at the elite Ecole Supérieure Pour le Perfectionnement et la Préparation des Professeurs de Français à l'Etranger?*

LISSFELT: *Oui [French: Yes]*, but nobody I was ever associated with called it "elite." It happened to be staffed, at the time I was there, with U.S. students on the GI Bill who could get paid for it and really wanted to do sculpting or whatever else they did, and I suppose in my whole group there were probably two or three of us actually seriously trying to learn French.

Q: *But you got enough to get this job.*

LISSFELT: That helped me get the job. That was the clincher. And Van Campen went back and consulted with the Secretary General, and I got a call a few weeks later that I'd gotten the job on condition I could be at NATO in June so that they could train me up in time so they could all go off for their August vacations, which are, of course, sacred in Europe, as you know. We were pleased, reconciled to the job, and pleased to go to Brussels, and off we went with four children and this time another dog, a big Irish setter. For the next three years, 1973 to 1976, we worked in a fascinating job for a wonderful and extremely amusing man, Joseph Luns, but under the direct supervision of the not terribly wonderful and not very humorous director of his private office, who had his problems.

Q: *What's this, Van Campen?*

LISSFELT: Yes, just to give you the setting, we worked in adjacent rooms. I probably saw him 200 times a day through a connecting door, speaking on everything imaginable. I think it took a year before he really began to trust me, and the sign was when he finally came in to me - I was very careful about not calling him Paul, but rather Dr. Van Campen. Then one day he said, "Mark, you may call me Paul, and your wife may call my wife Daphne," whom we almost never saw. I knew then I was accepted, that Paul then considered that, although he wasn't a hundred per cent sure, he thought that maybe he had *one* ally in the whole of NATO headquarters against the masses out there. He had a particular animosity against anybody in uniform, which was a rather

bizarre fixation for somebody at a defense alliance headquarters. Anyway, it was three fascinating years, including traveling periodically with the Secretary General. When Van Campen didn't go, I could.

Q: Luns had a certain amount of humor and zest for life, didn't he?

LISSFELT: Oh, wonderful, wonderful man, just one of the most amusing and interesting people I've ever met in my life, and a great success as a politician. He'd been 19 years as, he used to say, foreign minister of a "not insignificant little country," The Netherlands, with this wonderful accent that he had. The closest time I ever came to having a fight or an argument with Joseph Luns came over the removal of Richard Nixon from the White House, by the way, in the summer of '74, the year after I arrived, I happened to believe that the right thing was being done and that the American Constitution was functioning; and I was, although shaken, relieved about this, having seen the hearings in the summer of '73 with Senator Sam Ervin. It was on television before leaving for my assignment in NATO, and I told Luns that I really believed it was the right thing. He was outraged, as Nixon, he said, was the only American president who consistently kept his word "to me" as foreign minister, who knew something about foreign policy and was interested in the world. "And you destroy him. You're mad." And he continued this argument with me periodically. He would appear looming over my desk from time to time with no warning. He never wore shoes in the office so you could not hear him coming. He'd come in in stocking feet, and suddenly I'd be aware of this six-foot five presence looming over me, as I said, at my desk with another argument he'd thought of, why I was a fool and the American system hadn't worked. I would limply try to reply that, yes, in fact, the system *had* worked and that whatever Mr. Nixon's qualities, in my personal view and many Americans', we were well off without him. But those were intense moments, amusing in retrospect.

Q: Bill Liddendorf was the Nixon-selected ambassador at that time in The Netherlands, if memory serves.

LISSFELT: And Luns knew him well there.

Q: He recounts in his own oral history his close friendship and admiration for Luns.

LISSFELT: Whether they were close friends, I don't know. I think Luns admired his art collection. I saw no evidence that he admired his intellectual involvement or curiosity about foreign policy. I'll just leave it there. Let me think if there's anything else particularly about Luns, except it was fascinating times, fights over cod wars and things like that. And then the Cyprus crisis of '74, when the Turks invaded Cyprus - two NATO allies practically at war - was a certain moment of truth.

In the American side, by the way, David Bruce was the permanent representative when I arrived, who had been my ambassador in London on my first assignment. Bruce was back from China, and this was 13 years later, very senior and aging, I must say, but a distinguished and revered man, after whom the staff at NATO named their conference room. It's still called the Bruce Room.

He was succeeded by Donald Rumsfeld, quite a different generation and quite a different personality, after whom, I assure you, there are no rooms named at the U.S. delegation at NATO - and many tales of unhappiness and unnecessary abrasions under his leadership. I didn't experience them because I was not part of the U.S. mission. My one major encounter with Ambassador Rumsfeld, by the way, was when I met him. Jack Maresca took me over to say farewell on his part and to introduce his successor, and he sat in his office in this headquarters that NATO was in then, and still is in, outside Brussels, at Evère. I sat beside an air conditioner that was roaring. I could not hear one word that Ambassador Rumsfeld said to me, and I kept saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I can't hear." And I'm sure it was as a result of that, which was a very brief encounter, that he must have thought, "What a damn fool is around the corner working for Secretary Luns. I won't pay any attention to this one." It was very amusing, a little embarrassing, but still, I'll never forget it. A perfect Woodie Allen movie scene!

Q: But the lesson of the '74 Cyprus crisis was really that NATO just wasn't set up to do much about squabbles between its own members. Is that not a fair reading?

LISSFELT: Yes, it was evident that they didn't know quite what to make of it and what to do about it. It clearly was a crisis provoked by the Greek government in its efforts to set up their own man in downtown Nicosia, and the Turks had had enough. The hatred that exists between those two people was shocking to me. I later worked on Southern European affairs - we'll get around to that later assignment - but you couldn't believe it. It was worse than the animosity that most French feel toward the British, which is saying a lot, you know.

Q: Were you involved in the NATO-French relations?

LISSFELT: No, not particularly. I mean I was involved at least peripherally in everything that the Secretary General was involved in, but more often not in important meetings, because Van Campen had to be there and there wasn't room for two of us. But I was well aware of how well represented the French were in NATO by a wonderful man, Ambassador François de Rose, truly one of the great French diplomats and thinkers on strategic matters, of whom the French didn't have very many these days. He had great skill at knowing when not to ask his government for instructions and when to speak in the NATO council without saying he was uninstructed, but everybody knew that he was being extremely careful and cooperative in every way that he could be because he believed in the North Atlantic Alliance. He was an Atlanticist. I think he's still alive, and I saw him in Paris later in my assignment, and I had a chance to pay tribute to him personally. He was very touched, but he was most interested in my French accent. He wondered where I'd learned my French, and I said, "Well, I spent a year in Paris at the Sorbonne." He said, "Yes, one can see that." That was a big compliment, coming from him.

BRUCE W. CLARK
Special Assistant to Ambassador, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1973-1977)

Bruce W. Clark was born in Los Angeles, California in 1941. He attended Claremont Men's College from 1958 to 1959 before transferring to Stanford University, where he received his BA in 1962. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserve before joining the Foreign Service in 1966. His career has included positions in countries such as Germany, Vietnam, Belgium, and Saudi Arabia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 4, 2002.

Q: How long were you doing that?

CLARK: About a year, from 1972 to 1973. Then I was assigned to the U.S. Mission to NATO, and arrived in Brussels in August 1973, following French language training.

Eagleburger talked to someone in USNATO, and they needed a guy to be special assistant to our ambassador - or permanent representative as he is actually called.

Q: Who was the Ambassador?

CLARK: I had a new ambassador every year. George Vest had just left as the chargé, I think, and when I arrived Donald Rumsfeld was ambassador. Then he went back to Washington. Then came David Bruce, Robert Strausz-Hupé and Tapley Bennett just as I was leaving.

Q: Well now, where is USNATO located? In Brussels?

CLARK: It's outside Brussels at the NATO headquarters in a suburb in a sort of industrial park toward the airport.

Q: How did you find this type of work?

CLARK: Really tiring. Very long hours. As a staff assistant, you're not creating things or going to meetings or meeting people. You're sitting in an office. NATO is like a foreign policy factory. It is not like a normal diplomatic post. Everything is right there in this one huge headquarters, so you don't have to go out to meet and talk to people since they're all right there. And the staff assistant's job is completely non-substantive: pure paper pushing. But the officers, both FSOs and military, were really bright. The top floor of our wing was the office of the defense advisor, Larry Legere, and most of his staff later became admirals and generals. They were really good. It was a very bright group of people.

Q: Was there much concern about the "Soviet Menace" at that time?

CLARK: Well, yes. I think there was always a worry that if war ever came the Soviet Union would be a real problem, I don't think I ever heard anyone mention that the Soviet divisions were 40% undermanned or badly equipped. Everyone took the number of divisions and all that at face value. And there was real concern that if war came the European allies wouldn't have all the materiel and equipment and technology and so forth to hold the line.

Q: Did you get any feel for how NATO was looking at the role of France at that time?

CLARK: France was always a big problem. There was a real loathing for the French position. Jobert was really disliked.

Q: He was the former French Foreign Minister.

CLARK: They really stuck it to the United States all the time. You began to wonder if France was an ally. Though France didn't participate in NATO military or defense planning, they had a permanent representative in the North Atlantic Council and played an often obstructionist role.

Q: Did you have any French counterparts that you worked with?

CLARK: No. I think the Americans had very little to do with the French.

Q: How about the Germans and British?

CLARK: Oh, yes, we had very close relations with the British and the Germans. And Luns, the Secretary General of NATO, was very pro-American.

Q: You were there from 1973 to 1977?

CLARK: '73 to '77. I was there when the war in the Middle East broke out in 1973, and we decided to resupply Israel with tanks and equipment committed to NATO.

Q: Yes, that was the Yom Kippur war in October.

CLARK: As I recall, we were ready to ship them out without even telling the Germans or NATO what we were doing. That, coupled with the Europeans' reluctance to get involved in any way in that war in light of their own interests in the Middle East, caused a lot of problems for us with our NATO allies.

Q: That really must have been a very acrimonious period.

CLARK: Yes, there were some hot issues while I was there. And then there was the Year of Europe, which was designed to strengthen relations between the U.S. and Europe. The MBFR talks in Vienna. The founding of CSCE. The revolution in Portugal and how to deal with Portugal now that the government was socialist. And the overthrow of the Greek government and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

Q: How about the British and German counterparts, did you deal with them very much?

CLARK: I didn't, no. I suppose fellows in the political section did, but as a staff assistant I didn't.

Q: Well, as staff assistant to Rumsfeld for a year and then to Bruce for a year, it doesn't sound like we were treating NATO as very important.. High grade people, but they only had time to make the rounds before they're out again.

CLARK: It wasn't a very good to have a new ambassador every year. But they were top-notch people, and both had influence and easy access at the highest levels in Washington. Rumsfeld left to become Secretary of Defense. He was very bright and very secretive. He had very little to do with the other people in the mission and didn't appear to be much impressed by his staff, though more so by the military officers than the FSOs. The staff had very little contact with him, though he bombarded them all the time with questions on little slips of paper called "yellow perils." As far as I know, he discussed ideas mainly with his own special advisor, Robert Goldman, whom he brought over from St. John's College in Annapolis. He and Goldman talked all the time, and the staff was excluded. He seemed sort of contemptuous of the people in the mission. I don't know if that's true or not, but that's the way it came across. The mission did not like him. David Bruce was very likeable, but he also had little direct contact with the staff. On the other hand, he had remarkable access and contacts in Washington and Europe and could communicate directly to the most important people at the highest levels.

Q: What impression did you and your colleagues in the Foreign Service and all during this period in time have of Henry Kissinger?

CLARK: Very smart, very wily. I think most of us were happy that he was Secretary of State since for once we could be sure that the Department was on the inside instead of the outside of decision-making. I don't think we thought much of him as a person. Several friends of mine had been his staff aides and they said it was absolute hell to work for him, that he was most arrogant person they'd ever worked for. He had a famous temper and so forth, but he was bright. I think that only now are some of his clever moves and ploys catching up with him.

Q: Thanks to Vietnam and NATO, you were sort of thought of as a political-military guy, weren't you?

CLARK: Yes, everyone thought of me as a political-military officer. That had never been my original intention, but the jobs just sort of started shaping my career that way.

STEPHEN J. LEDOGAR
Political Officer
Brussels (1973-1976)

Deputy Chief of Mission, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1981-1987)

Ambassador Stephen Ledogar was born in New York in 1929, and received his BA from Fordham University. He served overseas in the US Navy from 1949-1952. Ledogar entered the Foreign Service in 1959 and was posted in Montreal, Milan, Quang Tri Province, Saigon, Paris, Brussels and Geneva. He was Interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 1, 2000.

Q: You were in Brussels from '73 to when?

LEDOGAR: '76.

Q: What was your job there?

LEDOGAR: Let me talk about it in terms of the three different Ambassadors. When I arrived, Donald Rumsfeld was U.S. permanent representative. At that time, I was put in the mission's large political section as a foot soldier. Just prior to my arrival NATO had a structure where there was a four-person political section and a separate four-person political-military section. This really didn't make much sense, so the two were merged. After the merger we had a seven-person political section headed by Jim Goodby. This was under Rumsfeld. I was assigned to follow what they called the "flanks" of NATO. That meant political developments in the northern flank, which was Iceland, Norway, and Denmark, and the southeastern flank, which was Greece, Turkey, Cyprus.

Q: What a joy [laughter].

LEDOGAR: I got tangled up in a controversy very soon. It began with Iceland and the United Kingdom and their so-called "Codfish War." The Icelanders were convinced that the British were overfishing in the waters around Iceland and they declared a quarantine zone of I think 50 miles. They told everybody, "Keep out of our waters. They are for Icelandic exploitation only." Mind you, this was in 1973, before the Law of the Sea Treaty, back when territorial waters expanded out from national shores only as far as a cannon could fire; three mile limits, and the like. Of course, the British have an affinity for fish and chips and codfish is very popular in the U.K., especially in the northern parts of the United Kingdom near Iceland. The British reaction was, "The hell with this. These are free and open seas." So, things started getting nasty. The Icelandic Coast Guard cutters began to come out and cut the fishing warps, or the fishing gear, of the British trawlers. The Royal Navy said they couldn't stand for that, so they started sending frigates to defend the trawlers, not with guns, but by what they called "shouldering," ie, getting into a position where the Icelandic aggressor ship, the one trying to cut the lines, had to give way to the frigate according to international rules of the road.

Q: Basically muscling them away.

LEDOGAR: Yes. In nautical terms it was called "shouldering." Matters got quite bitter. Then at one point there was a fatality. The ships were maneuvering so close they were bumping into each other occasionally, with each side playing "chicken." An Icelandic sailor came out to repair some damaged equipment on the deck of one of the Icelandic cutters and he used an electric arc torch. A wave came along spraying the welding area and he was electrocuted. That was the first casualty and there was diplomatic hell to pay. Because of the alphabet, the Icelandic and U.K. representatives sat almost opposite each other at the big roundtables of the North Atlantic Council. The Icelanders called upon all the NATO allies to chastise the United Kingdom. It was really David versus Goliath. The population of all of Iceland back then was something like 275,000 if everybody was home. Iceland has no military forces other than a U.S.-manned NATO

force at the NATO base in Keflavik. The U.S. had airplanes and underwater listening capability and so forth in Iceland.

Of course, the Icelandic Delegation to NATO was only two officers and a support staff of two more. NATO was one of only eleven Icelandic diplomatic posts in the world, and the Icelanders at NATO were also accredited to the Belgians and to the European Common Market. So, their's was a pretty small operation. I made a couple of trips to Reykjavik to help cover events. I was only one of the people who were reporting for the U.S. on the Codfish War. I'm sure we had action officers at the Embassies in London and Reykjavik, but still there were only a handful of Americans really following this.

Eventually, the parties called upon the then-Secretary General of NATO, Joseph Luns, a very colorful fellow who had been around for ages, (formerly for 17 years Foreign Minister of the Netherlands), and requested his good offices to try to mediate the dispute. I don't know whether it was he himself who thought up or whether he was just the agent to carry out what was a fairly ingenious compromise. If you can, visualize a circular zone including the waters around Iceland as a pie chart divided into maybe sixteen different pieces, each about 22 and a half degrees. The waters were declared closed except that each week there was an open slice that rotated around the circle. Thus, over the course of so many months, all of the area in question had been opened and over the course of so many months all of it had been closed. That was the compromise. I can't recall all the details.

Q: Were we playing any role outside of going "Ta, ta, ta?"

LEDOGAR: No, the United States was taking the high and noble path of pointing out that NATO was an organization that was not designed to handle disputes between or among its own members. Rather, the alliance was designed to deal with external threats. We contributed nothing beyond rhetoric. We didn't put pressure on anybody that I know of. That was one of my accounts.

Very soon thereafter in the summer of '74, we were in deep trouble in the Aegean.

Q: I had been consul general in Athens until July of '74. When I left, all hell broke loose.

LEDOGAR: Yes. In a way the Cyprus crisis was similar in style to the Codfish War but much more dangerous in potential impact. Two NATO members, members of the same club, were each trying to take advantage of a captive audience to plead their case and to enlist sympathies, if not support. The rest of us were saying, "You two are going to have to work this out." Things actually got to a very dangerous phase where at one point in the summer of '74, there was a signal heard by many people that a Greek higher echelon air forces command was saying that they had an "enemy" cruiser in their gunsights and they were requesting permission to shoot it, to sink it; they got permission, and sank it. The only thing was that it turned out to be one of their own ships. It was tragic. There was a terrible loss of life. The point is that we could have had a hot war within the Alliance except for that curious blunder.

The Turks invaded Cyprus in 1974 and there was all kinds of stuff going on. We Americans had to scurry around and make sure that the nuclear weapons that we had under dual key

arrangements with each of these two allies were fully protected and in no way could they be compromised by either Greece or Turkey. There was a lot to that Cyprus crisis.

Q: Here you are, trying to be the person who is supposed to say what's happening. I would imagine that in the normal course of events, you have to depend quite heavily on reporting out of capitals and you put it together. You must have found two different worlds in hearing what was being reported from Ankara and what was being reported from Athens by our own missions. And on Nicosia, too.

LEDOGAR: Yes. And the wags would say that if you served in Ankara at the U.S. Mission there, you wound up really hating the Turks and believing the Greeks; and vice versa if you served in Athens.

Q: I have no sympathy at all for the Greek cause. I don't have any great pro-Turkish thoughts, but I do know that when I have talked to people that the Greeks were really very nasty to the Turkish peasant class. This was a dictatorship. There had just been a military coup in November the year before where the colonels were ousted and a new set of guys came in, including the head of the military police, who was very bad news.

LEDOGAR: Yes. I'm not suggesting that NATO was a central point for action. It was just a central point for a lot of conversation. There was this captive audience and both Greece and Turkey were vigorously represented. They couldn't resist taking swipes at each other. People would roll their eyes and groan sometimes out loud when one side would start up the propaganda because you knew the other then had to give its own version of it in an equal length of time. And each of them would find some excuse no matter what we were talking about to try to whack the other. When we got around to drafting NATO communiqués, we could say nothing that made even an oblique reference to the crisis because the communiqué is drafted by consensus; therefore, you couldn't get anything approved. So, having the flanks assignment in the U.S. NATO political section turned out to be quite different than it might have sounded. It sounded like a peripheral job at first.

At the same time, there were other important events going on that I got involved in. After my first year there, Goodby was rotated to Washington and Rumsfeld couldn't seem to make up his mind about who he wanted to replace him. So, I got to be acting political counselor until Frank Perez arrived as permanent political counselor. By this time, the political section was unified. I was acting political counselor for quite a while. That was under Rumsfeld.

Then Rumsfeld was called back permanently to be Chief of Staff at the White House. He had first gone TDY (Temporary Duty) to Washington to be a member of the small commission that chose the new vice president, Rockefeller, when Ford acceded to the presidency upon the departure of Richard Nixon.

Soon after, Rumsfeld was gone. In 1975, of all people we got none other than David Bruce, for whom I had worked in the Paris Peace Talks some years before. In the meantime, Bruce had gone to China as our first Ambassador there and had done a couple of other things outside the U.S. Government for a while. He came back in as head of the U.S. Mission to NATO for most of

1975, as I remember. At the beginning of '74, Kissinger had declared the so-called "Year of Europe." Kissinger was still at the White House as National Security Advisor. He called for a redefinition of our relationship with European friends, first of all within the Alliance, but more challenging to the members, a codification of the relationship between the United States and the European Union. The NATO self-reflection coincided with the 25th anniversary of the North Atlantic Alliance, which was celebrated in Ottawa in the spring of '74. There, NATO published a declaration that said a lot of important things. I don't remember all the new departures, except that we agreed on the benefit to the Alliance of French and British nuclear weapons, and importantly for the future, managed to achieve agreement that events outside the NATO treaty area could have negative impact on the security of the Alliance. That had important implications later on. When you think that 25 years later on, about NATO's role in the former Yugoslavia and Kosovo (outside the NATO treaty area), the declaration proved to be very significant. But at the time, we were talking hypotheticals.

The effort to redefine a relationship between the United States and the European Economic Communities, the Nine, was filled with a number of problems. I'll summarize them as follows. A fellow by the name of Christopher Soames, who had been in the British government but later on became an EC commissioner, was outspoken on the EEC side. In effect, he said, "Wait a minute. You Americans talk like you want to renew or review or put down on paper what the U.S./EEC relationship is, but I know that what you Yankee bastards are trying to do is trade off security considerations against concessions from us Europeans on frozen chicken or corn gluten or other economic products, and that's not acceptable. Security has got to remain in the security area and foreign trade and so forth has got to be considered on its own merits." Furthermore, the European Community said, "We are just beginning to take the first steps toward European political coordination and eventually political integration." Kissinger and the United States replied: "We can understand your point about frozen chicken and so forth, but the U.S. has independent and friendly relations with each of the Nine. If you start moving, without taking into account our views, toward political coordination on subjects that we think should be discussed and coordinated within the North Atlantic Alliance or bilaterally, we Americans are going to be confronted with a nicely, neatly, tightly-organized, non-negotiable consensus and no spokesperson to deal with. When is our point of view going to be taken into account if you pre-cook your views on matters of concern to America and Canada and other non-EEC members of the Alliance?" So, this became quite a sharp debate. The two sides couldn't really resolve it. The final step was kind of the gentlemen's agreement to approach any difficulties that might come up in what was called the "spirit of Gimnich." Gimnich is a chateau somewhere near Bonn, where the Nine had gotten together for some final meeting. They said, "Look, we're not going to sacrifice our frail first efforts at European political cooperation to the booming voice and demands of Washington. On the other hand, we understand your point. So, what we'll do is, we'll make sure that whoever is in the European Presidency will have a special vocation to talk to you, inform you, in advance of the European Commission meetings, during, and afterwards. You'll have plenty of time to know in which direction our debate is going. You'll have an inside wire to help us learn how you feel."

So, that's kind of the way it ended. Nobody was fully satisfied, but it was one of these things that just couldn't be fully solved. But all of that, including the drafting of these documents, took an enormous amount of time on the part of each of the political sections. Of course, the Europeans

started to try putting into practice their political cooperation in the CSCE Helsinki process. That irritated us, too, because we and the other non-EU Nine allies had depended on NATO caucuses for coordination in the Helsinki process. “The Year of Europe” was a kind of a busy period.

I continued working fairly closely with Ambassador Bruce because I was the officer assigned to support him for the weekly Permanent Representatives’ lunch. This is where the Secretary General and the Ambassadors lunched together every Tuesday, just the Ambassadors alone. Many delicate matters were handled in this forum with no notetakers or interpreters; also, many confidences exchanged and sensitive decisions were taken. There was no one there except the Secretary General and the sixteen Ambassadors. So, to be sure that Bruce was prepared for all likely subjects, I would sniff around and ask my counterparts supporting their Ambassadors, “What might your guy bring up at lunch?” The object was to give our respective bosses little white cards or something like that with the briefing points. Then when our tiger came back, we would debrief him and take his notes and put together a report. It was an excellent job and a chance to work pretty closely with Bruce. Also, in that period of time, the year that Bruce was Permanent Representative, a revolution was occurring in Portugal. The young officers who had returned from Angola overthrew Salazar-

Q: I think Salazar died but the successor government said Salazar was overthrown.

LEDOGAR: Yes. There was a question as to how far to the left Portugal was going to go. Eurocommunism was on everybody’s tongue. Here is one area where I think that Kissinger was mistaken. I heard this later from the Ambassador who was Portuguese Permanent Representative at the time. This was a couple of years later when I met him. He said, “You know, Henry Kissinger used the analogy that Eurocommunism and the loss of Portugal would inoculate and make Europe immune to Eurocommunists. The thrust of his analogy was right, but he took it too far. What happened was that the obstreperousness of the extreme leftist Portuguese military inoculated Portugal against Eurocommunism.”

It happens that Frank Carlucci was our Ambassador in Lisbon. On the election day itself, since he had been portrayed as being excessively interested, Carlucci left Portugal and came to Evre. He spent several hours with David Bruce in his office. I would love to have been a fly on the wall during that conversation. I know that Frank was down emotionally, and maybe in terms of spirit. Those of us who were around when he emerged from Bruce’s office thought he looked like a new man. He had gotten a real bucking up from the wise old man. At least that’s my “fly on the wall” take on the whole thing. Bruce never said a word about what transpired. We all know that Frank went back to Lisbon and did a splendid job.

Q: Also, he was able to stand up to Kissinger and Kissinger was ready to write off Portugal.

LEDOGAR: That’s it. That was what the Portuguese NATO Ambassador meant. Kissinger was ready to write off Portugal.

Q: And just cut them off from everything and Carlucci said, “Wait a minute. Let’s do something.” He worked with NATO to make sure that NATO would be nice to the Portuguese

military. At the same time, in Portugal, they were getting quite a bit of support, the socialists, from the West European socialist “mafia.”

LEDOGAR: Yes, both of those are true. We later got into the business of the so-called American Brigade in the Portuguese military. That was sort of like U.S. special security assistance to a group in the Portuguese military that was playing it straight. There were a lot of deft maneuvers there. I always thought that Frank did a first-rate job.

Q: I think it’s one of the great moments in American postwar diplomacy. Luckily, he had had subcabinet status, although he was an FSO in HEW. He could have gone to Gerald Ford on his own. This was clear to Kissinger, who was in effect told, “Don’t try to cut us off until we’ve had the chance.”

LEDOGAR: Vernon Walters was around in Europe. Before he retired from the U.S. army, he had been military attaché in Paris. He was a superb linguist and an excellent intelligence gatherer. I knew him in Paris, although not terribly well. At any rate Walters was identified by Kissinger. Immediately after, the Portuguese Revolution broke out and he was sent on a mission to Lisbon, sub-rosa. The idea was to find out whether our team there headed by a political appointee could handle it. Walters reported back, “Sorry, you’d better get yourselves some new people.” Immediately, Carlucci was selected. He then was in Brazil. Frank picked Herb Oken as his Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM).

Q: I think actually Carlucci was Under Secretary of HEW at the time.

LEDOGAR: Was he?

Q: Yes. That’s where he got his power.

LEDOGAR: At any rate, Carlucci sent Oken out there immediately with authority to clean house. Oken kept the political counselor, who was a classmate of mine and was my source for a lot of this stuff - Charlie Thomas, recently deceased. He just said, “Goodbye” to almost everybody else and started reorganizing. Meanwhile, Carlucci worked the Washington scene. He went around to the head of every U.S. agency that had people on the ground in Lisbon. From each he got a commission and a mandate to do what he subsequently did. Then he arrived in Lisbon suddenly one morning on an overnight flight, immediately went to the Embassy, called a meeting of the country team, and said to them, “Now listen, I’m so and so and I’ve just been to see not only our Commander in Chief, but also the top dog in each of your agencies and services. I have it from that person eye to eye and handshake to handshake that I’m in charge. There will be absolutely nothing but 100% fidelity to the President through me. There will be no back channel reporting and nothing done by you that I don’t know about.” He just really read the riot act and at the same time enlisted the cooperation of the whole bunch. They proceeded to do a splendid job. Unlike the Spanish Revolution, the Portuguese Revolution had very little bloodshed.

Q: NATO was a prime ingredient, particularly keeping the Portuguese in the NATO thing and in a way attracting on the military side the Portuguese military officers to keep them from being

frozen out. Were you aware of any movement within the NATO circles to rally around and do what they could for this?

LEDOGAR: Of course the allies had limited capabilities to interfere in the internal affairs of a fellow NATO member. The informal focus was to support the Portuguese military officers who had their heads screwed on right. For a while there, it looked very bad, as all military discipline seemed to break down. We were trying to support the organized Portuguese military, including its chain of command, as well as trying to isolate a bogus line of radical junior officers and non-commissioned officers who fashioned themselves as an extreme left shadow regime.

Q: These were low-ranking commissioned officers.

LEDOGAR: They were way off base. It took a while before the good guys got into position where they could really cut off the activities of the bad guys. As was said, it scared the bejesus out of the Portuguese that they were that close to a Communist takeover. They became very good citizens. But these developments were mostly outside of my direct area of responsibility.

Towards the end of my time there at NATO, Robert Strausz-Hupé came in and replaced Bruce, who had lasted just a year. Strausz-Hupé- was an interesting fellow. He just did not have as many interesting things happening during his time at the helm.

Soon, I was off on reassignment in mid-1976. I had managed to turn one of my trips to Reykjavik into an opportunity to stop into Washington to see what was available and to talk to a couple of senior officers. I wound up with an offer of a job in Security Assistance. So, by this time, it's the end of the Ford administration. Kissinger is Secretary of State. I came back to Washington during the presidential campaign of '76. One of the foreign policy planks that Jimmy Carter was running on was that U.S. arms sales had gone "amuck" and the United States had reached an immoral level of international arms transfers. Under the Nixon/Ford era we had gotten to the point where, in Henry Kissinger's words, "The Shah of Iran can have anything he wants." Even before the election, opposition to the high level of U.S. arms sales was already brewing. Congress reacted by passing the Security Assistance and Arms Control Act of 1976 which introduced some curbs to the power. This suddenly thrust the issue of arms transfers onto center stage both in the campaign but also within the Ford administration. There were certain things in the new law that had to be complied with immediately. I was offered a choice between two jobs, both in the field of arms transfers: either in the Political-Military bureau, (PM) as head of an office there, or in the Office of the Under Secretary for Security Assistance.

A fellow by the name of Carlyle Maw had recently been appointed as Under Secretary for Security Assistance. He had been senior legal advisor of the Department under Kissinger. At the time, Kissinger had a lot of legal problems, including the Halperin wire-tap suit, and the nationalization of some multinational corporation in Peru or Colombia. There were a lot of pressing legal things. Maw, who was the department's chief lawyer, was wanted by Kissinger closer at hand, so he rose to the seventh floor and one more level in the bureaucracy, but he continued to be the top lawyer. All this new Security Assistance stuff and arms transfers would have to be taken care of by someone working independently but out of Maw's office. In between the time I received my assignment there and the time I showed up, a fellow who had formerly

been Assistant Secretary of Defense, ISA, named Amos (Joe) Jordan, was brought in to be the Security Assistance guru. So, Maw gave everything to Joe Jordan. Though chosen because I was a lawyer, I wound up working for Joe Jordan and Maw continued to do his legal stuff. It wasn't very many more months before Ford was defeated and Carter came in.

With Carter's arrival came a determination to take a whole new approach to U.S. international arms transfers. The new crowd felt that arms trade and arms aid were really an immoral and sordid commerce. We shouldn't be engaged in it to the extent we were. Carter said we had to cut way back. To discipline ourselves, he said, we should put a collective ceiling on the total dollar amount of the arms we were willing to transfer, as well as national sub-ceilings for individual countries. All kinds of crazy stuff. Military grant aid to our Cold War allies was considered by Carter to be just as bad as cold-blooded sales to right-wing dictators. It was an extremely interesting period.

Q: With these constraints, what about Israel? Was that not part of the game?

LEDOGAR: No, in dividing up the Security Assistance pie, Israel always had its full share fenced off. That was seen to by its many friends in Congress. When you started talking about who was going to get how much of whatever was left, it was always with Israel already taken care of.

But the trouble was the advocates of restraint got a lot of emotion involved. Some would ask, "Why do we ever sell guns and flamethrowers and all sorts of terrible things?" The answer, of course, is because Security Assistance is to help people to defend themselves. In many ways, it's an honorable thing to help out a friend who is in distress and danger. Some people can't afford to provide for themselves. Others would argue, "Yes, but what you're really doing is, you're trying to sell enough of these terrible machines so that the dollar cost to U.S. military of each piece of equipment goes down, and then the United States can better afford more equipment." The pros and cons...back and forth. There still is a lot of emotion attached to arms sales: "merchants of death" and all this jargon.

But with the arrival in office in early 1977 of Jimmy Carter and Cyrus Vance, they wanted to put a woman in a very high position in the State Department. They identified Lucy Wilson Benson and suddenly, bingo, she was made Under Secretary for Security Assistance, the number five slot in the Department pecking order. Lucy was a woman of extraordinary capability and experience. She had been the president of the National League of Women Voters and in that capacity had spent a lot of time testifying before many different Congressional committees on the wide variety of issues that the League chose to take positions on. She was a Democratic political figure from Massachusetts and had held high Massachusetts state office. Lucy was an honorary member of the Massachusetts Congressional Caucus in Washington. She was extremely well connected and was a very intelligent and effective woman. The problem was that she didn't know which end of a gun was the dangerous one. To put her in charge of Security Assistance and U.S. arms transfer policy was almost suicidal. As an Under Secretary nominee, she needed Senate confirmation. In order to get confirmed, she needed a crash course on weapons of war. I was held over as special assistant to the Under Secretary and was in charge of her special education in instruments of death. There were other people, new appointees, in the State Department bureaucracy, who did

not need confirmation. They knew that this was a hot political subject, especially early on, and they knew that if they wanted to make their mark on policy, the time to make it was before Lucy got confirmed. So, we had these wild few months in which I was her special assistant. I was in charge of teaching her to distinguish a main battle tank from a self propelled howitzer. She had to learn the differences among F-16s and F-18s and F-15s, and so on. We took her to Aberdeen Proving Grounds and let her fire guns and drive tanks and all kinds of things. I took her on a quick trip to Portugal, Spain, and Morocco because they were close together and we could visit three diverse U.S. Security Assistance teams in the field, and do it all in one long weekend. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs was end-running us. It was a real bitter, black-belt, bureaucratic struggle. It showed the ineffectiveness of the structure of the State Department at the time, where you had the Under Secretary level, but Under Secretaries didn't have line command over the Bureaus. They were sort of like commanders of ad hoc policy task forces.

Q: Did Ms. Benson get up to confirmation?

LEDOGAR: She finally got confirmed. She was very intelligent and was doing a fairly good job, but she had one weakness that was easily exploitable. She had a handicapped husband in Amherst, Massachusetts. Every Friday late afternoon, she flew up to Amherst and would come back to Washington about midmorning on Monday. So that's when all policy recommendation memos would move up to the Secretary from the bureaus, late Friday afternoon, Saturday, and early Monday morning, bypassing our office.

Q: Were you all trying to protect her?

LEDOGAR: Yes. But to tell you truthfully, I found to my dismay that in the Vance State Department there was a big difference between affirmative action as a gesture and what I would call real affirmative action. The real thing is where you push someone who is from a minority into a position of responsibility, but then you support that person to make sure that they're effective in that position. Of course, they used Lucy as a token and kept pointing to our senior woman, number five in the chain of command in the State Department. But when it came time to make sure that she was informed and her opinion was sought and respected, there was none of that. I was deeply disappointed that the people who appointed her didn't also decide to make her relevant. She could have been much more effective than she was.

Q: Was there a battle between your office, which was called T, and PM?

LEDOGAR: You bet.

Q: What were the issues?

LEDOGAR: Who was going to make the decisions and who was going to make the recommendations and whether Les Gelb, who was then director (not yet Assistant Secretary), had a direct pipeline to Cyrus Vance and could send his recommendations independently. Bureaucratically, he was supposed to report through Ms. Benson and factor in her take on things. These were policy recommendations that were forming the basis for the Carter Administration's

new departure on arms transfers. It was hot stuff at the time. It was a blatant bureaucratic end run. I was trying to get her in the policy loop, but I didn't get very much support from the 7th floor.

The problem with the new departure of the Carter Administration calling for arms transfer restraint was that instinctively Cyrus Vance and Les Gelb and his people tried to carry it out simply by putting into effect Carter's idea of an annual ceiling on the total value of U.S. arms transfers. Little thought was given to applying stricter criteria on proposed transfers, case-by-case. In practice, a ceiling becomes a floor very quickly in this kind of situation. If you say that "We're not going to transfer more than eight billion dollars worth of arms next fiscal year," everybody says, "Oh, yes? What's my share? How much of that goes to NATO? How much goes to Iran?" Then people want to make sure that if their share is X million dollars, that they get it early and they spend it early. Pretty soon, you find out that rather than hitting eight billion by the end of the year, you're up at eight billion halfway through the year and there are a lot of unfilled requirements. It just doesn't work out to try to tie your own hands artificially for the purposes of self-imposed discipline.

Q: Jimmy Carter came in saying he was going to control this "merchants of death" thing, to cut down on lethal arms sales, sales just for sales sake. Was anything really done with this? Were they really about to put much of a crimp in sales?

LEDOGAR: Well, not really. Several things kind of overtook events. The Shah or Iran was overthrown. There were a couple of other developments. I know of a couple of big sales that were killed. But I was quickly out of it and into another aspect of political-military affairs and not able to keep up with the... I was tapped four or five months into Ms. Benson's tenure to come take over the Office of NATO Affairs in the European Bureau, RPM.

Q: I was going to ask about Secretary Vance. Was he doing something else?

LEDOGAR: Cyrus Vance is a very bright, honorable, and very nice guy. I'd worked with him a couple of times, including very early at the Paris Peace Talks. He's a fine gentleman and so forth, but I don't think he had a lot of stomach for bureaucratic struggles. Vance was Secretary of State while Brzezinski was National Security Advisor. Brzezinski was cutthroat. Cyrus Vance made the mistake of trying to declare good relations between State Department and NSC staff. In practice, that translated into a predicament wherein every time there was a confrontation, the NSC staff prevailed. They didn't have any admonition to get along with us, but we had to get along with them because there was no department support above Bureau level. It was extremely difficult. The only way we could defend ourselves was by overwhelming them with numbers and paper. NSC staffers were few in number. We would just bombard them with decision memos. Rather than trying to cut them out, we cut them in on everything, the tiniest little detail. Soon, they were crying for help.

While struggling with this arrangement, I was working for George Vest in the Bureau of European affairs and Jim Goodby was his deputy assistant. I was by now the NATO Office Director. For most of the time, we had W. Tapley Bennett as our Ambassador to NATO. I did EUR-RPM from the middle of '77 to the middle of '80, ie, Director of the Office of NATO Affairs. That was one of the best jobs in the State Department. It was extremely busy, a mainline

office where you were working on all the important European security subjects that the Secretary of State was working on.

Earlier that year, immediately after Jimmy Carter came in, in January 1977, a Summit meeting of NATO took place in London, at which certain measures were taken as short-term improvements in the Alliance's defense posture. A study was commissioned for longer term defense improvements, with a view to reporting to another NATO Summit the following year, in the spring of 1978, in Washington. In effect, we allies all challenged each other and agreed that we would all try to pull together and increase our individual defense spending by three percent in real terms per year. That long-term defense plan caused an awful lot of work to be going on when I came back into the NATO arena in mid-'77, including having to start preparations for hosting the Washington Summit, which occurred shortly after I became Director. That's a little bit hard, as NATO Director, because you wind up having to do the work of not one state visit, but 15 or 16. The Washington NATO Summit in 1978 wound up being a temperature-taking on the London Summit challenges, especially the three percent defense spending initiative. The long-term program was adopted in Washington. Also around that time we began to get into preparatory work on what became the NATO two-track decision on Euromissiles.

Q: Were you around and had to deal with this rather unfortunate episode of the neutron bomb and Helmut Schmidt?

LEDOGAR: I was indeed.

Q: Do you want to talk about that from your perspective?

LEDOGAR: Yes. Again, this was early in my time as director of NATO. I joined the briefing team that went around major capitals in Europe in which our chief weapons experts from the Pentagon were presenting briefings to key allies about this nuclear weapon that was being developed, which had the properties of enhanced radiation but reduced blast (ERRB). It was dubbed by the press as the "neutron bomb." Some mistakenly thought this terminology was gratuitous slander by waggish journalists at the time; but actually, "neutron bomb" was carryover terminology from the very early post- World War II nuclear period, when the U.S. was developing nuclear-tipped anti-nuclear missile missiles (an extension of the NIKE program). It was decided back in the 1950s that you had a better chance of a kill in trying to intercept an incoming intercontinental missile in space if you used radiation to disable the target rather than a big blast. So, the technology was understood, but we had only just decided that ERRB warheads might be useful in the crowded potential battlefield of Central Europe, where one of the deterrents to NATO using battlefield nuclear weapons in pursuit of our flexible response strategy was the fact that so many Germans would be put at risk, assuming the Soviet attack went into Germany.

So, it was thought that it would be useful to have a nuclear weapon that was very discriminating in that it killed people near ground zero but it did not destroy all nearby buildings, nor people and things more distant. The idea was that an enhanced radiation weapon would be especially useful against heavily armored columns. The Warsaw Pact needed to mass its tanks to try to punch through NATO's forward conventional defenses. A heavy concentration of tanks would

present an attractive target for a NATO battlefield nuclear weapon. If such a nuke could be used without endangering our own forces or surrounding civilian areas with an enhanced radiation/reduced blast warhead, you could knock out the crews of tanks without necessarily having to smash the tanks and vaporizing the countryside. The problem was it was sort of a gruesome sounding weapon, and was susceptible to being portrayed as a “weapon that would kill all the schoolchildren but leave the schools intact.”

At the insistence of Congress, we had to organize it so that key European leaders would make commitments to receive these weapons on their territory before we, the United States, went into full production. NATO commitment to deploy was all set to go, and we even got Helmut Schmidt way out on a limb. On the very eve of the NATO meeting at which ERFB production and deployment was to be announced, our then Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, got to his friend Jimmy Carter. Young said, “You can’t do this. This is the eve of the UN Special Session on Disarmament. It would just be unthinkable to authorize and speak affirmatively and even threaten the deployment of this weapon at this critical time.” So, Jimmy Carter said, “Oh, yes, okay, we’ll drop it.” Nobody in Carter’s immediate entourage even dared or was capable of saying, “Mr. President, you no longer have the freedom to kill the program suddenly, because we’ve gotten our allies way out on a limb in support of it. We will have to find some other way to buy time and organize a way for Chancellor Schmidt and the others to climb back in again before you saw off the limb.” But Carter went ahead. We killed the program and guess what? Helmut Schmidt was furious. The task of informing the Germans fell to George Vest, who had to take some of the first lightening bolts from Schmidt. It was a general disaster of our own making.

There was another thing I’ll mention since it’s come back into the news here now, as we speak in 2001, after the Bosnian difficulties. We decided in the late ‘70s that there was an important weapons system that was being developed as a tank killer. It was an airplane called the A-10 “Warthog.” It was kind of a big, slow sub-sonic jet built around a big Gatling Gun, with five or six 30 mm. machine gun tubes.

Q: It was a big shell.

LEDOGAR: To give this weapon special punch for it to be able to penetrate enemy tanks, they made the slugs out of depleted uranium. It was recognized that in depleted uranium, (DU), low-grade radiation was still present. The DU rounds were very safe for handling and storage, but if your tank happened to be hit by these rounds, fired in anger, there would be a serious amount of radiation energy released as the slug penetrated the armor, because the DU gasified in the explosion.

Q: Also, the density of these meant that unlike most other things it would penetrate armor.

LEDOGAR: Yes. DU is harder than tungsten, harder than any steel. They also use DU in armor-piercing rounds fired from tank guns called “sabot” penetrators. But our problem was DU rounds for the A-10 aircraft. Trying to profit from the bitter experience of the neutron bomb, we did manage to orchestrate a smooth announcement and deployment. The material was accepted. The A-10 logistic base for the U.S.-European command was near London. The planes were fully

deployed to their positions throughout NATO Europe, but not carrying the depleted uranium munitions unless it was in time of war. The idea was that these DU rounds would be used only in time of war, not for training.

The NATO two-track decision on Euromissiles was worked out at the end of the Carter Administration. (And, incidentally, at the end of my tour in EUR (Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs) at the RPM, or Office of Regional, Political, and Security Issues). This was an effort by the NATO allies to address and try to deal with the destabilizing threat posed by the SS-20s medium range missiles of the Soviet Union. We came up with an Alliance approach, a two-track decision. On the one hand, we would try to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union on Euromissiles and also on strategic arms. We had already had one go at strategic arms control with SALT I and the ABM Treaty. We were in the process of trying another one, SALT II. But at the same time, we felt the need to get a handle on the SS-20. We felt that in order to have real negotiating capital, the Soviets had to understand that on the NATO side, if action in the form of negotiated reductions was not forthcoming, NATO was going to deploy its own Euromissiles. So we formed a group known as the NATO High Level Group, and set about the job of identifying what kind of missiles we would want to deploy ourselves, and where. We selected a combination of 108 new Pershing land-based medium-range missiles, and 464 new ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs). These Pershings would all be based in Germany, but the GLCMs would be based in five countries - Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Italy - the so-called "basing countries." That started this long struggle that was very big stuff for a couple of years, as we developed this plan and actually started to manufacture the missiles and build the deployment bases.

The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact started an all-out propaganda campaign, engaging all the Eurocommunists in trying to badmouth our Euromissile deployments as an attempt at escalation on the part of NATO. Some of the basing country governments that had strong center-left coalitions really were hard put to carry out their undertaking to accept deployment on their own territory. This was a very busy time. The problems included how to organize our response to the Soviet SS-20s, arrange it, take the decision, bind the people, and then start spending the money. The Congress said, "We want to have proof that the Allies are going to accept these missiles if we're going to put the money up to build them." Finally we started to bring the systems into Europe. In the meantime, it was time to organize the so-called Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) negotiations, which had to be started in Geneva. That's why it was called "two-track." NATO was going to negotiate the Soviet missiles out or it was going to deploy to offset them. Strategic nuclear arms negotiations were also going to begin at that time in Geneva.

Q: In a way, the Soviets started the thing by introducing the missiles.

LEDOGAR: That's right, but they wanted to try to say, "What's mine is mine and what's yours is negotiable." They tried to prevent NATO's counter-deployment. But they were unsuccessful. Just to set the context, recall that the INF negotiations began in Geneva in November, 1981. Paul Nitze headed the U.S. negotiating team and Mike Glitman, my predecessor as DCM at U.S. NATO, was chosen as his deputy. In early summer of 1982 the famous "walk-in-the-woods" took place in the countryside near St. Cergue, Switzerland, 15 or 20 miles north of Geneva. Nitze and his Soviet counterpart, alone on a stroll, worked out a tentative INF compromise on their

own personal responsibility, and each undertook to propose the idea to their authorities. I don't know whether Moscow or Washington hated the idea more, but as I recall, the Soviet Ambassador was the first to say that the trial balloon didn't fly at home. In November 1983 when deployment of U.S. INF missiles began in Germany, the Soviets walked out of the INF talks in Geneva. It was not until March 1985 that the new, and eventually successful, round of INF talks started again in Geneva. By this time Glitman was chief U.S. negotiator, and he brought home the bacon.

Let me just touch upon an indirect role that I played in the NATO two-track, or dual-track, Euromissile episode. As I mentioned, the INF consultations within the Alliance had two tracks, the hardware track called the NATO "High Level Group" (HLG), and the arms control track called the "Special Group" or the "Special Consultative Group" (SCG). National representatives to these groups were high level officials from capitals who came together periodically at NATO, where they would consult in an exploratory fashion, each representative speaking not necessarily on behalf of his government, but with knowledge of the general direction of his government's thinking on INF. Both groups were chaired by Americans, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy for the HLG (most of the time this was Richard Perle), and the Assistant Secretary of State for Politico-Military Affairs for the SCG (most of the time this was Rick Burt).

While these officials traveled to Brussels with small groups of experts from capitals, the essential business of each meeting took place not at the formal meeting itself, but at a dinner at my residence for heads of delegation. In addition to spreading out a fine meal for the 16 to 18 of us in the dining room around one big table, (my wife and the household staff saw to this behind the scenes), it was my job to chair the meetings as a host, recognizing those who wanted to talk, making sure that everyone had a chance to speak, and, as diplomatically as possible, squelching side comments or conversations. These heads of delegation dinners, and my wife and I put on perhaps 50 or 60 of them over a six-year period, developed a protocol of their own. The USG sprang for a special dining room table, as long and wide as my dining room and space for waiters allowed. We sat with me in the middle on one side, facing a mirror behind the opposite side, which helped me see everyone easily, and the American chairman of the Group sat opposite me as co-host. The representatives of the five INF basing countries were assigned on a rotational basis to the places of honor at each side of the two hosts. Others were rotated from month to month around the other seats "below the salt." From time to time, especially in the SCG, the heads of delegations would have a special guest like Mike Glitman, our INF negotiator from Geneva. I needed to have a solid grasp of the details of the INF issues but it was not my job to speak to substance, rather it was to create the atmosphere so that others could. Needless to say, there were extensive physical and electronic security measures in place at my residence for these meetings. But here we've gotten ahead of ourselves talking about the two-track decision. Let's go back.

Q: You traveled around a great deal. As regards NATO, what was your impression of the commitment, the ability of our NATO allies? Not necessarily an absolute one through ten ranking, but generally speaking.

LEDOGAR: There were certain features that you could count on as perennials. The allies were very upset when it seemed as though America was taking the lead and calling the shots. Then

they were equally if not more upset when it seemed as though the United States was *not* taking the lead and was *not* calling the shots. There was always this ambivalence about the role of the U.S. as NATO leader. Now the French, who saw themselves as number two - and one recalls the admonition that it's always worse to be second best in poker or in love - had this Gaullist holdover from the late '60s that as long as Europe was perceived in an alliance-to-alliance or a bloc-to-bloc dynamic, France would be condemned to be number two and would not be fully independent. They really felt that in Europe they were number one. They didn't want to be seen, as one of them explained to me sort of in a half rage, as the coal tender on a choo-choo train where the United States was the engine and everybody else was following. So the French had this real disdain for a bloc-to-bloc attitude. They, of course, had kicked NATO headquarters out of France.

Q: That was in the mid- '60s.

LEDOGAR: Yes. And they adopted a separate defense posture when they withdrew from the NATO military structure. They had separate positions on a whole lot of things. We were constantly running into problems with France and its theology about what was proper and for which NATO forum, what was not proper, what was strictly defense business and what was political or treaty business. They would not have French forces "integrated" on the NATO side. They talked about a strategy of "toute azimuth," which sounds a bit chilling to friends; in other words, they were prepared to shoot in any direction.

But other allies seemed to become so predictable when you had as much time in NATO as I did (11 and a half years of strictly NATO work broken only by a year off for the Senior Seminar). In late 1981 I went back to Brussels and became deputy chief of mission. So I had really had a lot of NATO time. I found that even as the personalities change, there are certain national characteristics of allied countries that remain constant. Some of these are charming. Some of them are very annoying. The Italians always tried to be the peacemakers. In times of negotiating impasse they always came up with "split- the-difference" solutions. They would compromise anything, even when others of us felt that we were with our backs to the wall and there was no further room for compromise. Other national characteristics were hot and cold. In my time the Scandinavian governments and Portugal were often leftist. It was always a struggle within NATO when leftist elements came into governing coalitions in these various parliamentary democracies, especially if Communist ministers came into high security-related positions. NATO security documents could be compromised. How do you deal with that?

Q: How did you deal with it?

LEDOGAR: There were only a handful of things you could do. One of them was reach an agreement with the country that they would have to close down their registry of NATO documents. Any document classified beyond confidential would be returned to NATO headquarters and could be read there by certain appointed representatives of the government, but it could not be left in any position where a Communist minister could dial up the archives and demand to see (and copy) sensitive NATO documents. At times, we just canceled certain sensitive meetings or had them without inviting all allied reps. Very difficult. You had to deal with these security problems with a combination of being straight forward and letting leaders of

affected allies know that as long as you've got Communist members in your governing coalition, you're just not going to be on distribution for certain sensitive documents. There is also the all powerful tool of a business luncheon hosted at the home of one of the ambassadors. Any group of ambassadors can get together and have lunch together and discuss anything they want. Nobody can say, "I'm left out." If it is not a scheduled meeting, there is no requirement to have everybody at the luncheon table. So, a lot of business was conducted that way, when we were concerned about leaks to the Warsaw Pact through Communist ministers in coalition governments of friendly states.

Q: Two things I'd like to cover. One was the view from NATO and from your perspective of the Soviet menace. This was not a quiet time. The Brezhnev Doctrine was getting cranked up and then you had the Afghanistan invasion. How did that play?

LEDOGAR: That played very poorly like a pail full of icewater in the face to many of us at NATO. It was the end of the concept of detente. It killed SALT II. The U.S. was running up to that treaty in late '79 and briefing it to the Alliance and telling ourselves that this was a pretty good deal, and then the Soviets marched into Afghanistan. That was that. We had the boycott of the Moscow Olympics. Things got very chilly at the end of '79, which happened to be very close to when U.S. self respect was being offended all over the place, including in the Iran-hostage crisis.

Q: What about this resurgence of Soviet might abroad, going into Afghanistan, which was essentially almost a satellite anyway? Did this change things with the French or the Italians trying to find a middle way?

LEDOGAR: On the contrary, I think it was very positive for NATO solidarity. People who began to chafe under good times started looking around for their friends when times started getting bad. It was rather terrifying to a lot of people that the Russians would do this. It was the first time that they really marched into foreign non-Warsaw Pact territory. Of course, Congress was infuriated.

Let me again go back here. I keep following NATO issues that began when I was NATO Director in Washington (1977-80) and following them as they continued when I was U.S. NATO DCM from 1980-'87. I went to the Senior Seminar in academic year 1980-'81. This was my second period of senior training. There were the requisite five or eight years in between. The Senior Seminar was a superb experience. I enjoyed that very much, traveling around the U.S. The big emphasis at that time was knowing the United States, all about the U.S., and very little about foreign affairs.

Q: I was in it from '76-'77.

LEDOGAR: I'm not going to spend a lot of time on the Senior Seminar because as a period of training it would not be of much interest to scholars of foreign affairs.

Q: You went from the Senior Seminar to where?

LEDOGAR: I learned the lesson that it was not a good thing for a career FSO to go into senior training or a short term assignment when U.S. administrations were changing. Instead of having an orderly process working in one job until you knew where you were going to go next when your training was over, you went out into the corridor at the end of the training. So, I was walking the corridor when I got out of the Senior Seminar. I did have some interesting short term assignments. I served on a promotion board. I was a member of a team that wrote the script for one of these big national emergency exercises conducted by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). That was kind of fun because you prepositioned cables and designed cataclysmic events that included decapitation nuclear strikes on Washington. But all the time I was angling for the job of deputy chief of mission back at NATO.

I should probably say a little bit more about the Senior Seminar in addition to it being a superb personal experience. I like to think that I was the sort of FSO that the program was designed for. I still had 16 more years in the Foreign Service, and it turned out that I spent 10 of those years as an Ambassador. That's what they were trying to do, to broaden and deepen the background of people who were going to move forward in senior jobs. For a while, the seminar was being used instead as a parking lot for people with assignment problems. As a part of our academic year in the seminar we had the phenomenon of the class study. Each seminarian was given a certain amount of money and a certain amount of time and was supposed to do a serious original study on a subject that was totally unrelated to his own field of expertise. As part of our study of the U.S. energy situation then in crisis, I did my study on van pooling and car pooling in America. That was a lot of fun.

Q: How did it go in the corridors trying to get a job?

LEDOGAR: Of course, the Reagan Administration, a new administration, had begun in early 1981. The two-track decision on Euromissiles had advanced to the point of deployment and the Soviets were calling for nuclear negotiations in Geneva. Early in the first year of Reagan's Administration, there was a summit meeting, at which it was agreed that the U.S. and the USSR would return to the table and have another whack at strategic arms reductions talks and a first whack at medium-range nuclear missile talks. Still in Washington, I had been offered a couple of jobs and they were pretty good jobs, but not in my judgement as good as DCM of U.S. NATO. But Mike Glitman was holding down that NATO DCM job. Washington wanted him to become Deputy in the U.S. Delegation to the Euromissile talks in Geneva. But Mike had certain conditions. He just wasn't interested in having his family in Washington while he went on trips back and forth to Geneva. Also, he wanted to be sure that he wasn't just the State Department representative on the U.S. INF Delegation, but rather that he would be truly the Deputy and the alter ego to our Chief INF Negotiator, Paul Nitze. Mike's negotiation with the State personnel people was going back and forth, and I was being yanked towards a job in the African Bureau or alternatively towards a job in Vienna on the MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction) Delegation. But I managed to hold on. Suddenly, Glitman was gone to Geneva and I was told to get to Brussels immediately. Tap Bennett, who was still there as our ambassador and whose desk officer I had been for four years, wanted me to come out immediately. It was just six weeks before the December '81 ministerial meeting time. I did that. I wound up serving five and a half more years in Brussels as the DCM of the U.S. mission to NATO.

Q: This was from '81-'87.

LEDOGAR: That's right. There were three U.S. ambassadors to NATO during my time as DCM. The first year and a half of it was Tap Bennett. Then for about three years from mid '83 to late '86 it was David Abshire. Right at the very end of my time, a fellow by the name of Alton Keel came in, but Keel and I overlapped only a short time. I left for my own ambassadorship shortly after he arrived.

Bennett, who had been at U.S. NATO a long time by the time I got there as DCM, was looking forward to his retirement and he knew that I knew the stuff and had been doing NATO for quite a bit of time. So he was quite content to let me handle an awful lot of the top stuff. Then David Abshire came. He was the founding director of the then-called Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, a big think tank guru and a very effective guy. He brought to NATO a whole different vocation, much of which was to continue the type of Foreign Affairs research and analysis work he had carried on in Washington. So, he added this on to the responsibilities of the Ambassador there. Again, I was left doing much of the Ambassadorial-level day-to-day stuff. Abshire didn't speak French and he didn't have a keen interest in a lot of the minutia. So I got to go to an awful lot of the Ambassadorial meetings. I spent a lot of time as Chargé because Abshire was off organizing conferences or doing a lot of special work for Reagan back in Washington.

Q: Taking think tank extension courses?

LEDOGAR: No, he was being briefed. He would organize big international conferences and symposia in Brussels to which he'd get visiting U.S. Senators and Congressmen, senior European statesmen and businessmen, and every think tank director that he could identify from around the world to come together. Abshire would get USIS to put up some money. He was always a master at leverage - "So and So's going to be there. You've got to be there. So and So is putting in money. Don't you think you ought to match that?" U.S. airlines would be told that it would be wonderful if they would supply all the transportation.

Q: I'm not exactly sure what NATO... [laughter] This does bring out the question... You've watched NATO. We had professionals in there and we've had other people come in there who have had their strengths and weaknesses, but sometimes it doesn't seem to be listed as an absolutely top assignment. Sometimes it gets rather political.

LEDOGAR: Bennett was the first career guy to get the job of Ambassador to NATO in, by then, almost 30 years of the Alliance history, and yet he got his job the same way all of his political predecessors did. He was a good old boy from Georgia. He was a friend of Jimmy Carter and all the guys around him. Abshire, Keel, and Taft followed Bennett. It was years before we had another career guy, Reggie Bartholomew. Then recently we had Sandy Vershrow. In my opinion, the U.S. assigned a mixed bag of political Ambassadors to NATO. Some were quite good, and some were near disasters.

Q: By the time you were back there, did you find that the equation had changed? You had a gradual growth of the European Union. This must have been something that had a certain dynamic. In a way, it's a counterforce and sort of a new solar system.

LEDOGAR: There are two sides to that. The European Union members were becoming more and more organized and beginning to coordinate more and more on political matters, but both the United Kingdom and France were loath to get into military cooperation if such European coordination in any way touched the fact that they were nuclear powers. They wanted to keep the nuclear vocation quite separate and play that with the United States directly, and with Russia and China. Also, the U.S. and the EU were beginning to understand each other more and feel less threatened. Some of the complication of the so-called "Year of Europe" and the idea that U.S. trade concessions would be balanced off against mutual security concessions - people realized nobody was going to play that game. But gradually, the European Union was becoming more of a power as regards coordinating European political positions. At first, it was sort of a joke when these people representing the European Commission would sit down at Western group meetings, semi-camouflaged in National Delegations. The rest of us asked ourselves: "Who is this person? Who does he represent?" But then gradually one realized that as EU political cooperation coalesced and Brussels became more powerful, there was a real reason for an overall EU point of view, especially when they started making modifications to their internal rule of consensus. That made decision-making in the political field easier for them. So, in a sense, yes, there were changes.

But in another sense, pure security matters always remained the furthest away from the likelihood of European political cooperation. More "Pol" and less "Mil" was the gauge for better success for the EU when trying to deal with "Pol-Mil" issues. One reason for that was the particular attitude of France. Since 1973 we had East-West "alliance-to-alliance" conventional disarmament talks going in Vienna: the MBFR talks. France and a couple of other countries didn't play on the basis of "our side, your side." In MBFR, positions were fully coordinated in advance. That was because the underlying problems with which both East and West were trying to come to grips - conventional force in balances and disparities - were all viewed as bloc-to-bloc. We also had quite a bit of East-West security negotiating experience by that time in the various aspects of the Helsinki process, i.e. the security basket in CSCE. Its spinoff entities started to coalesce and spawn new negotiating forums. They touched on security and cooperation in Europe, as the name CSCE indicates. But, the whole question of trying to organize East-West confidence and security building measures had to be undertaken with the assistance of France. But Paris insisted on the basis of a the committee of the whole, 35 nations under the Helsinki Process. Bloc-to-bloc approaches were discouraged by France. The Americans and several others asked, "How were we going to address the fundamental problem of whether there was a balance or imbalance between the forces of the two sides, or whether there was parity or disparity, or whether there was symmetry or asymmetry in our force postures, without considering the negotiations in terms of NATO versus Warsaw Pact?" After all, each military alliance was committed to maneuver, and if necessary, committed to fight together. That was the core issue. It was our alliance against the Soviet alliance in time of conflict.

In our view, the East had too many tanks. If we were going to have equal security at lower levels of confrontation, we would have to get at the question of the heavy concentration of equipment

on the basis of what their alliance had and what our alliance had. Furthermore, the neutral and non-aligned countries of Europe, especially Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, Yugoslavia, and Ireland, did not wish to negotiate about their force levels or their territory. But no! The French would not accept this logic. A bloc-to-bloc view is heresy to a Gaullist. It led to what France hates about Atlanticism, or dependence on American leadership. So, conventional force reductions had to be done somehow on the basis of what each individual country had. There was an intellectual impasse. NATO decided to take a fresh look at it within the Alliance. At the NATO ministerial in the Spring of 1985, ministers put together a High Level Task Force on conventional arms control (HLTF); we started to debate amongst ourselves how to organize a new approach. Shortly before, both the French and the Russians began to talk about how Europe, for security measures, should really be seen in the geographical context of the Atlantic to the Urals, and address the common security problem for the whole European tectonic plate - the whole Eurasian entity, instead of taking the bloc-to-bloc approach. A broad consensus emerged on the basis of this geographic view that there ought to be a new approach towards the conventional arms control in Europe: one that would take into account all of Europe, East, West, neutral, or nonaligned.

Eventually we got the French to agree that NATO would have to organize some combination of the two approaches. While one might have the trappings of the Helsinki process and be associated with the Helsinki way of doing things in one sense, we weren't going to allow Sweden and Switzerland and the other neutral or non-aligned states to deal themselves into an Alliance versus Alliance perspective and still remain neutral. If they didn't have anything to put on the table, then they didn't have any place at the table. We were going to count everybody's forces whether they wanted to be counted or not if they were potentially confronting entities. This went on and on and on. We had terrible fights within NATO in which the opposing views were championed by the United States, especially me, against the French negotiator, namely, Benoit D'Abouville. He overstepped his authority at one point and spent part of the year trying to retract an agreement that he had made. We wouldn't let him; and gradually we worked out an agreement. I was the chief U.S. negotiator, under Washington instruction; the French foreign office even tried to personalize things and suggest to Washington that I, Steve Ledogar, was the problem because I was a Francophobe! Washington didn't buy any of it, so they of course backed me.

Q: Did you have the feeling that the French proposal was mainly to make France a major player or were they on to something that we were missing?

LEDOGAR: There was an awful lot of old-fashioned Gaullist emotion and theology in their position. On the other hand, I do think that France had some real problems with trying to project Europe as Eurocentric with themselves in the lead. They also had difficulties with the whole North Atlantic concept of the U.S. and Canadian presence in Europe as a World War II holdover. While they wanted American troops in Europe and the U.S. nuclear umbrella extended over Europe, they did not wish to suffer the consequences of a predominant U.S. role. They said they wanted to have Europe for Europeans.

Q: How did the British, Germans, Dutch, and others feel about this?

LEDOGAR: For the most part, if you got them aside where there were no public consequences, they would admit that they agreed with the United States on the need to approach the question of European conventional arms reduction on an Alliance-to-Alliance basis. But they would quickly add, "Don't make me choose in public." They knew that for the longer term their vocation to a unified Europe would be threatened if they were made out to be disloyal to European unity. It was important to understand that. We Americans had to take a lot of heat and listen to disappointing silence from those others. Occasionally you might hear quiet encouragement, an occasional note of understanding or something like that, but the British, Germans, Dutch, Italians, etc., did not want to be forced to come out publicly in front of others as favoring the U.S. position over the French position. It was quite a dicey thing.

Q: It was important to have the continuity to understand from where everybody was coming and you could take your hits from the French and all that and not take them as seriously. I mean, you're not out to win France over in a brilliant burst of oratory.

LEDOGAR: No. A curious thing happened years later when I was U.S. disarmament negotiator in Geneva. I was getting along splendidly well with my French counterpart there. Our two delegations were working especially well together. Once, in a friendly private conversation, he asked, "Where did you ever get this anti-French reputation?" I said, "I was never anti-French. In fact, I'm part French myself. In fact, I love France. My wife is of French descent, my children were both born in Paris, and my daughter's godmother is French. What I despise is the French attitude towards NATO. I've always made that clear." I argued vociferously back in 1986 against the French approach to HLTF, because I thought it was contrary to my own country's interest and to the interests of the Alliance. This guy, the French Ambassador in Geneva, who became a very good friend, said, "I think I understand."

Q: You were dealing with NATO affairs for quite a while now. I'm not sure exactly when the Helsinki Accords started. But it was during the Kissinger period. George Vest was involved. What was the attitude looking at NATO towards the Helsinki Accords as it developed? In a way, particularly the "third basket" turned into a major key in unlocking Eastern Europe. Were you seeing a development of this being a peripheral thing, a growing awareness of how important this was?

LEDOGAR: For the U.S. the CSCE started out under a cloud because Henry Kissinger had absolutely no use for the whole Helsinki process. He thought it was a bunch of gibberish. It was "mush." To him it was all softness and sloppy thinking - the antithesis of "Real Politik." He particularly saw no utility in the humanitarian "third basket." Indicative of his disdain, in order to assuage some elements in Congress Henry even agreed to the establishment of a U.S./CSCE Commission - a joint U.S. executive legislative commission - that dealt in a lot of these matters. That's how far Kissinger regarded CSCE from being a useful instrument of U.S. foreign policy. With the commission in operation, when we had review conferences of CSCE processes, the U.S. Delegation had great problems because some U.S. congressman wanted to come to the negotiations to make speeches - uncoordinated personal speeches - to win brownie points with immigrant constituents. They would make their own policy on humanitarian affairs, on hostage release, on human rights, and so on.

On the other hand, U.S. diplomats who understood the Helsinki Process and learned how to work it realized gradually, and sometimes to their surprise, that what the founders had hoped for was really becoming true. In many East European countries, despite repressive Communist dictatorships, there was a lot of attention to the third basket and to the whole Helsinki process. CSCE represented an international entity, seven of whose members were states of the Soviet Bloc. Citizens of the East could quote CSCE statements, and CSCE communiqués had weight. You could not flout the dictatorship that was ruling you on other things, but you could say, “Hey, look, the CSCE communiqué has said so and so. How come we are not measuring up?” There have been a lot of interesting things written about what the U.S. learned later on. East European defectors started coming out saying, “Keep up the pressure on the CSCE because that makes our critics’ voices legitimate.” In reality the Helsinki Process had a significant impact on the events that led to 1989, and the breakup of the Iron Curtain.

Q: Czechoslovakia and other places. When it first came out, the main thing was that this would solidify the lines. Everybody agreed to what the boundaries of Europe were, that sort of thing. That’s what the Soviets were after.

LEDOGAR: That’s exactly what they were after. In CSCE communiqué negotiations they had to agree to pro-human rights passages in exchange for what they required in the security basket: inviolability of 1945 borders, etc.

Q: And they got it and then they got this bowl of mush, which really came back to haunt them.

LEDOGAR: It sure did. The French were looking ahead perhaps more than we were and they saw that the Helsinki process was a thing to support, and that if you could figure out some way to do the conventional armed forces negotiation under the Helsinki process, that would have its advantages. Of course the main advantage for France was that CSCE was not bloc-to-bloc and thus did not leave the United States in a position of commanding leadership. Paris may have been right about that from their point of view. They might indeed have come out better from the point of view of their current national interests because they didn’t have to follow the U.S. lead.

Q: More and more as one looks at this, the United States is put into the role of the leader of things like human rights, coming out for anti-corruption on business, what have you, and the other countries’ representatives may privately think, “Yes, that’s a good idea. We really have to do that,” but we were sort of designated as the tough guy and they would kind of sit there and watch.

LEDOGAR: Yes. And also, we were the tough guy who had to bear the heavy defense spending bills. They had other things that they wanted to emphasize.

Q: Were you feeling the pressure or concern about things such as withdrawing troops from NATO and so on? Was this a sword that was hanging over all of you all the time?

LEDOGAR: Yes, it was. It found many expressions. Many Americans were instinctively opposed to the U.S. continuing to bear such a heavy burden so long after World War II with 300-some odd thousand U.S. troops and so many billions of dollars per year to defend Europe. Why

weren't the Europeans doing more themselves? That issue was constantly before us. We were constantly having to respond as best we could to questions about continued U.S. presence in Europe. The standard response was that since we perceived that the threat to our national interests originated with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, we'd much rather confront that threat far from our shores rather than have our troops back here in North America where in the event of WWII, we would have to fight our way back onto the Continent yet a third time this century.

Then when you asked about how much it was costing us, I can remember at one point the answer that was given in congressional testimony was, "Well, Senator, our bill for our commitment to NATO is either \$3 billion or \$4 billion or \$9 billion, depending upon how you count." That was a perfectly defensible answer. What do you count? Do you count all the supply tail of deployed forces back at Fort Bragg, for example? Do you count all the support structure that's there in Germany, but which is backup so we can deploy forces all through the Middle East in the event of an extra-NATO crisis? There were so many different questions that needed to be answered before you could begin to answer the question as to what NATO cost us. That was a constant theme. We were proactive in congressional relations about U.S. troop levels in Europe when we were at our best. Certainly under Abshire we were. We would say, "Senator, you come on out to NATO. We'll give you a thorough exposure to the issues, walk the terrain, and talk to some of our allies" and so forth. Our objective was to get them to begin to appreciate the realities, not to change their minds.

That proved to be a very important approach in the arms control negotiations. Once the U.S. got to sit down with the Soviet Union in Geneva on SALT and START and INF, we then started in Vienna with the Conventional Talks in Europe. Paul Nitze, who had left the INF talks in the hands of Glitman to finish them off, stayed back in Washington as a special advisor to the Secretary of State on arms control matters. He made a special point of encouraging the Senate to appoint from its membership arms control observers. These folks at Paul's urging would take periodic trips to Geneva and stop by Vienna on the way just to be kept exposed and up to speed with what was going on. In the meantime, key staffers were given cables and kept current with developments in the negotiations. It was sometimes a hell of a drag in terms of timing, when the Senate Arms Control observers arrived on short notice, but when it came to earning support and, more importantly, consent to treaty ratification, it really paid off.

Q: Oh, yes. Congressional and media visits can seem sort of like a fruitless exercise, but in the long run, they are essential.

LEDOGAR: We should have done something like that during the later chemical weapons and Nuclear Test Ban Treaty negotiations, but did not, and therefore we have had this mess with the ratification of those treaties.

Q: Yes. What about the NATO military command? How did this work?

LEDOGAR: Well, you became very aware of it especially at the Ambassadorial and DCM level, when periodically, at least twice a year, we had big military exercises that would last for a week or so; war games, if you will, but ones that were played out as a command post exercise.

In these NATO military exercises, the scenario always had the Warsaw Pact being the aggressor and prevailing in the early weeks of the conflict, especially if you wanted to get to a level where NATO nuclear weapon release procedures would be exercised. The Pact would be winning rapidly, so the issue would arise that the only way we were going to stop them was if we gave authorization to the military authorities to release battlefield nukes. In the exercise scenario the military had to request political release of so many nuclear weapons to give us a rough idea where they wanted to use them. The North Atlantic Council would have to approve it. So, the exercise usually went on just to the point of actual nuclear employment and then the exercise was over. That was once a year. The other big semi-annual exercise of the command structure usually was a more simmering political exercise. There were many other times when you were exposed to the NATO military because they sat in, had a representative at all the big meetings, and we frequently made trips to visit troops in the field. We were quite close to our folks on the international military staff: the U.S. military representative to the NATO Military Committee, and his staff. The NATO Military Committee is the senior military body. That's at NATO headquarters in Brussels. They supervise the three Major NATO Commanders (MNC). One MNC is at SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe) and that's the one that people think is the biggest because that's where the American top dog is based and where most of NATO's military might would most likely be attached in time of crisis or war. There is another major NATO field commander, also an American, based down in Naples at CINCSOUTH (Commander in Chief, Southern Command). A third MNC always a Brit, commands all forces in the area of the English Channel. These three report to the NATO Military Committee at NATO headquarters. The U.S. representative on the headquarters committee is a four star flag officer and he has a staff of U.S. military folks who are right there in NATO headquarters.

I forgot to mention that in 1982 we had the very interesting phenomenon of our NATO ally the United Kingdom going to war with Argentina over the Falklands. That was fascinating, to see how a real crisis worked. The British quickly called a meeting of the NATO Defense Planning Committee and announced that while the attack on them did not involve NATO directly, being outside the NATO treaty area, the U.K. would be sending substantial British military assets from the Northern Hemisphere to go to the South Atlantic to defend the Falklands. Thus British contingent reinforcement to deal with a possible full NATO mobilization in the event of an East-West crisis would be temporarily degraded. From time to time, the NATO military authorities would be asked to brief the North Atlantic Council ambassadors. On other important conflicts outside NATO's direct area of responsibility, like the Iran-Iraq war or other events that were of potential danger. I also did not mention the 1982 accession of Spain to NATO.

The Spanish people voted for it, didn't they? It was not considered a sure thing.

LEDOGAR: No, it was not. For a long time, the United States was in favor of it and the Spanish authorities were interested, but not yet ready to take the issue of joining NATO to the Spanish people. They did, however, want to study the implications for Spain of acceding to the NATO treaty. So the U.S. used to have kind of a special relationship with the authorities in Madrid that after each semi-annual NATO ministerial meeting, someone would be spun off from the U.S. Delegation from Washington to stop in Madrid on the way home. The idea was to give the Spanish a first hand insight and expert reporting on what we were doing. That job fell to me for

four years between 1977 and 1982. While I was NATO Director in Washington I always came home from ministerial meetings via Spain.

Q: What were you gathering from the Spanish? What was in it for them and what was in it for us and how were they reacting?

LEDOGAR: They were acting very businesslike. Having been holding NATO for so many years under Franco at arms length, when King Juan Carlos and the Socialists came in and started to consider NATO membership, the Spanish obviously had to climb a steep learning curve. When the U.S./Spanish NATO working group was formed, I must say the Spanish put good people on the job and these people did their homework. At first they couldn't comprehend some of the arcane things like NATO common military infrastructure, which is very complicated. And yet you'd find out the first time they came back they had studied their papers and they were asking very intelligent questions, and the next time they were asking very penetrating questions. In the process, the Spanish were building up a cadre of people who became very well informed about even NATO minutia, though it was not yet politically ripe to make the public move. Then once they decided to put the issue to the people, things moved rapidly. In fact, the lead up consultations had been so quiet that we had a curious period when the issue of potential Spanish accession became very active; we, the 15 existing allies, had to turn around and kind of reeducate ourselves as to what were the values of having Spain join up. The inclinations were to look only at political problems. Some allies were overlooking the geostrategic considerations: the territory and the population, the GNP, and the military forces, the navy and air forces and so on. I think Spain moved when the time was right. There were certain Spanish leaders that deserve a lot of credit for making that move. Fifteen years later, a Spaniard became the Secretary General of NATO.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover up to '87?

You were saying that you had a problem which was part of the support system, which was the Department of Defense school, where the children of our military and also our diplomatic service go.

LEDOGAR: In Brussels there was a fairly substantial community of American government employees accredited to Belgium, to the European community, to NATO, and to the international organizations. Because of NATO there were a lot of military personnel. But there was no regular U.S. military base. When in 1966 NATO headquarters left France and moved to Belgium there was established in Brussels a Department of Defense school. At that time, any U.S. government employee in the community could use the DOD school. Children of civilian U.S. government employees, while not required to go there, had to pay tuition if they went anywhere else. The U.S. government would not support education of children of its employees assigned to Brussels other than at the DOD school. Thus, if you were a State Department officer or a CIA officer, you couldn't get reimbursed for any school other than the DOD school. The theory was that the U.S. taxpayers were supporting one government school. Why should they pay "again" to reimburse parents who wanted to send their kids to a non-U.S. government school?

But it turned out that the DOD school that was right there in Brussels, not being on a base, therefore was not enjoying the infrastructure support from a U.S. military establishment, the maintenance personnel, all of the plant material, etc. It was pretty far down the line in terms of priorities for the European DOD school system. It was not drawing good teachers, and the school was just kind of sinking in standards and becoming worse and worse. The American civilian families said, “Look, I didn’t join the Foreign Service to go overseas just to be put into a ghetto situation where my kids have to go to a second class school with only Americans. What little advantage my kids can get from being with us abroad is that they can go to school with the foreign kids they play with next door.” Then the U.S. military parents’ answer would come back, “You’re just fancy pants diplomats and you don’t like your kids going to school with kids of sergeants and corporals. That’s your problem.” “No, it isn’t that. It’s blah, blah, blah.”

It became an elitist question and very divisive. The allegation was made that if the civilians were given freedom to go elsewhere with government support, suddenly 25% of the student body would be pulled out and the critical mass necessary to keep the school in Brussels would dissolve. In that event, the Brussels military kids would have to be bussed all the way down to SHAPE, where there was a big U.S. DOD school that was quite reliable but about 45 miles away. It got to be quite bitter, with parents getting all emotional and flying off the handle, and senior people getting involved.

It didn’t help that at the beginning of the Reagan administration, the president appointed a Conservative U.S. businessman to be U.S. Ambassador to Brussels. There were three different English language schools in Brussels that the American community (both business and government) used. Two of them were private and the third was the DOD school. It happened that all three were attended well below capacity - there was more capacity than there were students. The U.S. Ambassador, with his businessman’s approach, said, “Look, why don’t we close one of the three and fill up the other two? Then instead of all three being at 2/3 capacity, we’ll have two schools that will be at full capacity and the redundant resources could be shared.” He sort of suggested that the worst of the three schools was the DOD school and he asked, “Why don’t we just close that one?”

Well, then the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe — a senior four-star general — came out of his cavalry saddle. He really got very excited and in effect replied to the Ambassador saying, “We make a deal with American servicemen when we order them and their families to leave the United States and the advantages of the American system that they have there. According to that deal, we’re going to make family life abroad as much like the United States as we can. There are lots of morale advantages for our people and there are advantages for U.S. policy. It keeps our guys off the streets. There is less friction with the local community. And yes, our people can go to an American commissary and buy canned Chef Boyardee spaghetti even though they are based in Verona, Italy.”

There were just these two cultures, U.S. military and U.S. foreign service, clashing. I, being the deputy chief of our mission to NATO, with a delegation that was half military and half civilian, sort of wound up in the middle of this thing, being lobbied by both sides. The curious thing is that the solution came not locally, but with the stroke of a pen in Washington, when someone said, “Well, we don’t see why American civilians in Japan or Italy or anywhere should have to

go to DOD schools. Why don't we just give U.S. civilian agency parents their allowance and let them choose?" Suddenly the issue was resolved. It turned out that many of the non-military students who were in the Brussels DOD school decided, "Why should we get out now and start in another English language school when we have just one or two more years to graduation?" There was no abrupt drop-off. Also, the DOD realized its Brussels school was not first rate and threw some more money in and upgraded it. So all three schools survived. But the thing I remember was how passionate parents get when the issue is schools for their kids.

Q: You're talking about the kids.

LEDOGAR: That's right.

Q: A good friend of mine, Tom Stern, was DCM in Seoul, Korea, and got into one of these things. He had the people from the Embassy whose kids were going to DOD schools saying, "Well, there are not enough college preparatory courses" and some of the military side said, "We don't have enough vocational training." It was a battle. It is a cultural problem.

LEDOGAR: In my own family when my wife heard that I was angling to go back to Brussels for our second tour she said, "I'll go to Brussels, but our kids (then eleven and nine) are not going to go to that DOD school." That's the first thing she said. The reason was that she had played tennis for years over in Brussels with American wives and then back here during my following five years in Washington with the same folks that we knew from our first Brussels tour. The kids of my wife's tennis partners, who had all gone to the DOD school, all seemed to have had problems in later schooling. The mothers were constantly blaming the DOD school, saying that their kids didn't learn good study habits, they didn't have sound foundations in this and that. So I had strict instructions when I went back to Brussels to find another solution for our two kids that was not the DOD school. I was not looking forward to paying tuition for a private school. As a matter of fact, I was very fortunate to be able to get them on a space available/tuition free basis into the European Common Market school, (the English language section), which was a superb school. It was only after our kids had been a couple of years in the European school that this big American community blow-up occurred. Then the Washington Worldwide Ruling provided allowances for USC civilians regardless of proximity to DOD schools. After that policy change, we would receive reimbursement for tuition like anybody else, but ours were already in the Common Market school, effectively on scholarship, and doing well.

Q: Is there anything else we should talk about?

LEDOGAR: I had some theories that I developed on the basis of a lot of multilateral political work. I used these thoughts in counseling young officers, especially political officers, when they would arrive for a tour of duty at NATO. My objective was to alert them as to how different a tour in multilateral affairs would be from any previous tour of duty they might have had as a political officer in a bilateral post. A lot of people have attitudes about multilateral diplomacy versus bilateral diplomacy. Any one of us can have prejudices. Mine favor multilateral diplomacy as a profession, but I respect those who prefer bilateral diplomatic work. The point is that there are some fundamental differences that one should expect, especially in NATO work. When we would get new political or economic officers arriving, and especially if they had experience

in a bilateral post, I thought it was important to warn them from the very beginning, “You’ve just come from a place where your job was to get out of the office, learn what’s important, learn who is important, what’s going on, and then analyze things and report back to Washington those things that affect U.S. interests.” If you were doing your job, you were probably not around the Embassy very often. You would have to develop your contacts and you’d have to nurture them and exploit them on your own initiative.

Here, you’re going to find political work is quite different. You can have a very successful tour of duty at NATO headquarters and never leave the building. All your contacts are already made. Your committee counterparts from the Netherlands and Norway and so forth; those are your contacts. The fact that a scheduled NATO meeting takes place means it’s important to the United States. You’ve got to make decisions. You may decide how important the meeting is and how much space to devote to it, but you’ve got to report it. It’s an Alliance event that was scheduled here. You will learn how to draft cables here like you’ve never done before. We produce an enormous amount of reports. We do it at a very high speed. But one thing you will get here in abundance that is very hard to come by at a bilateral post is experience in multilateral negotiation. It has little to do with experience in bilateral negotiation - selling a car or a house, settling a two party dispute, and so forth. Multilateral negotiation is not zero sum. It’s not winners and losers. The whole business is moving ahead in a common enterprise to extract the highest common denominator, and getting it right. You should start with the recognition that there are differences. Multilateral diplomacy is different. If you accept that, you’ll have an easier time of it. I still feel that that’s true.

Another thing, and this is a prejudice of mine, but I did some bilateral work and found it to be true, is that a lot of the bilateral issues were what I call “garbage on the neighbor’s lawn” kind of issues. They are not very important in themselves but they take on an importance in the local context. U.S. radio transmitters and magazines are spilling into Canada and sucking up advertising dollars that Canadian radios and pubs would rather have for Canadian media. That kind of stuff. You’ll find that in multilateral diplomacy, the issues, while often fuzzy and less clear-cut than bilateral ones, are of a higher caliber.

Let me just run by quickly the remaining events of my five and a half years as U.S. NATO DCM. In ’87, during the last few months that I was in my second tour of NATO, I began commuting to Vienna once a week to represent the United States at the CFE [Conventional Forces, Europe] negotiations. Recall that within NATO the allies were hammering out an agreed approach by the sixteen of us to try to engage the seven member Warsaw Pact states. For a while, I was going back and forth every week between Brussels and Vienna between two pretty big jobs. Indeed, for three months in the winter of ’86-’87, I was U.S. Chargé ad Interim in NATO between Abshire, who left to be Reagan’s Iran-Contra advisor, and his eventual replacement Alton Keel. Keel suddenly came out of the NSC staff because of some political upheaval in the White House.

Beginning in early 1987 with Monday morning working breakfasts at 23 in Vienna, we gradually got going on CFE. Then after a period of time it became clear that this was going to take off into a full-fledged negotiation and that the U.S. would have to have an Ambassador and a full time Delegation there. About that time the U.S. Ambassador who headed our Delegation to the MBFR post was transferred to a new assignment.

Now, funding for the MBFR team came out of the State Department budget. State also had first dibs on controlling the new U.S. CFE Delegation, but it had not budgeted for it. Having been U.S. Representative all during the NATO in-house deliberations, I was a likely candidate. As this new approach to East-West reductions of conventional armed forces in Europe wound up, the older forum, MBFR, continued, but would be wound down. There were other strong candidates for the new position. I did not hesitate to point out to Washington that if I got the nod for CFE we could do both CFE and MBFR with one team.

That's the way it worked out. Ledogar was the low bid. In the middle of '87, I moved to Vienna; and shortly thereafter, I was appointed as an Ambassador by President Reagan to be in charge of the U.S. Delegations to both CFE and MBFR. There, with the one delegation, I was doing two negotiations. One was the old approach to East-West conventional arms control, MBFR. The other was the design phase for the new approach; ie, to design a mandate for the CFE.

Q: What do you mean by "design phase?"

LEDOGAR: Well, before we 23 members of the CFE {NATO (16) and the Warsaw Pact (7)} could begin talking about actual reductions, we had to agree what we were first going to talk about: what the geographic area would be, what would be on the table, who would participate, and what the rules would be. By going for a detailed mandate first, we agreed on all sorts of things that usually complicate a regular negotiation or are in some of the minor paragraphs of a treaty. In other words, first we specified the scope of the negotiations. Jim Woolsey, who eventually took over the CFE portfolio for the U.S., testified that his job was made relatively easy in many ways because much of the tough procedural stuff was already done by the time he got there to Vienna.

Q: I assume it was the Soviets on one side. Who was on the other side, you and who else?

LEDOGAR: We worked it out that it would be the 16 members of NATO on one side and the seven members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization on the other, i.e., 23 of us would do the negotiations. There were 12 other states who were also members of the CSCE, namely the European neutral and non-aligned states. They would be kept closely informed of progress in the negotiations but they would not participate in any of the meetings, nor would any of their territory or any of their armed forces be considered as negotiable. Because their security would be affected by what happened among the 23, it was recognized that the 12 had a right to inside information and to have their views taken into account. All of this design phase work would fall in the end into a so-called mandate, and this mandate would form part of the final product of the then-ongoing Vienna CSCE review conference. That was in accord with the compromise worked out with France: the new CFE Negotiations would be fundamentally autonomous among members of the Western and Eastern military alliances, yet CFE would be within the framework of the Helsinki Process (i.e., the 35 of CSCE). That's the way it worked out. The mandate was concluded just in time to be promulgated in January 1989 in the Vienna CSCE review conference final document. This coincided with what became known as George Schulz's last waltz in Vienna at the very end of his tenure as U.S. Secretary of State and the end of the Reagan Presidency.

PIERRE SHOSTAL
Political Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1974-1977)

Pierre Shostal was born in Paris in 1937. He graduated from Yale in 1956 and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1958. His postings include Leopoldville, Kinshasa, Brussels, Lilongwe, Moscow, Kigali, Hamburg and Frankfurt. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 16, 1997.

Q: Today is the 8th of July, 1997. You were in Brussels with NATO from '74 to when?

SHOSTAL: '77.

Q: How did the assignment come about?

SHOSTAL: I'm really frankly not quite sure. Two possibilities at that point were either to come back to the Department, and the African Bureau was interested in having me. The other possibility was as Political Officer at our NATO Mission. I preferred the latter. I'd spent quite a lot of time in African affairs at that point and wanted to have a somewhat new field and I felt that my Moscow experience gave me good preparation for that.

Q: What was the situation in NATO in '74 when you got there?

SHOSTAL: There were a number of problems. The immediate one was the Cyprus situation. I arrived there in the midst of the 1974 crisis between Turkey and Greece.

Q: Which should have been about the 14th or 15th of July, 1974?

SHOSTAL: That's correct. What had happened was the Greek government had decided to declare unification between Cyprus and Greece. That was too much for the Turkish government and they sent in troops at that point. There was fighting and when I arrived there, there were desperate efforts being made to achieve a cease-fire and to pull the forces apart.

Q: Why don't we talk about this first. My experience, I served in Greece for four years and had the good sense to leave there on the 1st of July, 1974. Later I served in Naples where I knew the NATO Commander South. I wonder if you could talk about how within your job and other people, how they viewed the Turkish, Greek commitment to NATO and their relationship. Because, this has always been the stepchild.

SHOSTAL: Well, I can't claim to be a real expert on this, because I happened to arrive at NATO as the crisis peaked. I didn't really work on those issues subsequently, but in a nutshell, my impression was that you had a very incompetent military regime in Athens at that time, whether trying to conduct domestic or foreign policy. They totally misjudged Turkish reactions. I think

they saw this move of uniting Cyprus with Greece as something that might shore up their popularity, but it backfired. This led to the collapse of the military regime shortly afterwards.

Q: What about your colleagues? Did they go around swearing about the damn Turks and the damn Greeks? I mean, sort of upsetting the rather more sophisticated Western European group or not?

SHOSTAL: Well, there was quite a lot of frustration over the Greek-Turkish problem and Cyprus problem. You're right, this was seen as a distraction from NATO's main business, which was maintaining the solid Western front against the Soviets. Once the cease-fire was achieved and the U.N. presence was re-established and also, with the end of the Greek military junta, the problem really tended to subside. People at NATO were too happy to forget about the Cyprus bombing.

Q: You mentioned that there was a broader issue concerning the NATO Southern flank. Could you talk about that during the '74-'77 period?

SHOSTAL: Right. There were during that period a number of important changes that were taking place in Southern Europe that made some people very concerned about a sense of erosion in the position and influence of the United States in Southern Europe. That had to do with, first of all, the what was seen as the challenge of Eurocommunism at that time.

Q: Could you explain what Eurocommunism meant?

SHOSTAL: This was the brand of communism in individual countries, particularly in Southern European countries, in which the Communist parties distanced themselves from Moscow, appealing to national feelings and resentment against governments in power. Quite a few people felt that this movement, particularly in Italy and then later in Spain and Portugal were very dangerous to the alliance, because at best it might promote neutralism and infiltration of governments by Communist agents.

Q: What was your job when you were at NATO?

SHOSTAL: One of the briefs that I had was dealing with Spain and Portugal, which was a very interesting one, because both countries were undergoing the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Franco died during that period, I think it was in 1975. Already in '74 you also had a military coup in Portugal by generally leftist officers that overthrew the old right wing dictatorship. In both countries there was among Americans a concern that you might have a lot more Communist influence in the governments than you would like.

Q: I'd like you to get the NATO perspective. I think one of the great moments in American diplomacy is how our Ambassador, Frank Carlucci, dealt with the problem in Portugal. I've interviewed him on this subject, but I was wondering if you could give me the perspective that you saw. How things developed, not how it came out, we'll move to that, but how you saw it at first, how we felt about it and then what reflections were you getting from Washington from Secretary Henry Kissinger?

SHOSTAL: As Frank Carlucci has probably told you, in Washington there was a lot of skepticism about Portugal at that time and the direction it was heading in. There was an inclination to write Portugal off, even exclude or quarantine from NATO. I think there was a lot of that feeling at our mission in NATO at that time. Carlucci came up from Lisbon on his way to Washington to try to persuade the Administration, particularly Henry Kissinger, that there were elements in the Portuguese establishment with whom we could work. Carlucci thought there were people who were basically democrats and who should be encouraged to keep Portugal out of Communist domination and, rather, develop a democratic system. Carlucci's approach was to work with these people, to give them some backing. One issue that involved NATO was to figure out what to do with the Portuguese armed forces to get them out of politics, to get them focused on military tasks. Carlucci proposed a package we worked on during his visit of practical steps that would help ensure that outcome. I think it was a really very impressive success on Carlucci's part. First, to identify people we could work with; second, to come up with a practical program that would move things toward his goal; and then to sell it in Washington, which he did.

Q: Can you remember any parts of the package that you were dealing with to bring the officers to keep them professional and out of the politics?

SHOSTAL: It was essentially a military program of reorienting, retraining, and re-equipping the Portuguese forces. There were two basic parts to it. One was the Navy which had long been a rather minor, but still useful NATO partner, but which needed to be upgraded. But, more important were the Army and the Air Force whose focus had been on fighting colonial wars and on being an internal security force. So, it was focusing on them, providing them with the equipment and training programs that would give them a NATO role, and a greater sense of professionalism. In a sense, what was accomplished with Portugal and later Spain in developing professional armed forces for emerging democracies is what we're trying to do in Central Europe today.

Q: We're talking about the great debate over whether to bring some Central European countries, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary into NATO. We're talking about it today.

SHOSTAL: Exactly. The strong parallel here is with the military in those countries. We're trying to reorient and restructure their professional approach, and recast the relationship to civilian authority.

Q: I think one of the things often forgotten is that a major effect of NATO has been to professionalize the military forces and make sure that they keep to their professional tasks, rather than dabbling in politics.

SHOSTAL: Exactly. That was the key element, perhaps the central element of the Carlucci package.

Q: How was this received? I assume when Carlucci came he was talking first to the United States and then they'd go out beyond that?

SHOSTAL: That's correct. I don't recall that we sent the Carlucci package to other posts for comment because it was too sensitive.

Q: It doesn't sound like this sort of thing you could until we had the American ducks in line, because it was apparently he told Kissinger, get off my back and let me play. He happened to have had just left subcabinet rank and so he was not somebody Kissinger could sit on, although somebody else might have been. In the first place, who was the head, who was your Ambassador to NATO and the DCM and let's talk about how they reacted to this.

SHOSTAL: I'm trying to recall, because I had an almost bewildering succession with Ambassadors when I was there. My first few weeks, was under Don Rumsfeld, but within a month of my arrival he left to become Chief of Staff in the Ford White House. That particularly turbulent summer also included the Nixon resignation and Rumsfeld was succeeded by David Bruce who had as his DCM Ed Streater who was the DCM for most of my time. He was there when I left in 1977. So, Bruce was there for, I think about a year, roughly 1975, but I can't remember exactly.

Q: So, during this Portuguese crisis who was the Ambassador then?

SHOSTAL: I think that Bruce was the Ambassador.

Q: What was the reaction within your delegation to this thrust of Carlucci? I mean prior to it and when he came. Were there changes?

SHOSTAL: That I don't recall precisely. I think that there was a tendency in the delegation to take the Kissinger view up until Carlucci visited. But, I do remember particularly one evening meeting with Carlucci where he really made the case extremely well for trying to help the moderate democratic politicians and military people in Portugal.

Q: Let me throw a little thesis at you on the subject and if you want to play with it you can. Sometimes I have the feeling that with Henry Kissinger, particularly when he was backed by Richard Nixon, tended to be of the old European School, very sophisticated, not very optimistic, worse comes to worst, that type of thing. Whereas, there is a certain amount of American can do, maybe you can work within the thing and sort of never say die. This seems to be a place almost where these two principles came to a clash. Where we were seeing a European communism maybe beginning to take over, how you cut your losses and all that. This is from the Kissinger thing and Carlucci and others are saying, to hell with this, we can do something.

SHOSTAL: I think I would agree with that. I don't think that I had that feeling at that time, mostly because I hadn't read as much of Kissinger's work at that time as I have since. But, I think that would certainly fit with his book on Metternich and I think his effort to kind of equate himself with Metternich trying to constantly shore up the old order that was crumbling away. I also had that feeling with respect to another issue that was very prominent at that time and that was Central Africa, particularly Angola, and the Cuban offensive there. I did attend a meeting with Kissinger during the height of some of the fighting in Angola where he'd expressed himself to be very pessimistic. He felt the Congress in particular was undercutting him and making it

impossible for him to conduct a policy that was in the national interest. But, I would agree with you that there seemed to be in Kissinger at the time a sense of pessimism, believing the United States to be on the defensive in the face of a dynamic and a really aggressive Soviet Union.

Q: Yes. It's a theory that I think that's important to try to recapture, because looking at it from our perspective now, we realize that the Soviet Union had feet of clay and wasn't going to last very long. But at that time we felt that they were on the march and we were on the defensive.

SHOSTAL: I think that was true with respect to another issue that I worked on and that was the CSCE.

Q: Could you explain what that is?

SHOSTAL: CSCE stands for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It had originally been a Soviet idea. I think the Soviet goal was to achieve the recognition of the postwar borders and of Soviet influence in Europe by having a document that would be signed by all of the countries in Europe, as well as the United States. The United States Government was initially very skeptical toward the CSCE idea, because it suspected it to be a ploy by the Soviets to consolidate their influence. But, as the discussion process went on, at least some Americans saw some opportunities to try to achieve a greater political breathing space for the countries of Eastern Europe that were under Soviet domination. That eventually proved to be the package that was agreed on at Helsinki in 1975 in which, along with recognition that current borders can only be changed by peaceful means. There was a series of provisions on other issues such as human rights. These provisions incorporated a lot of Western ideas about political freedom. It was those Western ideas, which at that time were known as Basket III of the CSCE document that proved to be tremendously potent in the 1980s and very much contributed to the collapse of the Soviet empire.

Q: You were involved in this. As this thing developed, what was the initial reaction toward this event? The analysis coming out?

SHOSTAL: I think that CSCE generally was more popular among European governments and NATO delegations than it was within. I think there was quite a lot of American skepticism that very much could be accomplished with the Basket III measures, because the feeling was that the Soviets really wouldn't apply these measures to their own country or allow them to be applied in Eastern Europe. There was somewhat more confidence that a separate set of provisions of CSCE called military confidence building measures could help defuse a certain amount of East-West military tension. The idea was to build confidence and transparency through measures like observing each other's military exercises, exchanging information about military budgets and those kind of things.

Q: What was the feeling toward the Soviet threat? The military threat and then the political threat?

SHOSTAL: There was a definite change during the period I was at NATO. The military threat had become a kind of routine thing for much of that period. The military balance between NATO

and the Warsaw Pact seemed to be very stable. What changed things was the decision of the Soviets, I believe in late '76 or early '77 to deploy the SS 20 intermediate range missile. That seemed to be an effort to change the military equation, to change the balance in the Soviet's favor by deploying a weapon that could reach anywhere in Western Europe and for which the West didn't have a counter.

Q: What was the analysis that was coming from your mission and from the others? Why were the Soviets doing this?

SHOSTAL: I think it was a view that the Soviets appeared to have achieved, technologically, parity in the whole range of weapon systems including the intercontinental range. By deploying this new set of weapons, the SS-20, they seemed to be trying to achieve a means of pressure and intimidation against Western Europe that could be used for trying to extract political concessions.

Q: What was the reaction within both, first the American delegation? How was this news received, was this one of the satellite information things or did the Soviets announce it and then what was the reaction?

SHOSTAL: I can't remember exactly how the first intelligence reports came through. I think more significant was the political reaction. As I recall it, Washington feared that this kind of initiative would further still European tendencies toward accommodating the Soviets. One of the favorite terms at that time was Finlandization. In other words, Europe making itself more neutralistic, more compliant toward the Soviet Union. So, there was a great deal of alarm about the SS-20. But, the turning point, was a speech that the German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt gave in early 1977 in which he pointed out the acute political and military danger presented by the SS-20 and pleaded for a strong Western response. That was the beginning of the America-led effort to deploy intermediate range missiles in Europe.

Q: Was there the feeling at that time that, I mean we had missiles that could be deployed, we just hadn't put them in to Western Europe. Was the feeling in a way almost a shrug or something saying, well, if they want to play that game we can really count on that, or not?

SHOSTAL: No. I think that there was, well within the Administration and here I can't speak with any authority, but my impression was that...

Q: Now we're talking about the Carter Administration?

SHOSTAL: We're talking about Carter, the new Carter Administration.

Q: Which was, I mean in the view of a lot of people a bit shakier on confrontation with the Soviet Union. I mean Carter early on wanted to do business; he was not in favor of confrontation.

SHOSTAL: No. I think that's right. Taking military steps to counter the SS-20, the deployment, my impression is that this was not something that Carter would do instinctively. But, he did get a lot of pressure, particularly from Germany to do just that. There was also at that time, and this extends far beyond my time at NATO (I left in the Summer of '77) there was quite a lot of

talking about countering Soviet deployment through the Enhanced Radiation Weapons known as the Neutron bomb. I think that was the Carter's Administration preference, because it would cause less destruction. But, later Carter abandoned that.

Q: You weren't there at the time he abandoned it?

SHOSTAL: No, I had already left.

Q: I can't remember who it was, but I interviewed somebody who was there at that time and said they could hardly wait to get home and vote against Carter and there was his turnaround on the Neutron bomb that undermined Helmut Schmidt.

SHOSTAL: Well, I had an opportunity to talk with Schmidt many years later, in early 1989, and he was still very bitter at Carter for having abandoned him.

Q: I think at the time it was talked that his young daughter, Amy, had said it was not a good idea and he then changed his mind. I don't know. What about Spain while you were there? This was part of your bailiwick.

SHOSTAL: That was really a very interesting problem with some similarity with the situation in Portugal. The similarities were that Spain at that time was trying to make a difficult transition from dictatorship to democracy. One difference was, that you didn't have the threat of a left wing dictatorship as you did in Portugal. You had essentially conservative politicians taking over from Franco trying to make that transition. Also, unlike Kissinger's view of Portugal, you simply couldn't write off Spain. Spain was too important. We had significant bases there and it occupies an important piece of real estate, so you had to deal with Spain. I think pretty quickly between the Mission at NATO and our Embassy in Madrid, there was a consensus that trying to work toward Spanish entry to NATO was the way to help stabilize the transition.

Q: This was in the same line as with Portugal to neutralize politically the military by making a military force and not a political force.

SHOSTAL: Exactly. The Spanish army was quite a large army, but devoted essentially toward policing the country. They really didn't have either missions or training or equipment that allowed them to be significant players in NATO strategy, so there was definitely a benefit seen in trying to restructure the special forces.

Q: Within the NATO ranks in the military, the fact that they were all professional officers and they were all kind of working together that this sort of kept the military from running off and trying to do things, I mean was there a sort of spirit that you just don't mess around with political events?

SHOSTAL: I don't think so. I think that we had first of all some encouragement with the Portuguese experience which had already started a bit earlier and that seemed to be pretty well on track. Within the American establishment, diplomatic and in military, I felt that there was quite a lot of support for the idea of moving Spain toward NATO, but we all recognized that this

would be a big job. Portugal had been already in NATO right from the beginning, but Spain was a relatively large country and we recognized it would be a process that would take a number of years. Among the reasons that we thought it would be a rather long process was, first of all that there was no consensus within Spain in favor of NATO membership. The political left, which had not yet had a chance to govern, seemed to be very opposed and they were certainly a very significant factor. Also, among a number of European governments, there was a strong feeling that military steps weren't necessarily the most productive ones for linking Spain more closely with Western Europe. For them, EU membership was the higher priority. Also, Spain at that point was still a relatively poor country and it was felt by a lot of Europeans and some Americans that the economic benefits of joining the European Community really had precedence.

Q: What was your job? Did you have sort of a watching brief on Spain and Portugal and Italy and elsewhere, or would you go down and visit? How did you work?

SHOSTAL: I did have a brief for both Spain and Portugal. In the case of Spain I spent several days working in Madrid with our Embassy on developing a package of steps for moving Spain along. So, that was really more than just a watching brief, it was really a very interesting sort of operational challenge to see what we could do as practical steps. There wasn't the same kind of policy level resistance to working closely with Spain from Washington as there had been earlier for Portugal. The problems were more budgetary ones. With Spain being a large country, the amounts of assistance or equipment that would be involved would be considerable, so it was more those kinds of problems and resistance that we met. But, most important, was really the question of the political complexion of Spain itself. Spain clearly wasn't ready for several years after those initial steps for NATO membership, though finally it did join.

Q: What were you getting when you looked at Spain? This is the period where Juan Carlos became King after Franco died. At first it had a hand-picked Franco government I believe and then it moved to a socialist government, didn't it?

SHOSTAL: That was somewhat later. During my time it was still a conservative government. I believe they had elections already during the time I was there, which brought in a right-of-center government.

Q: Within this right-of-center government, how did you find they reacted?

SHOSTAL: I'd say in lukewarm fashion generally. I think that their concerns were that NATO membership first of all was not very popular in Spain as an idea; secondly that it would be expensive, because it would mean re-equipping their armed forces. So, there wasn't a great deal of enthusiasm, although certainly there was interest.

Q: So, in effect, we and we're talking about the United States, but also parts of NATO were more looking towards recruiting Spain than Spain was pounding on the door to get in NATO. Is that correct?

SHOSTAL: That's correct. At that point that's right. One of the things that we had in mind was to shore up the southern flank of NATO by bringing Spain in.

Q: What about Italy? Italy, during that period and since 1948 has persistently had about a third of its voters vote for the Communist party and it was sort of the center of "Euro- communism." What was the feeling toward Italy?

SHOSTAL: Well, let me first say, Italy was not one of the countries that I had a brief for, but of course you couldn't avoid looking at Italy, because it was important. I think there was a mixture of concern very much along the lines that you described, because of the possibility that Euro-communism could really achieve a strong position of influence there. There was nervousness about the revolving door nature of Italian governments and a sense or at least a fear that the linchpin of the traditional political system in Italy, the Christian Democrat Party, was becoming more corrupt and that this process of erosion in time could lead to the Communists coming to power.

Q: You had what in your brief case, you had Spain, Portugal and what else?

SHOSTAL: CSCE. The CSCE issues which included preparations for and follow-up to the 1975 Helsinki Summit. This included a lot of work on the military confidence- building measures.

Q: Did you get involved in the CSCE negotiations?

SHOSTAL: Yes. I was involved in the NATO negotiations of trying to achieve common allied positions on the key issues in the CSCE. That was really a lot of fun to do.

Q: Let's talk a bit about some of the other major NATO countries. How about Great Britain in the CSCE business? Where were they coming down?

SHOSTAL: I think that generally Great Britain played a rather low profile role in all of this. It tended to be very supportive of the United States. I think that Britain by that time still was trying to use the special relationship with us as a means of maintaining its status as an important power, and we had agreement on issues with Great Britain. But, as far as CSCE itself is concerned, I don't think that the British were all that keen or excited about it.

Q: Of course the Germans had the greatest stake, because we're talking about boundaries, which were German boundaries essentially. What were you getting from the Germans?

SHOSTAL: I think that there was a schizophrenic view coming from Germany. On the one hand, on the question of boundaries no German government at that time would want to be in a position of formally accepting forever and ever the borders as they were at that time. This would have meant giving up any claim to territories that had been German for many years before that.

Q: And, they had a significant population that were looking toward other places as their real home?

SHOSTAL: That's right. So, for the Germans, I think very important in the CSCE was a provision that borders could be changed by peaceful agreement, even if at that time it didn't look

as if this could happen for a long time. On the other hand, the Germans, being on the front lines of the Cold War were very interested in measures that decreased tension and the possibility of conflict. They were also interested in doing whatever was possible to improve relations with Moscow so as to improve the lot of East German citizens. That time was a period when you already had several years of so-called Ostpolitik which was one of trying to improve relations with Moscow and with the other East European countries as a way of improving the lives of East Germans through more visits and that kind of thing. So, the Germans were generally in favor of things that seemed to improve East-West relations and were very supportive of CSCE, because they saw that as an instrument for doing it.

Q: France, I'm not even sure what we call France. Was it in or out or what was its role on this particular thing?

SHOSTAL: France was a member of NATO and still is, but not a member of the integrated military structure. Hadn't been since '66-'67. On CSCE, France did not tend to play a really major role. I don't think that they saw CSCE as an instrument that advanced their interests very much. I think what they were much more interested in was to play a kind of double track role. On the one hand, being within the alliance in a partial sense and, on the other hand, continuing to pursue the Gaullist dream of being the interlocutor between East and West, between Moscow and Washington. This usually translated itself into difficult and somewhat obstructive behavior within NATO. There were at that time, as there have of course been since then, lots of friction and irritation.

Q: I have to say this. I interviewed somebody who was later one of the Deputy Secretaries in NATO, Phil Merrill, who was saying that while he was there that his children use to think that it was one word, the God damn French, which he would say almost every day when he came home. Did you find within the American military and the other military, German, British particularly and others. How did they view the CSCE?

SHOSTAL: I can't recall any real discussion. I think among the American military there was quite a bit of skepticism about whether or not it would bring any real results, but they saluted and carried on. One thing that I mention about the French angle is relevant here and that is, one of the reasons I think that Washington tried to avoid direct collisions with the French during that period, we were finding them to be very useful to us in Africa. This was the time that a lot of turbulence in Zaire for example. There were two instances, one in '77 and one later in '78, of secessionist movements in Zaire, which the French had the major hand in sending troops in to put an end to. So, there was a kind of a balancing feature in our relationship.

Q: Was that the time when there were problems in Chad too or was that somewhat later?

SHOSTAL: That was somewhat later.

Q: In the early '80s?

SHOSTAL: That's right. The French role in Africa was something that during this period (in the '70s and certainly in the '80s) was one that we considered to be of value in blunting Soviet, Cuban, and later Libyan thrusts.

Q: Well now, you having come out of Africa, were you sort of the African hand in the NATO mission?

SHOSTAL: Well, as they say in the Hertz commercial, "not exactly." There really wasn't much interest in Africa, except for Angola.

Q: But, Angola at that time was considered to be part of a major indicator of Soviet expansion wasn't it?

SHOSTAL: That's right. Southern Africa, especially South Africa because of the sea lanes, was the main focus of interest.

Q: What was your impression of, from what you would see of our intelligence about Soviet intentions and Soviet capabilities?

SHOSTAL: The capabilities issue was less of a problem because we had, thanks to satellites, a pretty accurate picture, at least of the hardware side of their capabilities. What we were less good at, I think that subsequent events really showed this, was in being able to access the effectiveness of the fighting forces from the point of view of morale, discipline and leadership. When it came to missile deployments we knew very quickly what was going on or if divisions were being moved around we knew that too. Intentions was a very different matter. There was really a lot of debate already beginning at that time about whether the Soviets might be trying on the back of their military modernization and build-up program of the '70s to achieve strategic breakthrough. For example, already at that time, the mid-'70s, there was a lot of worry about whether the Soviets might be embarking on a big civil defense program. Now why's that important? Because, that would have suggested that their strategy might involve a possible first strike with the expectation that they could survive or ride out a counter strike by the United States. That would be the kind of things that intelligence people and strategists would worry about as an indicator of a change in Soviet intentions. There were at least some indications that the Soviets might be moving in that direction. So, there was a lot of worry about their intentions in that respect. I don't think that there was too much worry that they would try an attack through the Fulda Gap, that area of Germany which would be the most likely invasion route.

Q: David Bruce was the Ambassador most of the time you were there?

SHOSTAL: He was there I think about a year, I think the year of 1975. I don't remember the exact date. He was followed sometime I think in '76 by Robert Strausz-Hupé, a conservative university professor.

Q: Did you get any feel for David Bruce while you were there?

SHOSTAL: Yes. Really a man of great distinction with an amazing ability to analyze problems very clearly and cleanly in a few words. He reached conclusions in a way that was sometimes witty, but always done with a sense for the broader picture. Just listening to him in staff meetings was a real education.

Q: What about Strausz-Hupé, because as you say, he came out of the conservative wing and sort of an odd appointment to have during the Carter Administration?

SHOSTAL: I believe he was still appointed by Ford, but still around, I think, for the early months of '77.

Q: Yes, that would make sense. Did you find that he came in with what we would call a conservative viewpoint that we've got to get tougher and that sort of thing or what of a change?

SHOSTAL: Something of that kind of rhetoric, but I would not call him somebody who was interested only in confrontation with the Soviets. Very honestly, I was never quite sure what he was trying to accomplish, but I think that he was trying to get his voice heard in Washington. I do remember a NATO Defense Ministers meeting in London, probably in '76. He asked me and a military officer on the staff one evening to write a paper to be given to the Secretary of Defense for the next day in which we recommended a total revision of NATO defense strategy and to base it on a kind of Swiss-style militia defense system where you have an automatic rifle under every haystack. In the event of a Soviet invasion, he thought that the Soviets probably could break through with their tanks and that these militias would be able to so harass the Soviet columns that this would be an effective defense. Well, we gave our paper to the Ambassador and I think he gave it to the Secretary of Defense, but we never heard anything more about it.

Q: Well, actually there was a certain type of thing, wasn't it the Gladiolus operation which one heard about much later about the CIA having arms caches around so that if the Soviets broke through they could distribute arms.

SHOSTAL: That's right. I think that was, however an earlier operation. I think that was in the '50s.

Q: Yes. But, I think the arms were still around, because of the trouble in Italy I believe, if I recall.

SHOSTAL: Italy and I think Austria too. No, I think that idea did not find much favor.

Q: Obviously, you were a good soldier, but did this thing sort of raise some eyebrows?

SHOSTAL: It raised my eyebrows I must say. Although, I approached it with great modesty and a certain amount of excitement. It was sort of fun to try and rewrite NATO strategy overnight.

Q: Well, after turning NATO around in '77 where did you go?

SHOSTAL: I came back to Washington. I had been out of Washington for seven years which was quite a long stretch and had just been promoted and decided that I wanted to try to do something different.

Q: What rank were you then?

SHOSTAL: I was then a three. That's equivalent of one today. I really decided I wanted a break. Just before I left NATO I ran into Tex Harris who's the AFSA President and he was working at the Environmental Protection Agency and loving it. He was working on a NATO program for enhancing the environment called CCMS. He said, "Listen, there's a great job available at EPA to manage the U.S.-Soviet Environmental Protection Agreement." This was an agreement that had been signed at the '72 Summit in Moscow. He said, "Look, they're looking for somebody for that job, are you interested? Do you speak Russian?" I said, "yes." So, I went there and it really was a fun job. I did a lot of traveling in the Soviet Union during the period I was there and had a very different relationship with Soviet officials from the one I'd had five or so years earlier while at Moscow. Because, this was a program in which the Soviets were really interested. They thought that they would get some benefit, so that meant that access to officials, access to parts of the country which had been very difficult to achieve was much easier.

Q: This was from '77 till when?

SHOSTAL: Till late '78. I was there only a little over a year.

FRANK H. PEREZ
Political Advisor, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1974-1977)

Frank H. Perez was born in Washington, D.C. in 1924. He received his Bachelor's and Master's Degree from George Washington University and served in the US Army from 1943 to 1946. He was posted abroad in Brussels, Geneva, and Ankara. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed Mr. Perez on February 15, 2006

Q: You were then assigned, I think to...NATO?

PEREZ: Yes.

Q: And you were there from '74 to '77. What were you doing in NATO? This would be in Brussels.

PEREZ: I was the Political Advisor on the delegation. That was a job that was held by Jim Goodby when I took over, and before him Larry Eagleburger had held it. The job was to serve on the NATO Senior Political Committee and to work with the various delegations on mutual problems, as well as to run the Mission's political section.

Q: In other words, you weren't used as sort of the Nuclear Advisor. This was a much broader scale. This being '74 to '77, at that time how did we view the Soviet threat in Europe?

PEREZ: We viewed it as very serious and as a growing threat because of the continuing deployment of nuclear weapons, the growing imbalance in ground forces and that sort of thing in Eastern Europe.

Q: This was before the great crises when the SS-20 was put in?

PEREZ: Right.

Q: That maybe upset the whole mutual policy at that point or at least it was about to.

PEREZ: Yes.

Q: How did you find working with other nationalities in NATO? Was this a different way of working?

PEREZ: Pretty much so, yes. It was very collegial, but then there were problems. For example, when I got there we had the crises over Cyprus involving Greece and Turkey. We had to work with their representatives separately, and we couldn't deal with them in the normal manner. The French were somewhat of a problem, particularly with regard to such things as Ministerial communiqués.

Q: On the Turkey-Greece thing, I had been in Athens As Consul General. I left in July of '74 just before all hell let loose, and there was a Greek sponsored coup in Cyprus, and the Turks responded by inserting troops, and here were two NATO countries sort of at loggerheads. How was this resolved in Brussels?

PEREZ: It was solved by a delicate diplomacy working with both sides. They cooperated, I think, as much as one could expect under the circumstances.

Q: There must have been sort of a feeling under the other NATO countries where you were, "Oh, my god! We've got to worry about the Soviet Union with so many divisions sitting on [inaudible]", and you've got these two little countries on our flank going to war over a small little island, and it seems more like a tribal dispute or something. That must have been a certain attitude.

PEREZ: Yep, when you had North Atlantic Treaty council meetings, and the Greeks and the Turks went at each other, it wasn't a very allied thing to do.

Q: You get that. Especially a [inaudible] issue when you deal with those people. It's hard for us to empathize. You mentioned the French. The French were not on our Military but on the Political side, but in some ways their military had to be kept involved.

PEREZ: Oh, yes, they were. They were involved. They knew what was going on. They were fully involved in all the NATO activities, except the military side, but they were fully aware of what we were doing military-wise.

Q: I image there was quite a bit of really understand that despite what the political masters were saying in Paris and other European capitols, and the French were not in the military side of NATO had sort of military command, military commander, there was quite a bit of cooperation. So it was more a dispute that seemed to...

PEREZ: They had a mission in SHAPE headquarters, so they were fully informed and aware of what was going on militarily. They saw the need for it because of the need for full integration of NATO forces in the event of wartime situations

Q: As things played out, did you find that the Germans, the Netherlands, Norway and all, Italy, were there disputes or differences between these various countries on what we were going to do in NATO?

PEREZ: No, I didn't really discern too much difference in views on the various issues that came up before us. The Soviet threat was growing and the allies saw a clear need to work together to confront it.

Q: You weren't there at the time that the Neutron bomb came up? That came a little later or not?

PEREZ: That became quite an issue. I don't specifically recall much about it since it was an issue that would be handled by the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). The one thing we did was to keep the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group fully updated on all these issues. We didn't want them to feel that we'd left them out of any of these sensitive matters.

Q: I'm looking at the dates, '74 to '77, nothing particular was happening on the Soviet side. The Czech invasion was back in '68, but...

PEREZ: There were no major crises while I was there. One of the areas that I worked on was the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talk that were being conducted in Vienna. In Brussels, at NATO, we put together the Allied policy on MBFR. That was one of the important areas I worked on as head of the Political Section.

Q: Watergate was being played out, the crisis there with President Nixon I think while you were there.

PEREZ: Yes.

Q: Did you see with your colleagues, did that have any impact at all?

PEREZ: It had a direct impact on our mission because Donald Rumsfeld was the Ambassador. President Ford called him back to be his White House Chief of Staff not very long after I arrived in NATO.

Q: Who took his place?

PEREZ: David Bruce, a prince of a man. He was called back from retirement by his friend Henry Kissinger.

Q: He kept being called back from retirement. Poor man! They never let him go.

PEREZ: As soon as he got there, there was the Portugal crisis and I can remember being with him during the wee hours of the morning as the crisis unfolded. We had the Red admiral in charge of Portugal, so this created a lot of problems for the alliance.

Q: Yes. I think it's one of the major stories. I have Frank Carlucci's account about what to do with Portugal. While you were there, this was when basically relatively junior officers who were leftist in Portugal had their coup and took over, and the feeling was that... I think Henry Kissinger to all accounts was about to write the Portuguese out of NATO practically, and Carlucci and others were saying, "No. Let's let this run its course." Were you getting into the debate?

PEREZ: Not directly. Carlucci came up, and we spent a couple of days with him and Ambassador Bruce. We felt that the best thing to do was to keep Portugal in, but we had the requirement to cut off their access to highly classified materials such as Nuclear Planning Group materials and other sensitive materials.

Q: What was the Portuguese role in NATO at the time? They must have been off to one side at that time.

PEREZ: They didn't play a major role, no, but they were a full member of the Alliance.

Q: Basic thing was, of course, they had the Azores, I think.

PEREZ: Yes. For us. .

Q: How did the other countries look upon Portugal at this time, the other countries in NATO? Were they more supportive of Portugal?

PEREZ: I think they were equally concerned as we were about having a government that was leftist and they worried about the security of the NATO information and the commitment of Portugal to the alliance.

Q: Did you get any feel for how Rumsfeld was as our ambassador to NATO?

PEREZ: Yes, I did. He was very positive, and he felt very confident in his role. He felt that he needed to take a leading role in the key activities in NATO to include both the political and the military. He was highly respected by the people in our mission and well liked by his colleagues on the NAC.

Q: Did you find in NATO that we were working hard not to force our will on NATO? In other words, trying to allow all countries to have their say and not appear that this is just an American instrument. Was this a problem?

PEREZ: That's always a problem because we had a much larger presence there than all of them, and we had Alexander Haig as NATO Supreme Commander, plus a very active crowd in Washington seeking to push their agenda in NATO. In general I'd say we tried to be even-handed and not to give the impression that we were the bully on the block so to speak. We worked closely with these countries and took into account their concerns as best we could. Obviously we worked the closest with our key allies to develop a consensus that we could then push in the larger arenas.

Q: Was the Mansfield Amendment Proposal on the table at that time, which was to the NATO countries weren't fulfilling their troop and financial quotas, and we should start withdrawing? Was that an active issue?

PEREZ: I don't really recall that, but yes our allies always worried about any reduction in the U.S. commitment to defend Europe, both in terms of our troop strengths and the coupling of our nuclear deterrent.

Q: I'm not sure when it came up, but it was sort of to make the European countries live up to their commitments more.

PEREZ: We constantly urged these countries to meet their NATO commitments. Of course, there were annual reviews of each country to determine if it had met its commitment to NATO.

Q: Had any?

PEREZ: In most cases yes. When they hadn't, NATO would seek a commitment from them to do more.

Q: When you left NATO, where did you go?

PEREZ: I went to Geneva to the Strategic Arms Talks, SALT II. I was nominated for the rank of U.S. Minister by President Carter and confirmed by the Senate. The rank was for my period of service on the delegation.

DAVID T. JONES
NATO Desk Officer, European Bureau
Washington, DC (1974-1976)

Political-Military Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1976-1980)

David T. Jones was born in Pennsylvania in 1941. He received a B.A. and an M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army overseas from 1964-1966. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1968, his postings abroad included Paris, Brussels, Geneva, and Ottawa. Mr. Jones was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Today is April 19, 1999. You were in NATO affairs from 1974 to when?

JONES: Essentially straight NATO affairs from 1974-1980, first on the desk from early 1974 until the summer of 1976 and then a switch to U.S. Mission NATO in the summer of '76.

Q: Let's concentrate on '74-'76. What was your job?

JONES: I won't quite say that it was a supernumery desk position but it was within a subpolitical section within the NATO desk certainly for the first stretch of time on this. We were doing support work for the Political Committee at NATO. We were also doing work for the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society [CCMS], which was an environmental and scientific type of NATO subcommittee, an effort to make NATO a little less military and show a kinder and friendlier face to NATO. Even at that time, there was some concern that NATO shouldn't be viewed as a straight military alliance. It was also the tag ends when I arrived of the Year of Europe and the CSCE declarations, the Helsinki-related declarations. These were in the final phases of being created. The man for whom I originally went to RPM to work for, Robert Frowick, who is the man running the NATO summit right now, the 50th anniversary summit, was a deputy subdirector or section director within RPM at that time. He had been the general drafter, creator, organizer, of many of the Year of Europe declarations and Helsinki-related declarations.

Q: I'm trying to pick up attitudes. Henry Kissinger was Secretary of State. I would have thought that things like the Helsinki Accords would have been viewed by people like yourself working with NATO would be that this was all fine but it really was something of no real consequence that was mostly PR.

JONES: There was an element to it that said that the Russians were getting a better deal out of this than we were getting. One phrase from the time was, "The Russians have got their half loaf and we're going to have to fight for ours." The point for the Russian half loaf was the guarantee of borders, that borders were not going to be changed other than by the most democratic means. It looked as if under those circumstances what we had done was put a seal on the permanent division of Germany. The side of the loaf for which we would have to fight which was being presented now as a touchy-feely-kind of thing, was the openings that they were supposed to guarantee, the greater freedoms, the greater access to publications, to information, theoretically greater flows of movement of populations. There were people who thought that it would never come to pass, that it just wasn't going to happen, that the Russians would stonewall us and we would get nothing out of our side of the CSCE. What it proved very slowly over about 15 years and more is that it was far more successful than we thought it was going to be at the time. The series of CSCE review conferences always seemed to be a fight uphill, but we were steadily able to put the then-Soviets on the defensive in the way of humanitarian, human rights, openness of

populations, greater elements of discussion, exchanges of publications, things of this nature. Most of the people who had as much a military spin to their thinking as a political spin to it didn't think they were going to be all that successful.

Q: What was your particular bit of NATO?

JONES: At the beginning, it was a very small bite, not much more than a nibble to the extent of assisting in the preparation of instructions for people at NATO in one of the subcommittees, the Political Committee. It was not even a very senior NATO committee. And also work on the Committee on Challenges of Modern Society, which again in retrospect actually people had more hopes for as something that was being kicked off, something that might be quite dynamic and dramatic in its prospects, which has continued on but as a very tertiary element of NATO, and I don't think has ever developed anywhere near to the level that they hoped it might in scientific.

Q: In many ways, it's been superceded by more global organizations, hasn't it?

JONES: I guess so. There have been other things that have emphasized global outlooks and global aspects for environment. Perhaps it never got anywhere because it was never possible for it to. Even my wife will tell you at some point that the science that was presented in the way of projects to be done in CCMS was science that couldn't get funding anywhere else because it was pretty poor science. The things that they would bring out, like an electric powered vehicle, were also things that were being done in many other places probably more effectively. So, I was involved with this for perhaps six to nine months.

Then I moved to another section within RPM. That proved to be more interesting and more productive in many ways. This was dealing with the Nuclear Planning Group, the NPG, and a variety of political-military studies that were being done on the utility of nuclear weapons use under certain circumstances and the development of certain new types of nuclear weaponry, enhanced radiation, and reduced blast. They were almost abstract political-military concepts at least at my midgrade level. I see myself as more of a political-military technician working on these studies than anything else.

Q: I'd like to probe the feeling about nuclear weapons. To the layman, you look upon Europe and tactical nuclear weapons seem to be a complete oxymoron. How can something be tactical and be nuclear? How did you approach it and as you went on this thing, did you change? How did you feel about what people were talking about?

JONES: That is a marvelously complex subject with all of the iterations that you suggest. How did I personally feel about it? I felt that the weapons could be used. I did not feel that the use of one nuclear weapon or even substantial numbers of nuclear weapons meant that there was without any question going to be a world annihilation. I felt that nuclear weapons in Europe were absolutely necessary for us to be able to hold off the threat of a Soviet attack. There was a complex NATO European working group going on here as to where and how a war could or might be fought and under what circumstances. I remember the very first NATO nuclear-oriented meeting I attended. I was still ignorant about some of this. At the same time, we were

urging an increase in European conventional force capabilities. There was a three percent plan in which we were steadily pushing the Europeans to increase conventional capabilities across a wide spectrum of weaponry and of capabilities. Only one element of this spectrum was improved nuclear weapons and improved nuclear capability. But the question that I raised in effect was, “Why are you Europeans so resistant to increasing conventional capabilities?” I will never forget a German response that said, “We have no interest in making Europe safe for conventional war.” They had been there. They had done that. They wanted – or at least this group of Germans representing that government at that time – very clearly wanted it understood that there would be a nuclear war if there was a war. They did not want a situation in which they were going to be forced into an extended conventional slugging match with the Russians. As a result, we had elaborate scenarios as to what would happen under which conventional circumstances. We did not believe that we would be able to hold for an extended period of time with conventional weapons. Then the question would come as to what type of a nuclear scenario you would use? I bought into this. In honesty, I still think it not only would have worked but did work. We did indeed convince the Russians that if there was going to be a war it would end by being a nuclear war, that we would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons. I don’t think we would have hesitated. We would have thought, but we wouldn’t have hesitated. We would rather have gone to nuclear weapons than to have lost Europe as a result of a fight with the Soviets. We just weren’t going to lose Europe. We had convinced ourselves and the Europeans that a loss of Europe to the Soviets would mean a very, very isolated America and eventually our loss as well, that we would end by losing our own freedom and security if European freedom and security were lost. As we were not willing to expend the financing or the social commitment to build conventional forces to a level that we thought we would be able to stave off a Soviet attack, we depended as well on nuclear weapons to do so.

At the same time, there were doubters. There were a set of European doubters as well. This was a question of whether our use of nuclear weapons would result in heavier strikes by the Soviets in which case the argument was that we would only lose the war faster if we resorted to the use of tactical nuclear weapons within Europe. This was an argument that, happily, was never resolved by real testing. But it was an ongoing, persistent argument.

Q: Did you get involved at all with at least the fruits of these people in the Pentagon who were sitting around planning, “If we lose 20 million people and they lose 25 million people, we’re coming out ahead,” playing at the mega scale about nuclear exchanges?

JONES: No, I didn’t see that type of study. I worked a little bit on certain hypothetical exchanges on a lower level and whether some of these scenarios would work to our benefit. In particular, there was one case which came out all positive for NATO. That was how we used nuclear weapons to beat back a perspective amphibious assault by the Russians, which was a very clean study in all manner, shapes, and forms. It was clean because none of this weaponry landed, in effect, on NATO territory. It was all maritime. There was less as a result of an expectation perhaps that the Soviets would respond with nuclear weapons or they would have fewer immediate massed NATO targets in the same way.

In the same manner, just about this time, we began studying a variety of new advanced nuclear technology in an effort to find ways to make our nuclear weapons more usable on a tactical basis.

These were the enhanced radiation weapons or enhanced blast weapons and a variety of what they called “earth penetrator” weapons to use against a particularly hardened facility’s air base or underground command post, things of this nature. But the effort to use what later became known as the neutron bomb was indeed conceived of as a very humane exercise on our part, an effort to deal with the problems of Soviet armored formations. Their armor was just large enough and heavy enough with thick enough armor that our regular conventional weapons were seen as not that effective at that juncture. We were just beginning to talk about precision guided munitions, which were also very expensive. Our conventional anti-tank weaponry was not deemed to be that powerful or effective. The soldiers using it were regarded as pretty vulnerable in trying to use it. Consequently one of the things that they turned to was, “How can we use nuclear weapons, our most powerful and effective weapons, against armor formations in a way that would be tactically effective and less damaging to the area in which they would be fighting?” We never moved away from a recognition that this was our own territory on which we were fighting. No one was ever thinking of carrying the attack to the other side.

Q: Except for interdiction.

JONES: Right. But there was no talk about taking an opportunity to unify Germany if they were foolish enough to attack us. It was always a recognition that we would be killing our friends or at least people who were not particularly hostile to us. We never thought that Warsaw Pact allies were particularly hostile to the West or particularly combat effective so far as that was concerned. There was some concern about the likelihood that the Russians would push these people to the front of the assault and force us to waste our weaponry on inferior troops while they were more or less behind Warsaw Pact formations. But the nuclear philosophy was also not a last ditch philosophy. We were not going to put ourselves in a situation where we wouldn’t choose nuclear weapons until we were at the point of defeat. That was also both an American concern and a European concern.

Q: During this ’74-’76 period, we had a plan for the worst. How did we view the Soviet threat and the likelihood that the Soviets might do something and why?

JONES: I’m not sure I was particularly introspective at that point. There was an ongoing, endless concern that the Russians were just one or two steps away from being able to exploit a failure on our part. This is only six years away from the time in which they crushed all resistance in Czechoslovakia. Soviet willingness to beat their own people into submission over and over again was very pointed. It was something with which young officers or mid-level officers of my generation had been the abiding foreign affairs aspect, that Soviet influence was behind virtually all the problems that we could specifically identify around the world, and Europe remained the area in which we could lose the most the most quickly if we were not constantly on guard. This is why there were ongoing, endless concerns about the degree to which communists were active in France or in Italy. It’s also just about pre-eurocommunism. Whether the communists were going to be able to put a more cleverly adroit face on their nefarious actions.

Q: During this time, were people you were with concerned about the American army because of the abrasion that Vietnam caused on its fighting power?

JONES: Yes. There was a recognition that the Army was not what it had been. There was serious concern that the Army had not managed to emerge from being blamed for losing the war that the civilians had actually lost in Vietnam. But the retrospective problems of transitioning from a draftee army to an all-volunteer army and the questions as to whether an all volunteer army would work, whether it would be the right kind of army that we wanted were still in play. We were still struggling with drug associated difficulties in the military and particularly in the Army. I don't know how long it took for us to get to a point where we were more confident in the military capabilities of this new all volunteer army. Perhaps by the end of the '70s, the early '80s, we were beginning to be more confident that the Army had turned the corner and that the all volunteer military was working. But in these early-mid-'70s, it was still an army that needed recovery time. Individual officers that I met, individual mid-level field grade officers that I met, these were all very capable people, but they were also very dubious about the all volunteer army. They were afraid that what you were going to get was an army that no longer reflected America and as a result of which the population itself wouldn't support. They were also concerned that it was going to be a pretty stupid army. The people that they were going to get weren't going to be from any university background. They were also going to miss, they believed, the better class of ROTC graduate officers who were from better schools and had always provided also something of a leavening effect within the military. There were those that were afraid that we would start moving toward a pretorian military, that it might erode the concept of civilian authority over the military. You did not have, in effect, a draftee army that reflected the wide range of the population. There were people that remembered enough out of the French experience in Algeria and wondered whether we would start moving in the direction of an army that was politicized in some ways and divorced from control in others because it was an all volunteer military. These were mid-level major/lieutenant colonel officers who didn't really like what they were seeing in this all-volunteer army. Perhaps they and I didn't like it that much because we didn't know what could be done with it.

Q: It was a step into the unknown.

JONES: Well, in some respects it wasn't. Historically, we had not really been a draftee military. We had been an all-volunteer military. But it was the first time we were trying to meet circumstances that saw global responsibility rather than fighting Indians or being only a defensive force, having only a few thousand people. There were a lot of people that looked at the pre-World War I military, which was an all volunteer military, and said, "This was not a very good military. This was a Chinese army military," the phrase being "You don't make good iron into nails and you don't make good men into soldiers." That was the kind of military that people recall in From Here to Eternity, James Jones military. They thought that was the kind of all-volunteer military we would get. Well, we are very fortunate – it hasn't turned out that way. But in the early '70s, people certainly weren't sure about that.

Q: Within your circle, not at the higher regions, what was the thought process about members of NATO? For example, this was a very critical time with Portugal. Did that come into play at all?

JONES: That was a little bit before my time. But, yes, we were certainly worried about communists in government. Indeed we set things up at NATO so that we had confidence in the Portuguese ambassador there. But we put real limits on what he could do and see, and we

managed our way around the fear of communists in government in Portugal. At the same time, we began thinking of a Portuguese military modernization program. How can we strengthen their military? How can we make sure that their military remains involved in NATO military things? Some of this was a long ongoing program that I'm not sure has ever even really come to an end. But it involved a variety of areas in which we tried to strengthen the Portuguese military, particularly the Portuguese navy. Maybe that was Azores-related. There was a long ongoing frigate construction program for the Portuguese navy. But the Portuguese army was also one about which people were concerned.

Q: What about the French? They were sort of in and out. Would they be with us, ahead of us, behind us?

JONES: The French were always infuriating. If you took a description of the French at the time, you would feel in some ways that they ranged between irritating and infuriating. At the same time, there was recognition that on a very quiet military-to-military basis, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, SACEUR, had been working out arrangements with the French military. SACEUR had always been an American. I can't remember when General Al Haig was out there, but he was SACEUR in approximately that time. The fact that the French had military divisions in Germany for the defense of Germany gave us always the sense that they would fight in a clear Soviet attack on Germany – not because they loved the Germans, but because keeping the Russians further away from the French border would obviously be to French benefit. There wasn't much fear that the French would make a separate deal with the Russians. That was occasionally bruited about as a worst case possibility. It was something that the Russians would try from time to time in their discussions of "no first use" aspects of nuclear weaponry. But the French never left the North Atlantic Council [NAC]. They were always represented at the next step below the NAC, the Senior Political Committee [SPC]. They were always represented there. They were also always represented on the Political Committee, which was again another step below the SPC. But they had stayed out of the military side and as a consequence they also stayed out of the nuclear planning aspect. We very deliberately always kept a seat in the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) for the French. The French were never closed out of these meetings so far as us removing their nametag and options. We also kept a seat for the French in the discussions on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBRF). They didn't participate, but we kept a seat. These were for discussions of conventional forces and conventional force reductions. This is something that I also got involved in substantially while I was at NATO later, although not in this first two years-plus on the NATO desk.

Q: What about the smaller countries – Holland, Denmark, Belgium, Norway? They had rather substantial neutralist groups or at least groups that had not as much a tendency to feel they were on the frontline. How were they?

JONES: These countries did not send their "neutralists" to NATO, first of all, nor were their governments neutralist or ambivalent about NATO. As you indicate, in the Netherlands, there was a neutralist element. Historically, the Dutch have been neutral at times in European conflict. I would say that the Belgians were not. The Belgians were strongly committed to NATO. The Nordic countries were involved but not engaged. NATO, working on consensus, as it does, in theory allows any single country to stop a NATO consensus. That could mean that the totally

unarmed and indefensible Icelandic community could stand up and say that they refused to go forward with a particular level of agreement or particular proposal. In fact, however, this just didn't happen. None of the Scandinavian countries – Denmark, Norway, Iceland – ever prevented a significant NATO action from going forward. You had intelligent questions from them and you had an implicit recognition that their military contribution was likely to be marginal (certainly from the Danes and nothing from the Icelandics, but Norway, given its geographic position had serious concerns about its own vulnerability and, as a result, was also as strongly committed to NATO as it could be also with the expectation and the plans that NATO forces would be sent to Norway to help defend it in case of a Soviet attack). There were regular war games and there was steady commitment of forces to the defense of Norway. So, Norway was a strong NATO player and not neutralistic. Nor were the Italians. Over a period of time, the Italians wanted to be considered a significant player in NATO on the level of Germany and the UK.

The Italians also, despite a significant Italian Communist Party, slowly but steadily became more committed to and more willing to commit to support of NATO. Their ability to do so financially was always in question. Their ability to make real improvements in their forces was never at the level that we would hope. But politically they were much stronger than we thought they might be. Particularly through the '70s this commitment on the part of the Italians grew steadily stronger, and our concerns and fears about what eurocommunism might mean and particularly eurocommunism in Italy turned out to be less pointed than we thought they might become. I'm not going to say that the absence of attention to the eurocommunism phenomena would have been justified, but we and the Italians fortunately were able to deflect the Communist Party in Italy.

Q: How about Greece? Cyprus had been invaded. We had an arms embargo against Turkey. Greece seemed to be far more interested in confronting Turkey. Turkey to some extent was tied up in the Greek business. Particularly American political support was not there. Did that cause disquiet with the group you were with?

JONES: This was always a problem. It was only later in my own career that I became more involved in Greek-Turkish issues. But it was, has been, and remains a problem within the NATO structure. It has been absolutely impossible to work out a relationship between Greece and Turkey over the last quarter of a century. Ever since the Turkish seizure of the northern part of Cyprus and the division of Cyprus, the relationship between Greece and Turkey has been very barbed. This has meant a constant effort within the NATO councils to work around the problems or not to raise specific issues within the Defense Planning Committee or the Defense Planning Questionnaire, the DPQ, in which various commitments of each country's forces are laid out. The point is that neither the Greeks nor the Turks have ever agreed on how the Defense Planning Questionnaire should be resolved. We have struggled with this problem year after year after year over the acceptance of certain forces in certain areas as legitimate or not. As a result, NATO was regularly dragged into what NATO itself considers not to be its argument, that this is a bilateral argument; why do they insist on fighting the bilateral argument in the NATO arena? The NATO arena is designed to fight the Soviets. Why do you insist on fighting each other within the NATO arena? As a result, it was very difficult not to find an area in which the Greeks or the Turks, on any given day, might decide to make this particular NATO quorum a subject for their personal

fight. It became very tiresome, always having to manage the Greek-Turkish problem. For the most part, the NATO representatives there of Greece and Turkey were not themselves personally hostile. You would see, well, all right, they've had instructions from capitals to go out and pound on the table in this manner or some new representative at the foreign ministry has seen this as an opportunity to put one in the eye of the other. So, then the rest of us, whether it was Americans, Brits, Germans, Belgians, or somebody else, would try to find some way to mediate it or to get them to withdraw the point or to agree to disagree and to move past their specific bilateral problem to get on with the overall NATO issue for the day.

Q: I realize you were at a relatively junior level of this NATO thing. But when you were talking to colleagues, how did we see a conflict breaking out? What were some of the hot points?

JONES: There was always the potential for a problem in Berlin that would spin out of control. Berlin was such a potential hotspot. People now forget that we had a garrison out there that was totally isolated, hundreds of miles away from the rest of the force structure. It was as a result both totally vulnerable in some ways and absolutely indispensable in others. There was always the fear that for one reason or another the Russians might decide to seize Berlin, that Berlin would just become so much of an irritant or that they would decide to make a point for us against everything else on Berlin and that war could begin over Berlin. There was certainly always the concern within the military that we were not strong enough to be able to handle a Soviet attack and the fear that if we weren't strong enough, how long could we last, and why or how the war would start, let alone whether the war would start, we couldn't predict in this manner. Each time we ran regular NATO wargames, so called Wintex, the Winter Exercise, and Hilex, the high level exercise, in which we created artificial scenarios but the point of which was still that fighting would begin. These were procedural exercise drills, how we would respond, what was available in our books to react in certain ways, what demarches could be made, what organizational structures would be activated, and then a step-by-step procedure through controllers providing information and responding to reactions by the various NATO committees and councils. These "games" were played with seriousness. They were certainly played seriously at NATO. The ambassadors were engaged, every mission was engaged, fully. It was not played by some small cell within the mission that was doing it with a yawn. It was played seriously by all the ambassadors and most people believed by very high level foreign and defense officials in the ministries throughout Europe. To a certain extent, it was real. It was real to the extent that these were serious plans made by serious people to get your team ready in a worst case.

On the other side of it, it was illustrative that we were demonstrating to the East, to the Warsaw Pact and to Moscow, that we were serious and that this was serious organized NATO response, that we were ready if they were ever so foolish, misguided, or mad to attack us. That's why we would run through an escalation scenario in which it ended with NATO use of nuclear weapons. Now, the NATO use of nuclear weapons at that point blurred to what would be done or how long it would be done or how much NATO use of nuclear weapons would be engaged. But it was a clear illustration, although all of this was classified at the time and held secret, there was also an expectation that the Warsaw Pact and the Soviets in particular would know the broad outlines of what we were doing so there would be no misapprehension on their part that they could seize a portion of the West and hold it. There was the fear that they might be able to drive to the Rhine and stop, seizing West Germany. You looked at the distances and the logistics base and it was a

relatively short distance from the Soviet jump-off points to the Rhine. There was the common concern that our requirement for forward defense was not militarily wise. The political requirement to fight for every inch of German territory, when tactically it might have been far more efficient to withdraw a substantial distance, could make things militarily worse than might have been the case if we were able to do what would have been militarily wise although politically impossible. We couldn't get to a point of saying, "Well, the very best thing to do with the Soviets and a Warsaw Pact attack would be to withdraw to a line of defense along the Rhine River." You could make that case and then try to shorten our lines. We were also having serious logistical problems. We no longer had straight logistical lines of communication through France. Our lines of communication and our lines of resupply were very awkward indeed. We might hypothesize on a best case that in an instance of Soviet attack the French would reopen their facilities and allow us to move supporting operations through France, but with no prior planning for this happy eventuality, we couldn't depend on it. This meant that the political requirement to defend every inch of Germany, let alone by the Germans, who would have to defend every inch of Germany, could have made the circumstances for the defense of NATO perilous.

Q: Who was your chain of command at that particular time?

JONES: The circumstances were such that at NATO we were transitioning from Don Rumsfeld, who was a particularly dynamic guy as an ambassador. He later became SecDef. He was a very dynamic, very vigorous person who drove people at NATO very, very hard. He had a DCM there, Gene McAuliffe. The description was that McAuliffe, if you were on a slave galley, would fight his way to the point where he was the man who had the drum so he could pick up the pace. Rumsfeld would scream. Instead of McAuliffe being a buffer, he was an amplifier.

Within RPM, there was Edward J. Streator, who was a consummate professional. He had a deputy named Arva Floyd, who was also very good. Then within RPM, there was Bob Frowick, for whom I worked at first. Then in the nuclear planning aspect of RPM and on conventional force issues, there was Jerry Christianson, who subsequently left the Foreign Service and went to work on the Hill for Senator Pell and also became and was for many years the staff head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the majority. He was a very smart man also. Subsequently Streator left to become DCM at NATO, a job for which he was exceptionally well suited. He was replaced as head of RPM by one of the very finest Foreign Service officers of this era, Alan Holmes. Floyd left as deputy and was replaced by another excellent officer, Jerry Helman, who eventually became an ambassador as well. So did Streator. So did Holmes. After Christianson left, another outstanding officer by the name of John Hawes came to head that particular section of RPM. Hawes was in the latter part of his career deeply involved in political-military work and became a senior deputy in the political-military bureau. He was an absolutely outstanding officer who is now traveling with his senior Foreign Service wife. He retired and stayed as a dependent. The structure of the organization within RPM and with NATO had a very high quality group of officers.

The overall effort... I've gotten you in some respects down into the weeds. NATO was endlessly involved in senior ministerial councils. NATO's work qua work was incredibly laborious with endlessly long hours and astonishingly detailed and, at the same time, it was paid enormous attention by senior people. You just knew all the time that NATO, that RPM, was one of the

focal points of whatever was being done. This meant very, very long hours, weekend hours for the Department of State. The problem was accentuated by the time differences at NATO. With it being six hours ahead at NATO, if they worked until midnight at NATO and drafted telegrams and got them out, they would have arrived at the opening of business in Washington, whereupon if Washington worked all day until midnight, they could send off instructions and they would be sitting at NATO when NATO opened for business at 6:00 AM. So, by madhouse type of effort within the Department and at NATO, you could work 24 hours a day. You would have same time turnaround at a time when communications were certainly very good but not the incredibly good communications that we now have. So there were people who said that “RPM” really meant “revolutions per minute” for the frenetic quality of our work.

Q: You left there in '76 and went where?

JONES: I went to the U.S. Mission at NATO. My job in RPM was a combination of training ground and recruitment center for people at NATO. It was time for me to go overseas. I had been back since '71. This was a good opportunity to go overseas. I was “well and favorably known” by the people at NATO. I had visited some of them. The DCM at NATO, Ed Streater, had been the head of RPM at the time that I was working there. He made it clear to me that he was interested in bringing me to NATO under those circumstances.

Q: You were in Brussels from '76 to when?

JONES: 1980.

I should also step back at least at one point to note that it was at this juncture, the '74 timeframe, that my wife entered the Foreign Service. Her first tour was with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency [ACDA]. She was endlessly helpful to me on the arms control side, bringing me up to speed on technical issues associated with arms control and disarmament points. There was a major ongoing effort at this juncture to work on a comprehensive test ban, an issue that we in RPM followed somewhat tangentially. There was also the ongoing SALT discussions again an issue that in RPM we followed tangentially but always needed to be aware of because of its prospective NATO angles. All of these efforts were subject to endless consultation with the Allies. This was being done at every level. You could not consult with the Allies more often. It became a ritual: what is it that we haven't done lately? Well, we have to consult with the Allies? Is it on SALT? Is it on MBFR? It is on Comprehensive Test Ban? Is it on nuclear non-proliferation? We were endlessly sending out teams of briefers and discussants on just about any topic under the sun. So, midlevel officers were always preparing briefing papers, talking points, background material, etc. Teresa was always giving me good insights on how things would work on a purely technical side for arms control issues.

Q: When you started out in '76, what aspect were you working on at NATO headquarters?

JONES: I was what they call the executive officer. It's a curious, almost NATO, phenomena type of position. It's not the ambassador's staff assistant. It's closer to being the DCM's DCM, where you were the general controller for virtually all paper within the mission while at the same time you were also giving support to the ambassador. I also had a couple of dossiers associated with

the political section but which fell under my special purview anyway and they were the nuclear dossiers. I was able to retain them and follow on the work that I had been doing in RPM at NATO.

Q: The Carter administration came in in early '77. You like everyone else was watching the campaign. How did you feel before the Carter administration came in? This was quite a difference between the Ford and the Nixon administration and Kissinger. Here comes Carter.

JONES: This was my first change of administration in the Foreign Service. I had come in in '68 just as the Nixon administration was about to arrive. Here it was, '76. The juncture in which I arrived at NATO was also the point at which a new ambassador arrived, Robert Strausz-Hupé, who had just gotten the assignment that he had hoped for and sought throughout most of his life and been extremely interested in obtaining. He had slid from Sri Lanka, then Ceylon, to Belgium. He had spent a couple of years in Belgium. Then he had been sort of bumped out of the ambassadorship in Belgium and gone to Stockholm. His wife died while he was in Stockholm and he arrived in NATO just a little bit ahead of the time in which I arrived. I had known Strausz-Hupé previously as an undergraduate student at the University of Pennsylvania. I had met him occasionally subsequently. I had been, because of that association, his control officer when he was preparing to go out to NATO but had been in Washington. I had been something of his control officer while he was there. Then I was arriving at NATO at the same time he was breaking in at NATO. Certainly Strausz-Hupé and, as a result, the rest of the Mission overtly and to the degree that I could sense personally were quite satisfied with the Nixon-Ford administration. Although almost every Foreign Service officer is pretty careful about expressing political views or associating themselves in any direct way with a political party, there was no active dissatisfaction that I recall with the Nixon-Ford administrations and certainly a general willingness, if not enthusiasm, to continue on with Ford as President through the rest of the decade. Certainly Strausz-Hupé obviously wanted that to happen. To the extent possible, he tried to work to make sure that he was viewed as an effective ambassador at NATO at this period.

Q: Following the political campaign, was there disquiet about where Carter and his administration would stand on NATO or not?

JONES: A transition is always one in which you don't know what's going to happen. I suppose in strategic terms, yes, you know what's going to happen. Carter wasn't going to pull the U.S. out of NATO. But what would happen with the projects and the programs that were going forward whether it was NATO modernization, nuclear modernization, what our attitudes would be on specific individual issues, it's much harder to say. In retrospect, I don't think we thought that Ford was going to lose. You can get pretty divorced from reality even with polls and things of that nature. We tended to expect that Ford was going to win and that Carter was not viewed as tremendously able. After all, he's this former governor from an end of the world kind of state. What was his background? Things like that. I won't say that we were shocked that he won because you saw the polls, you saw the numbers, you saw that Carter was leading, you saw that Ford could lose. But I don't think we really thought that Ford was going to lose and that Carter was going to win. We thought that way just because it was, if anything, because it was easier to continue with what we were doing with the leadership that we had and with the directions that

we had. You always find that our allies are just as happy to continue with the leadership that we have on the “devils we know” basis than the angels we don’t.

Q: After Carter won the election and was setting up shop in ’77, did you find that there was a lot of consultation at least unofficially with European allies coming to you all and saying, “Who the hell is this guy and what does it mean?”

JONES: Yes, there were people visiting. There were people who were coming from Washington quickly to consult with the allies to reassure the allies. We had then Vice President Mondale. We had people like this very quickly coming to NATO in early 1977 to consult, which was really to reassure and to say all the right things so that people would – not that they didn’t expect us to say the right things, but to actually hear the right things being said. That was fine. So, this was part of the “get together with the allies, tell them that they’re all loved, that we’ll continue to be reliable partners.” This was how we were trying to work the process. Since I hadn’t gone through it before, it was new to me. It was an incumbent ambassador who was going to be replaced, a political ambassador who was going to be replaced but didn’t really want to go. So, Strausz-Hupé was trying to demonstrate to Washington how bright his work was, how many fresh, clever ideas he and the mission had. We had a series of “big think” projects. They were thoughtful, intelligent, coherent pieces of work that Strausz-Hupé inspired to the Mission to go off and write. Individual people worked on them. God only knows what they said. But I remember them in these general terms as being intelligent, thoughtful, coherent pieces of work in which Strausz-Hupé hoped to be allowed to stay on perhaps six months at least to give him a full year at NATO. It turned out pretty quickly that he had wasted his time and energy, that they were not going to leave a senior post like NATO filled with what they considered to be a Cold War Republican hawk. Everyone, including Strausz-Hupé, who thought that he had a ghost of a chance of staying on under those circumstances, was woolgathering. He didn’t. He was told, in effect, to vacate by the end of March of ’77. He did with some of the unnecessary ill grace associated with these kind of departures. I was much involved in his effort to write a final speech to the North Atlantic Council. This is a traditional farewell address in which they offer and give the ambassador a memento, an award, a plaque, a plate, things of this nature. I was involved in some of the drafting but it was Strausz-Hupé’s speech that he wrote and that he sent to Washington for clearance. Well, the people in the European Bureau were equally nervous about anything that was being said. They didn’t know whether they were going to be replaced or how they would fit in with the new administration. They were very touchy over what Strausz-Hupé was saying or what they thought Strausz-Hupé was trying to say, Strausz-Hupé arguing back, saying, “I wasn’t trying to do this” or “What I’m saying is exactly what the new administration is in the process of saying.” But it turned out to be one of those gritted teeth exercises on both sides where you had a man who was then about 74 and was trying to say what he expected would be almost his final statements. It was not that. He finally did give a presentation which in many respects was brilliant. He gave a speech that was close to an hour long in which he made not a single verbal misstatement, not the tiniest little verbal slip or blip. It was a remarkable thing in that manner. Most of us can’t speak two minutes without an “Ah” no matter how hard you work on your own speechmaking. It was something of which I remember the format and not the content. But the *tour de force* presentation that he gave was remarkable in its own way. The commentary that EUR had made on the speech with a perspective of about 20 years (I reread it all last summer when I was working through Strausz-Hupé papers) was silly but it reflected the angst of

transition. Nobody knows what's coming and the more senior you are, the more worried you are about what's coming – because you're the ones under the gun, while people at midlevel come and go. For young major lieutenant colonel equivalents such as I was at the time... Okay. It was just a question of who your boss was going to be. You hoped that there would be decent guys rather than crazy guys.

Q: I would imagine that the neutron bomb, enhanced tactical weapon, became a hallmark of the Carter administration. Could you talk about that? Explain what the issue was and particularly with Helmut Schmidt and how we were seen at your level.

JONES: In many respects, this was something that I was involved in from the very beginning. I was involved in it to a degree on the Washington side. It was something in which I was engaged throughout my NATO career and in which I followed on and which was one of the major strands of my entire Foreign Service career. It goes back to the question of nuclear weapons being one aspect of NATO's modernization program. It is part of the entire three percent real increase in budget and improvement of NATO's defensive capabilities. One element of this effort was tactical nuclear force modernization, "TNF modernization." There was a full range of discussion of what was needed, how it was needed, and under what circumstances it was to be used. Part of it was based on the problem that we foresaw of using aircraft as the major delivery vehicle for nuclear weapons. These aircraft were vulnerable in certain ways. We had dual capable aircraft which theoretically delivered conventional weaponry during the conventional battle but were also being reserved for the potential of delivering nuclear weapons. There was a conceptual problem. You were going to use all of your aircraft to fight the war on the conventional basis. But you assumed you were going to be losing aircraft and losing ground during the conventional war. You had to reserve in your mind and plans a certain number of aircraft for the delivery of tactical nuclear weapons. What would happen at the juncture when the war itself was raging and perhaps even in the balance but you had drawn down your conventional aircraft, your dual capable aircraft, to the point in which you only had enough left to give your nuclear strikes? Would you then have to pull all of those aircraft out of the battle in order to prepare them for using nuclear weapons? At the same time, it would mean that the conventional war that was perhaps at a tip point was now going to be lost, forcing you to go nuclear. At the same time, was this the type of signal that you would end by giving to the Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces that your aircraft had now been withdrawn, so you were about to go nuclear? Would that preempt nuclear strikes on their part to avoid getting a nuclear hit from us? This was a very serious conceptual problem. At the same time, we were reluctant to go through the political and military upgrading of our tactical nuclear missile force in Europe. This was at the time when the Soviets were beginning to deploy SS-20s. The deployment of Soviet SS-20s was seen and viewed as an increasingly serious threat by the Europeans, particularly by the Germans. They were saying, "We have to have a response to this. We have to have an American response to balance the Soviet missiles." Otherwise, the Soviets might come to the conclusion that the Americans would be willing to sacrifice existing forces in Europe to preserve the United States from any nuclear strikes while only if the United States deployed nuclear weapons in Europe would we be able to threaten the Soviets appropriately with intermediate range weaponry that would assure that if a war started there wouldn't be a "burnt space between two green spaces." Well, our first response was essentially a political-military reaction rather than a political reaction. Our first reaction was that our existing strategic forces and nuclear forces in Europe were more than enough to counter

the increase in Soviet intermediate range nuclear weapons and their SS-20 deployments. We were hypothesizing at that point that the SS-20s might be just a replacement for their SS-4s and 5s, which were obsolete by that time for a number of technical reasons. They were much more vulnerable than the 20s would be. The 20s were mobile, the 20s had multiple warheads, the 20s were solid fueled or better fueled, all of these aspects that made the 20s a clear modernization. We sent a couple of high powered briefing teams to NATO in the late summer of '76 in an attempt to convince the Europeans that our strategic systems, our SSBNs, submarine based ballistic missiles, which were nuclear submarines that were actually allocated to SACEUR, were sufficient NATO responses, committed dedicated forces to counter the SS-20s. We thought we had convinced them. We seriously thought that we had convinced them. Until Helmut Schmidt spoke in London. I can't remember the date of it. He forced us to conclude on a political level that the force deployment that we had, our current strategic forces, were not sufficient to respond to the new SS-20 deployment. So, we then got into and began discussions on both a military and a political level with the Europeans. What became the High Level Group and the Special Consultative Groups began to meet and work out a question of how we would respond.

Q: This was approximately when?

JONES: This is around '77. After a great deal of effort and consultations with the Europeans, we had gotten their technical acceptance of these weapons. Whether they expected them to be used, I have no idea. But the credibility of NATO nuclear use was always regarded as one of the key elements of deterrence. I did not hear demurs from my European colleagues and other NATO diplomats about the use of these weapons or necessarily other nuclear weapons. On nuclear weapons specifically, the only system about which they appeared to be unhappy was the atomic demolition munitions. That concern devolved into a long argument about "prechambering" for specific areas and whether you would drill the holes ahead of time for the use of atomic demolition munitions. There was reluctance to do this; it was more political than military reluctance. It would drive home to the guy in the neighborhood that the likelihood of using a nuclear weapon was right there. On the flip side of it, the Germans had developed special equipment that would allow the drilling of emplacement chambers for atomic demolition munitions on relatively short order. But the technical decision that we could move ahead with enhanced radiation weapons was one that had been made. It had been endorsed. It had been approved at the various levels within NATO. My recollection sense is that it had been endorsed at a ministerial meeting by the acceptance of the report. The study being done on these weapons and the general NATO approval as a result meant that the alliance was regarding enhanced radiation weapons as part of its military capability.

Q: I did an interview with Vlad Lehovich, who was in Bonn. He was saying that the neutron weapon was viewed with a certain suspicion by the left within Germany and other places because supposedly it destroyed people, not property. This sounded very capitalistic as opposed to communistic, where it's much better to destroy property and if people go, that's too bad. Helmut Schmidt, who was a socialist, had been reluctant for political reasons to endorse this. Jimmy Carter as our President was pressing him very hard all the time. Were you aware of this?

JONES: This was certainly an element of it. You had Schmidt in power and you had Schmidt and the Socialists for the first time in many years in power in Germany. There was concern about

the left side of the ruling party. No matter where you went in Europe, the left was hostile to nuclear weapons, was hostile to NATO, was hostile to the neutron bomb, or fostered the “ban the neutron bomb” exercise. Indeed, your recollection is correct that the communists said that the neutron bomb was the perfect capitalist weapon, that it killed people and preserved property, our response was that the neutron bomb was the perfect communist weapon because it would kill capitalists and preserve the means of production. But that was a propaganda tit for tat exercise. There was a clear expectation that the Europeans were not only going to be on board... We had argued and persuaded them that they should accept these weapons and this philosophy and this report. Yes, we had. Lehovich’s recollection is also perfectly clear that on the left in Germany and on the left everywhere, they were not enthusiastic about nuclear weapons. They were certainly not enthusiastic about nuclear weapons that looked as if they could be used. They were even less enthusiastic about nuclear weapons that looked as if they might be useable in their neighborhoods. There was a “not in my backyard” view of nuclear weapons. Whether these people were no longer screaming, “Better red than dead,” we thought of them as exactly the same type of people that would find any excuse to surrender. Well, we were also in the situation where we couldn’t force the allies to take these weapons. They had to invite us to make these deployments. This was orchestration, in that they knew that they had to ask; and they knew that if they asked, we would make the deployments. So, Schmidt got far enough out on a limb that he endorsed the deployment. This is my sense, that there was indeed no question that Schmidt, who had to be the leader on this subject because the key deployment of nuclear weapons presumably would be in Germany, whether there were ER weapons in other areas. The most likely storage facilities would be in Germany, so Schmidt had to make this kind of endorsement. He did. Then Carter decided to rethink it all. His decision to rethink it was a type of decision that was completely inexplicable at the time. I had one ambassador for whom I later worked, Reg Bartholomew, who was in the NSC at that point and was dealing with this issue. He said to me years later that he received an endless stream of phone calls, and he answered none of them. He said that somebody came to him and said, “Yes, Reg, your lack of an answer was profound.” We had no answer. There was no explanation. There was no defense for what the President had done. We got Helmut Schmidt out on a limb, and we sawed it off and left him standing there in midair. There was no way in which you could figure this decision on Carter’s part. It left one speechless. All we could do as a result was say, “Well, we’re rethinking it. It’s delayed rather than stopped. We’re reconfiguring.” Try to make some sort of rational explanation out of what was going on in his mind. It was, “Well, what’s the parallel? Paul on the road to Damascus? This Rose Garden decision...?” This decision left us with no idea on how it had happened. At that point, there was the general expectation that European confidence in Carter just disappeared. Ostensibly, they met with him, everyone was very straightforward, we were all together, one for all, all for one, but there was the feeling that Carter had lost essential trust or essential appreciation in his decision making, that he was not reliable, and that everything that followed after that, what happened in his reactions to the Russians in Afghanistan, in his reaction to the seizure of American hostages, the Europeans always said the right thing and could be bulldozed into doing things like not participating in the Olympics in Moscow, okay, but it was that they were going through the forms with us because they had no other choice than to continue to play on our team. But the team captain was just not reliable.

Q: How did this effect you all? Did you have the same feeling?

JONES: It was one of these situations where, when Carter was elected, I said, "What we really need is a successful President. We have had a series of terrible problems. We had Kennedy assassinated. We had Johnson destroyed in office. We had Nixon's Watergate. We had Ford who was never considered presidential timber before he became President, almost a caretaker President. Whether you're in favor of Carter or you voted against him, what we really need is a successful presidency, whether it was four years or eight years." I had some serious hopes for this. I thought that Carter was a very bright man. I'm always in favor of people that know something about nuclear energy and, as a result wouldn't have had, I thought, an implicit fear or terror of nuclear energy as a conceptual basis of use. It was something for which I had serious hopes. As it was, his steady deterioration in the polls was, even with the foreign policy failures that I thought he had engaged himself in and been involved in, still puzzling. I couldn't understand why his standing in the national polls declined as much as they did. Some of it I could see. Well, we really did have much higher rates of inflation that anyone wanted. We had had difficulties of that nature. But at the same time, I was saying to myself, "We don't have domestic upheaval in the way that we had when our cities were burning at the end of the '60s. We don't have real depression. We have an economic recession. We aren't engaged in a foreign war overseas. We're just out of Vietnam. Why is this man so far down in the polls?" NATO was in Brussels with an endless flow of visitors that we had and the total ability to get just about anything in the media provided total information. I could see what was happening factually and not have a feel for it. On one visit, I came back to the United States as an Army reserve officer on a two week active duty tour. I saw two of my friends who were liberal Democrats. I went through the litany that I went through with you and said, "Is he really a 26% President?" They said to me, Dave, he's worse than that." Then the each gave me little vignettes on the level of his scheduling play at the White House tennis court and rewriting dedications badly on memorial plaques that left people with the sense that he was a good man and would have been great as your next door neighbor or your Sunday school teacher, but as a President, he was failing and just failing steadily. This was the impression that seeped out slowly but steadily wherever you were.

Q: This must have been rather disquieting as you moved ahead with NATO. Was there a feeling that we weren't as strongly led a nation as we might be?

JONES: It's something of a leading question. The fact is that the allies continued to play on our team because this was the only team in town, and they didn't have any other choices. There were areas in which people were trying to push ahead. We thought we had brought the SALTII treaty to conclusion. This was a great success. I was involved with at least moving documents back and forth to Vienna in the last days and bringing material back to NATO so we could have briefings to explain what was happening to the allies. The allies were enthusiastic about the prospects for SALTII. They hoped to be able to move on to a SALTIII that was more tactically nuclear engaged or intermediate range engaged rather than the strategic arms reductions which SALTII was to be. We had hopes at least that MBFR was going to make some progress. We were regularly engaging the Russians with packages of proposals even though this was seen as a very long range slugging match in Vienna. These were exercises in which we were engaging the Warsaw Pact and trying to find ways in which to move beyond the confidence building measures of CSCE into something that would be real conventional force reductions. There was a nuclear package in the MBFR proposals that were being worked, the so-called Option 3. But these were

areas in which, at least on the political-military side, aspects of NATO strategy were being steadily worked out. It was an incredible, and incredibly busy time.

Before I came over to talk to you, I thought I was going to have more time to prepare for this than I did in reading my diaries for the era. What I did was to get my diary from 1977. What I remember from reading this material is that a lot of it is just strictly personal. Our third child was born at NATO. Our children were about eight years old at that juncture. There are things of that nature. But looking at it, I see again the appalling hours which we worked, where regularly I was at the Mission until 9:00 PM and it was early when I left at 6:30. We worked every Saturday at least half a day. The relentless pace of this work was completely and totally exhausting. I have to say that it was one of these situations where I was in my mid-30s and by the end of the first year, I was beginning to think I was an old man. The only way I realized how totally exhausting the pace was was when I went back to the States for two weeks for an Army Reserve tour and worked from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM and found that I had incredible amounts of energy. I went out and saw my friends and we went to dinners. I had all sorts of energy. I recognized that it wasn't that I was getting old at 35. It was that NATO was so all consuming, so totally exhausting, so completely engaging, that there was nothing left of virtually any of us at the end of a given working day. To have anything left over for family, for personal life, for much of anything except sleep was rarely available.

Q: How did the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan hit us? Was this just an affirmation that it was really an aggressive force?

JONES: It was a real shock. NATO certainly didn't expect or predict that this was happening. We thought that Afghanistan was a sufficient enough Russian puppet that there was no need for them to do anything of this nature. We were more concerned that they were about to invade Poland and seize and overthrow the Polish government. We called emergency meetings and pulled people together and had consultations. Then we issued sanctions and things of that nature. My feeling was that we thought the Russians would make short work of anything in Afghanistan; that it wouldn't be any serious problem for them. We never predicted that Afghanistan would become as politically brutal for them on any level of equivalence as Vietnam had been for us. If anyone had said, "Afghanistan will be Moscow's Vietnam," we would have laughed at them. Of course, it was never at that level of societal equivalence for them, but it became a brutally draining exercise. In some respects, we learned nothing from the Russian experience just as they had learned nothing from our experience in Vietnam, that trying to pacify a nasty, well armed, bloody minded people is a hell of a fight. We didn't learn from the Russian experience in Afghanistan when we tried to impose our will in Somalia. So, that element of it, that portion of it, had much less effect on NATO than any of the other combination of events then in play. The seizure of our people in Teheran, the fear that the Russians were going to invade Poland and do to the Poles what they had done to the Czechs – these were more immediately pertinent than what was happening in Afghanistan.

Q: The Poles at this point had been going through reform.

JONES: Yes. This was communism with a more human face. This was Jaruzelski in control but seen as a more liberal Polish communist. There seemed to be some question about the Soviets'

perception of the Poles as a reliable ally. There was some perception that they were worried that their lines of communications through Poland might be less secure under the type of Polish government that was evolving. The entire question was one of how much strength Solidarity was gaining and whether Walesa was going to be a destabilizing figure so far as communist rule in Poland was concerned. There were flat predictions from very competent intelligence analysts that the Russians were going to move, that there was just no question, that it was just a matter of whether they moved today or tomorrow or next week or whenever. They just felt that the Russians were going to move on Poland.

Q: Was this accepted that if they did move, we would not intervene?

JONES: Yes. There would certainly be no military intervention. We would leap and scream politically, we would offer new sanctions of one sort or another, would take them to the UN, and would denounce them pillar to post. We would make them look as black as we could around the world to make political points wherever there was somebody who was a doubter that the Soviets were the unmitigatedly nasty SOBs that we all knew them to be. That sounds pretty hard line, doesn't it? But there were no peaceniks at NATO.

You have to let me spend a minute or so talking about the Mission itself. This was not an embassy. This was a giant political-military section. It was a 90-person political-military section, of which the diplomats were only one portion of it. There was an entire floor's worth of some of the most capable mid-rank military officers I have ever encountered. This was an exercise on their part of preparing for war, of preparing with the feeling that the military had throughout this period that they were going to have to fight outnumbered and win or there was no future for the West. Day after day, you got this reflection not necessarily from what they were saying or from the people out in the field, but they planned... When they ran their exercise, it was not always known whether this was for real or this was an exercise. Were the Russians going to come through the Fulda Gap? Were we going to be able to hold them? Was there any chance of holding them conventionally rather than having to go nuclear? Although we were morally, intellectually and politically prepared to go nuclear, this was nothing that anyone looked forward to. There was always the fear that the Russians were 10 feet tall. There was always the endless recollection of what their units were like, how tough their armored forces were, how much artillery they had, how capable they were in military terms. All the numbers were always recounted straight out so it was obvious that their numbers were always much greater than ours, let alone adding in their Warsaw Pact forces. It was a source of constant tension in a way that recedes into the background like a dull headache that only becomes a migraine occasionally, but you always knew it was there if you spent a little bit of time thinking about why we were there. It was a regular worry. The NATO mission, as an operation, as a result was really driven by the United States. We were the locomotive that was hauling the entire apparatus all the time. As a result, our meeting schedules were amazingly intensive and frequently intrusive. The schedules were such that we had a major meeting every Thanksgiving Day. It was impossible to prepare for the ministerial meetings that were later early in the month of December unless we had a wide range of preministerial meetings. That required for us, as Americans, to be meeting on Thanksgiving Day every single year – not all day long, fortunately, but every single Thanksgiving Day, we were running tough, infinitely detailed preparation meetings where every single word and phrase was struggled over and consulted upon, trying to get 15 NATO nations to

agree. It was a very, very detailed task requiring just endless patience, endless consultation, endless flexibility and discussions with Washington, with key allies, with the NATO international staff, and good leadership and good fellowship.

Q: Was there the feeling there by 1980 by the time you left that America had pulled up its socks and its military was getting better or was there concern about the capabilities of our military?

JONES: By the time I left NATO, there was no reason to know one way or another whether Carter was going to win and continue nor were we out of the “America held hostage in Teheran” problem. We were just at the beginning stages of INF deployments, which was one of the things with which I was much engaged for an extended period of time leading up to a 12 December 1979 combined ministerial decision.

Q: Could you talk a bit about that?

JONES: Let me back off on that and give that to you the next time.

Q: Today is May 3, 1999. INF. What does that mean and what were you doing? This is the '76-'80 period.

JONES: Yes. The INF issues were the intermediate nuclear range force issues. They were a spin-off, an evolution, from theater nuclear force modernization topics, about which we have had a little bit of discussion already. The entire exercise was designed to bring matching U.S. intermediate range nuclear forces into Europe on a modernized basis to counter Soviet SS-20 deployments during this time period. There were long, convoluted, and extremely agonized-over political set of decisions in Europe throughout this entire period. The Europeans were probably even more nervous concerning it considering the problems that they had had with the neutron bomb exercise, and it took them a long time to convince us that they were truly serious about the requirement for a U.S. counter to SS-20s. We had argued during this earlier timeframe that U.S. strategic forces, that U.S. SACEUR committed ballistic submarine missiles were sufficient to counter the modernized SS-20s. The Europeans, however, did not believe that and believed that it was indeed necessary to have a visible U.S. component on the ground, something that would not be able to fly or float away, something that was not an aircraft, not a submarine, but a visible commitment by the United States on the ground. The exercise then began throughout 1979 to work on a series of Special Group [SG] and High Level Group [HLG] analyses of what would be a proper and sufficient counter to the Soviet SS-20s. The HLG effort was to examine what the hardware would be, what appropriate mix of ground launched cruise missiles [GLCMs] and Pershing IIs, which was a follow-on with longer range and greater accuracy, to the Pershing I, which had been deployed in Europe for many years. After a great deal of discussion within the HLG and examining various mixes of missiles, they came up with a final combination of Pershings and GLCMs. GLCMs had a “TERCOM” guidance, a terminal ranging guidance, that followed contours of the earth and allowed for much more precise targeting than had ever previously been the case.

Q: What were you doing?

JONES: I was an action officer at NATO doing a good deal of the support for the SG, the political side of this effort. In this case, it was an effort for us to locate substantial European basing countries, countries that would accept U.S. cruise missiles. The Germans did not wish to be the only European host for INF. They wanted another host that was actually on the European continent. That is, a host that was not the UK. So, we had an extended ongoing persuasive diplomatic exercise with each of our European allies to determine who else would accept cruise missiles or Pershings.

Q: You're saying the Europeans said we should have something that's not going to fly or float away. At the same time, we were trying to persuade people to accept them.

JONES: Yes, that's a good point. The point essentially was the politicized concerns that we were getting from the European populations at the same time. The officials who were at senior levels in the European governments, also wanted to make sure that that it was being done in a way that their populations – or at least the left side of their political spectrum – could be forced into accepting rather than the deployments being viewed as something that the Americans forced on them. The Germans, while they were willing to do this, didn't want to be the only target in Europe. As a result, they were an object for Soviet pressure. So, we spent a good deal of time on this. Fortunately, about in May 1979, the Italian government, which we had not expected to be forthcoming and be receptive for a basing agreement because of the relatively strong presence of an Italian Communist Party (CP), indicated to us that they would be willing to accept INF basing. So, with the Italian agreement, we then were able to work harder on several other European allies to be willing to accept basing. We worked in particular for the Belgians and the Dutch to accept these systems. It was this type of process which also, then from the Dutch side, led to a second parallel track. The first track would be the deployment track of the systems. But the second track would have to be, in the Dutch view (and this had quickly become the general European view), that we had to have a negotiating track as well, that we had to be able to offer to the Soviets a proposal that we would not deploy if they did certain things. The primary requirement on our part was that they would have to withdraw, destroy, do something with their SS-20 missiles, or severely limit them in some manner. This was not by any matter being spelled out at that point, but there was perceived a need to have a political negotiating track for the INF effort as well as simply a deployment track to counter the SS-20s on the ground. We also recognized that it would be easier to sell deployments to European populations if we deployed in the face of Soviet recalcitrance to negotiate meaningful agreement. The expectation was not that the Soviets would agree. I don't think anybody expected the Soviets to agree to anything. But for us to have a better and more effective political cover for our own deployments, the political track was regarded as vital.

Q: Did you sense that this deployment was almost being forced on the Americans because of the SS-20s? Or were they saying, "I'm glad they did it because now we can put these things in?"

JONES: This was a curious ambivalence. Certainly at the beginning in about 1976, we argued vigorously to the Europeans that we didn't need anything more. This was going to be an expensive exercise. Making these systems was not going to be cheap. At the same time, there

were people within our own structure that wanted to deploy more effective modernized theater nuclear forces because of the problems that I've explained a little bit earlier on what would happen if you used aircraft to provide your nuclear strikes. As a result, there were certainly people in the U.S. when these systems were being developed that wanted to be able to deploy them and deploy them fairly extensively to give themselves, in their argument, a better ability to handle any conventional war that might evolve. At the same time, there were also people that saw these as better, more effective nuclear systems with far better guidance and accuracy as a consequence and that viewed them as prospectively a heck of a lot more effective than the nuclear systems that we had in Europe at that time – old Pershing Is and only the aircraft that were able to deliver nuclear strikes at an intermediate range. As it evolved, it came to this more or less famous 12th of December 1979 decision in which all of this effort was supposed to be brought together and everybody was supposed to be agreed at that point and sign off on a deployment decision. This first group was the defense and foreign ministers meeting together at NATO for a Defense Planning Committee. It turned out to be perhaps the most chaotic meeting that I ever was involved in in my career. As it evolved, neither the Dutch nor the Belgians were finally agreed on their willingness to accept INF deployment.

Q: I assume before you had the meeting that they were supposed to be all on board.

JONES: Yes. Again, that was our expectation. We were having Special Group and High Level Group meetings about once a month or once every other month as this evolved. Indeed, as far as I ever had the sense going into the meeting, we thought that it was ready.

Q: This meeting was in December 1979.

JONES: What happened at that meeting was that, without recalling the details precisely, both the Belgians and the Dutch were not as decided as we believed them to be. There was enormous effort put on them. Reg Bartholomew, who had become the head of the Special Group meeting, tells a story of how he had one of these senior foreign ministers in a corner and was pounding away at him and somebody came up behind him and said, "Say, old chap, you really shouldn't be pushing him quite so hard. Let me." It was the British foreign minister who wanted to put him to one side and hammer on the Dutch. So, this was a meeting that ran on and on and on. As a consequence, the special celebratory *vin d'honneur* at the end of it was never held. For me, this was particularly interesting in its own way because it was my 15th wedding anniversary. The very first thing in the morning I got up early. I went to the store. I got chocolates and then went to the airport to meet David Aaron. I met him at the airport at something like 7:00 a.m. in order to get back to this meeting. At the meeting itself, we then struggled for hours and hours and hours on this session. The meeting itself broke up sometime well past 8:30 p.m. in the evening with what they believed then to be agreement and actually was sufficient agreement. Then I spent another two and a half hours or so writing my portions of reporting telegrams on this meeting, after which I liberated a bottle of champagne from this never held *vin d'honneur* and took it home, and my wife and I had chocolates and champagne at 11:30 at night on our wedding anniversary. But we did get enough of an agreement for it to go forward and to have it announced that we did have an agreement for deployment. It was clearly designed to be one that would be held in conjunction with negotiating proposals that would be eventually created, eventually devised, to work with the Soviets. That is how the INF agreement itself got started.

From there on, for the rest of the time that I was at NATO until the summer of 1980, we worked on the evolution of the Special Group, which had then become the Special Consultative Group. We began and continued to design possible hypothetical proposals that could be made to the Soviets and how deployments would be arranged and in what timing sequences. Our own deployments. How the agreed upon new INF systems, the GLCMs and the P-IIs, would eventually be made. What countries would get them in what timeframe, when they would arrive, what would arrive at different times, which countries would be the last to have deployments. In each of these countries as years went by and the negotiations were very slow and there were ruptures in the negotiations that were held eventually with the Soviets in Geneva, the negotiations were very complicated and very slow. There were efforts on the part of the Russians to come to some sort of an agreement to prevent U.S. deployment efforts and, on the Allied side, to get parliamentary agreement in each one of the countries for the deployments. What you had on December 12, 1979, was a commitment to do so, but, as time went on, each of the countries involved in effect had an election. The election was fought at least partially on the fact of the existing commitment to accept INF deployments. At each juncture, the Soviets and their sympathizers within the individual countries attempted to put enough pressure on the electorate or offer blandishments of one sort to counter their threats that there would be a change of government, which would have reversed the NATO decision.

Q: It wasn't completely Soviets and their supporters, but also the indigenous socialist left-wing groups in Europe who just didn't like nuclear weapons.

JONES: I agree with you completely. These were members of the old left and members of the new left. When I said Soviet sympathizers, it means that to the extent that these people sympathized with the Soviets on this particular issue, I would say that they were Soviet sympathizers. Again, throughout this entire period, what I was doing was working on some of these issues simultaneously, both the end of SALT II, which had come to a conclusion in early 1979 and which I provided a tiny little part of the drama by flying to Vienna to pick up the text of the SALT II agreement and bringing them back to NATO for distribution. We need to demonstrate the small degree to which they had anything to do with the Allies so that the Allies would be able to see that the text of the agreements did not threaten their interests or NATO interests.

I also worked and continued to work through 1980 when I departed on MBFR, that is, conventional force reductions in Europe to match conceptually, at least, the nuclear reductions, about which we were talking to the Soviets at all times. But MBFR has now been lost from memory and is one of the failures of negotiating history. But for quite a number of years, it was a primary focus of our negotiations with the Soviets and, for that matter, with the Warsaw Pact as well. Since it dealt with conventional forces throughout Europe, we had a NATO Warsaw Pact negotiation in Vienna. I vaguely remember it started in '73. You can see that it had already been running for six years by the end of the '70s. There also there were elements of a nuclear package involved in these MBFR negotiations, a so-called Option 3, an option which would have withdrawn a certain number of nuclear weapons and reduced a certain number of aircraft and missile systems. But, for me, for the most part, I was working on the MBFR Working Group. This dealt more with technical studies that were being prepared for the negotiations for our side.

Some of these negotiations lasted internally for more than a year. We worked on what was called Associated Measures Paper. That system and discussions of it within the Alliance ran for probably about a year and a half. I remember arranging a birthday party for the Associated Measures Paper at its one year mark. The measures that were being discussed are those that were linked to what kind of an agreement you might have in the way of confidence building of one sort or another, notifications, types of inspection routines, what kind of inspections might be held, how they would be held. We had another major paper that was called a Flank Security Paper, which was a special concern to both the Nordics and of very special concern to the Turks, who were convinced for any number of reasons that if the Russians reached agreement on force reductions in Central Europe, they would pull them back to threaten the northern and southern flanks. So, the Turks and the Nordics in particular wanted agreements to any MBFR presentation that would guarantee that the Soviets did not simply reshuffle their forces and put them in positions that would create greater insecurity for Greece and Turkey, more prominently for Turkey, and, for Norway in particular, in the north.

Q: What was the attitude during this period? This was the Carter administration, which came in a little bit starry eyed as far as thinking things could happen. At least this is my impression. Was there concern in NATO that the United States might not show sufficient will and be too interested in agreement?

JONES: Well, I've already gone through with you in some detail the associated elements of the neutron bomb fiasco. My feeling is that there was a spillover into extraordinary, convoluted, detailed discussions that literally went on for more than a year and a half on some of these papers and some of these studies. There was and had been for many years also the feeling that MBFR's negotiations were really designed to prevent what were then called "Mansfield Amendment reductions." Senator Mike Mansfield had, in effect, said, "If you don't reach agreement, we should withdraw forces." Partially to stave off the Mansfield Amendment reductions that would have been unilateral U.S. reductions, The U.S. and NATO started the MBFR reductions, negotiations at least, to hold off congressional pressure to take unilateral force cuts. Unilateral U.S. forces cuts would have been seen as an indication that we were losing a commitment to Europe and/or stimulated Europeans not to build up their forces in response but to cut their forces as well, which, in theory, would have made all of Europe more vulnerable on the one side to a potential Soviet conventional attack but at the same time might have made the prospect of a nuclear war in Europe more likely if the Soviets had attempted a conventional attack and we had been even less able to withstand a conventional attack and had to respond with nuclear weapons sooner rather than later. But there was also always the feeling that there was a good deal of a "place-holding" operation going on in Vienna to talk a great deal about these reductions without a true expectation at that they would come to fruition. An analyst in INR named Robert Baraz, who since has died, used to think that we might find ourselves out-clevered by the Russians by eventually presenting them with the proposal that we didn't expect would be accepted but the Soviets would say, "Done." He used to put it this way. "If you stand in a shower bending over looking for the soap long enough, somebody is going to..." But that never happened with MBFR. MBFR despite efforts by its leadership, which apparently took it more seriously than other people within the establishment, continued to flail vigorously during the late '70s/1980.

Q: We're talking about December 1979. Our embassy had been taken over in Iran. We were worried about that falling apart. And then the invasion of Afghanistan. I would have thought this would have stiffened the spine.

JONES: Well, we did immediately after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have a frenzy at NATO of senior people coming for consultations and a very high level of effort to determine what could be done and what we could do. This led to more sanctions being placed on the Soviets and an effort to do things. This was the stimulus to stop holding the 1980 Olympics. But in NATO, there was a sense of shock in this regard. We did not expect this type of action against Afghanistan. We believed that the Soviets had as much control over Afghanistan as they had any need to or desire for, that we had been in effect pushed out of the competition in Afghanistan, and that we had lost the influence battle in Afghanistan to the Soviets. When the Soviets invaded, it was our sense that they would make rather short work of any afghani resistance. We just didn't think that the Afghans would be able to hold up against them very long. Yes, there would be places in the Khyber Pass that nobody would be able to go to in small units, but, so far as actually controlling everything of Afghanistan that needed any controlling, the Soviets wouldn't have any trouble doing that. At the same time, we were also extremely incensed about what had happened in Iran. Of course, as diplomats, we felt even more angry that these were our people that had been seized, were being held, and that nothing was going on. We felt that nothing was being accomplished, that we were acting weak. I personally felt that we should indeed make far stronger threats against Iran to force the return of our people under whatever circumstances were necessary to get them back. I felt that all we were doing in the long-delayed exercise over our captured hostage diplomats was to set up a circumstance where the same kind of incident would happen again and again and again. We were unable to respond effectively. Then when we attempted and failed in Desert One to actually do something, it was an even less happy an incident and episode.

Q: Particularly seeing what the Soviets did in Afghanistan, did this change the equation as far as you all were concerned about stiffening NATO as far as accepting cruise missiles and Pershings and that sort of thing?

JONES: It was at least a momentary endorsement of the decision which literally had been made only days earlier. The point was that over a period of time this stiffening softened and wore down and we had to refight the battle in every election campaign that was held in each of the perspective basing countries with the Soviets at the same time having started in their discussions in Geneva to urge us to push for a variety of freezes and no deployments that would leave them with very substantial numbers of SS-20s and us with nothing in the way of deployments. There were complicated proposals put forward that still would have left us with a handful of deployed INF but we would not have equality with the Soviets and that also was the bottom line on our proposals. Whether we built up to these ceilings or not, our agreements with the Soviets had to be based on equality in the way of deployments.

Q: In the summer of 1980, where did you go?

JONES: I ended my assignment at NATO and went to the Cyprus desk. This was an assignment that had turned up almost at the last minute. I didn't get the assignment until May. There had

been various other assignments that had looked as if they were possibilities or more like actualities and didn't turn out to be that way. It was probably the influence of Allan Holmes that got me the job as the Cyprus desk officer over an individual who would have been the initial choice of the Southern European office director. So, I became the Cyprus desk officer in the summer of 1980.

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Political Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1976-1979)

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

PENDLETON: I went to NATO, yes.

Q: You were in NATO from when to when?

PENDLETON: '76 to '79.

Q: What was your job?

PENDLETON: I was a political officer at NATO.

Q: *This was in Brussels.*

PENDLETON: Just outside of Brussels, at the US mission to NATO, out near the airport in a place called Evère. And I started out largely with regional issues, which were perhaps easier to chew on than MBFR or proliferation issues. Some I could even imagine, such as Malta; some I could imagine but couldn't deal with, such as the Greek-Turkish element at NATO. Those folks squabbled without ceasing. They intervened in every single discussion of the North Atlantic Council, pointing fingers at each other. It wasn't a surprise, but you could be talking about building a telecommunications link between the Netherlands and Belgium, and find that the Greeks and the Turks were at each other's throats over some aspect of that. And I must say, you learned that working at NATO or at any multilateral organization requires a lot of ability to sit and listen carefully and not let it go by but be patient about it. A lot of it is theater, and if you don't like theater, then you're probably in the wrong place. I dealt with Mediterranean issues more broadly, and I backed up on a whole variety of issues, such as writing the policy planning document that Washington required for the year. That lasted through the tenure of Robert Strausz-Hupé as ambassador, and then he was replaced by Tapley Bennett, who had come from New York, where he had been the number two ambassador at the US Mission to the UN. I had met Bennett in New York once when I was advancing a trip for Ken Rush, when Rush was

deputy secretary, and I remember going into Ambassador Bennett's office in New York and saying to the Ambassador,--who had been around a very long time at that point but looked young and very dynamic--, "Mr. Ambassador, I'm terribly sorry but I'm going to have to steal your desk for the deputy secretary of State." And he said, in his courtly Georgia way, "Mr. Pendleton, I have emptied my desk, and it is yours, and it is the deputy secretary's, with pleasure." He was a man of some considerable wisdom, I think, in terms of not letting his ego on such an occasion get in his way, not that he didn't have an ego, and his ego, along with his experience and wisdom, helped him in many respects.

Bennett rather snared me to work with him, after he arrived, on something called the Perm Reps Lunch, which took place every Wednesday. The permanent representatives to NATO would have a working lunch every week, and in many respects, that's where a lot of what George Bush liked to call the "heavy lifting" would get done,--in a more private environment than a council meeting. And my job became increasingly to patrol the whole mission, military side and State Department side, and prepare and brief the ambassador for everything that might conceivably come up at these luncheons. Prepare him with all the points that we wanted to make on behalf of Washington and to respond to the concerns of other perm reps. When you are in a multilateral arena such as that you can't wing it. This may be self-evident to most people, but initially it wasn't necessarily self-evident to me (you can't just speak as Sammy Jones; you are speaking as a representative of the United States of America, so you have to be instructed. Frequently you try to generate your own instructions: "Unless instructed otherwise, I intend to make the following points at tomorrow's perm reps' Lunch or at the NAC tomorrow which has just been called." And Washington would have to run around and bless the approach. So all these preparations had to be done very carefully. I also would go into the ambassador's office after lunch, and he would decant what had happened. If you had a serious ambassador, like Bennett, who could remember very well most of what had happened, --or who would take good notes-- you were in good shape. But there was also the danger that you would be told some days that "And then the Greek ambassador in marginal French said something about Egypt," and you would find yourself having to call over to the Greek mission to find out what the heck the point was that the Greek ambassador was trying to make and cobble this all together into a cable which would have to go out that day to Washington. You were always caught trying to get to Washington, which meant you were always caught there rather late at night for institutional reasons. The same is true at the UN. But because of doing this, I also attended the daily staff meetings the ambassador had. Then I was the lowest ranking flunkey who could go around and follow up on other things that came along, and so I ended up doing that sort of thing as well, and I learned a great deal that has stood me in good stead over the years. But I can't say it wasn't painful on occasion.

Q: What was your impression? Let's go through some of the major delegations, what you were getting and our reaction to it. What was your impression of the French representation, although they were not in NATO, were they a player that you would see?

PENDLETON: Absolutely. They were important and they didn't refrain from stating their case at all or coming up with new notions. They played in the North Atlantic Council just as actively as anybody, and their observers on the Military Committee were very active. What one has to understand is that even though the rhetoric coming out of Paris at that point would make the average Frenchman feel very much distanced from NATO on the military side (and indeed, of

course, NATO had been kicked out of France and had ended up in this basically temporary shopping mall in Belgium because of De Gaulle's decision. In reality and on the ground, the French were collaborating with us militarily in a fashion which was very important. So we listened to them; we had to pay attention to them. You never quite knew when they were going to heave a piece of salami in from the side that would be very difficult to cope with. And we worked rather hard at trying to work with them. Doing so, however, was nowhere near as easy as with the Brits. I thought the Brits had, under Sir John Killicks, an astonishing capability, through hard thinking, a lot of cerebral talent and an excess of confidence. They had a weight in NATO which was totally undeserved in terms of their military might at that time. It was the period when they were accused of being nothing but one brigade and eight bands, or whatever. And NATO was quite preoccupied by the weakness of the United Kingdom militarily in the late '70s. With the election of President Carter, we became relatively weaker than we had been, and that didn't go totally unnoticed, but the Brits were the ones who got their knuckles rapped.

The Germans had problems, not only because they were Germans but because, when I was at NATO, an inordinate number of German citizens, both in the mission and on the NATO staff, were arrested for spying. And that always was troubling in terms of NATO secrets and in terms of the German role at NATO. Still, they did a good solid job for a country which had been fighting with almost everybody else in the Alliance not too long before. They were careful about that, and I think they must have just wept over the spying incident.

One nation, which wasn't a NATO member, but which I would like to mention, is Spain, because one thing I participated in quite actively with my regional hats on was to try to help educate Spain about what NATO membership might mean. There was a measure of interest in Spain in joining NATO and no understanding of what being a member would be like. We went down to Madrid any number of times, with blessings from the Council. People came over from Washington as well, and one of the untold tales of diplomacy related to the Iberian Peninsula is the job that the United States took the lead in doing in educating the Spaniards about NATO membership so that when they came in they were in to stay. They did come in rather quietly and they did stay. It's not been easy, and there is to a degree, the French sort of problem, as I understand it. But in the initial education process we went from briefing 80-year-old lieutenant colonels down to briefing, over time, 35-year-old disinterested lieutenant colonels and their civilian whippersnapper brothers, who were helping educate the generals. Then we began to find the generals around the table. And by the time Spain decided to enter NATO, there was really no reason why they wouldn't have had a good sense of what the benefits and the obligations would be. And I think that was important, but they really started the process with a 19th century view of Europe.

Q: Well, this is the thing, I think, that's often misunderstood, that NATO is not just "Gee, sign up with us and we'll protect you," but it means that you have to meet certain military standards, which are quite severe and very professional, aren't they, as far as ability to produce competent troops and all that?

PENDLETON: Yes, and commit them to helping people whom you may not wish to help if they are attacked. And so there's a really important obligation which comes with NATO membership,

and it can't be taken lightly. That's why we needed to have perhaps more of a debate than we've had in this country over NATO enlargement.

Q: With the Spanish, by this time Franco had died, and it was beginning to move into the new regime, weren't they?

PENDLETON: Yes, but slowly. I mean, we were surprised, those of us who were not experts on Spain, how slowly they were going initially, and particularly the military.

Q: Well, the military was essentially the same military that had won the Civil War back in '38.

PENDLETON: Absolutely, that's why we were dealing with all these '75- and '80-year-old lieutenant colonels, and their notion of what Europe was like really stopped at the Pyrenées and in the past.

Q: What about Portugal at this time? Portugal had gone through the trauma of its revolution, young officers taking over, an extreme socialist government moving back towards the center. By the time you got there, had Portugal sort of reentered the acceptable government stage?

PENDLETON: Yes, it had. And NATO as an institution was anxious to try to help Portugal. There was a Portugal frigate program, in which nations were to contribute frigates, and assistance in the building of frigates that would help Portugal's navy. There was an attempt by NATO as an institution and by many of the countries that were members (and it was a modest attempt, but it was an attempt to make gestures to strengthen democracy in Portugal and to strengthen Portugal's defense robustness and confidence as a country. I would say these were, in my judgement from that perch, fairly marginal, but hearts were in the right place.

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

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

One of the institutional things about the EU, then the EC, which struck me most was the day when in '78 there was a discussion in the North Atlantic Council about expanding the Committee on Disarmament (CD) at the United Nations. There was talk about expanding it, which all of the Nordic countries were behind (for domestic political reasons) with considerable vigor. So who

would be on the expanded group representing NATO? That had to be decided at NATO. And I remember a debate that went on all morning, where understandably but unpredictably both Norway and Denmark wanted to be a member of the expanded CD. Usually they would work out such an issue between themselves in advance. We broke for lunch, and it was clear that Denmark and Norway were squabbling in public. At lunchtime the permreps went to an EC lunch, where the issue was raised (although it should never have been), and it was, I gather, voted on, although the EC isn't supposed to vote. Ireland (a non-NATO country) tipped the balance. And they went for Denmark, probably because Norway wasn't a member of the EC. When lunch was over, they went back to the meeting at NATO and suddenly announced that they'd like to have a decision on who it should be, and it went to Denmark, with the countries which in the morning had been unwilling to commit suddenly coming out for Denmark. It was one of the first times that I suddenly realized what the EC could do inside the NATO body, and a bell went off in my head, and I said to myself, "Well, let's watch this for the future."

Q: Did you get any contact with the Norwegians? Were they concerned by the fact that their people had opted not to join the EC?

PENDLETON: They would only discuss that with you privately, of course, and I think that the kind of officers and diplomats who served at NATO from Oslo were much more inclined to have a European optic than the majority of their countrymen. They wouldn't hide their own personal beliefs if you were having a cocktail or if you were having lunch in the cafeteria speaking privately, but of course, in Council meetings or in committee meetings they would be scrupulous about what they would say since it was being reported by notetakers from all the other NATO missions.

Q: What about Italy? What kind of role did they play?

PENDLETON: Italy played a really major role at this point. This was the period of the question of bedding down nuclear missiles and where the enhanced missiles would be placed, against widespread European public opinion. Italy took a bunch, really in a leadership role.

Q: We're talking about the SS-20 versus the Pershing missile issue, aren't we, or was this before that?

PENDLETON: This was before that, I believe. I've lost the thread, but we very much wanted to station more missiles in Western Europe, and the publics - quote, unquote - of many of the Western European countries did not wish to do so. Italy leaned very far forward and allowed us to do so. Belgium eventually came on board, as they say, and Italy time and again took steps to be supportive of NATO decisions, even at some risk to those perpetually tottering governments. The deputy secretary-general of NATO was Italian. When his term was up the Italians said, "Look, we're doing so much, we demand that his replacement be Italian." That was a tough fight for Italy, and in the end Rome won. I must say I was on their side, because they were pulling so much more of their weight, at a greater political cost, than most other countries that I personally couldn't help but admire them and what they were doing. Issue after issue, if not out front, they were responsive to the more thoughtful, i.e., US needs of the moment.

Speaking of the deputy secretary-general. The secretary-general was Joseph Luns, who was a Dutchman, former foreign minister, an imperious soul who went all over Europe in his most elegant and expensive Rolls-Royce, provided him at NATO's expense (somewhat over the dead bodies of a lot of people in Washington, --and I don't blame them. But I have to say that Luns could be, when the crunch came, very helpful to the United States and was consistently helpful to the United States. We tested him constantly in ways that he didn't deserve to be tested. I think principally of the so-called neutron bomb of President Carter and the President's approach to this enhanced radiation weapon, which would allegedly kill people without destroying the buildings. As you may recall, the United States went backwards and forwards on this issue at the highest levels, and at NATO, people just can't bear it if the United States doesn't know what it's doing. They'd almost rather have us take the wrong decision but be decisive about it than be wishy-washy; and we were being varsity-level wishy-washy about the neutron bomb.

This was driving Tapley Bennett, as Ambassador, crazy, and it was driving crazy almost anybody who had to explain to foreign colleagues U.S. positions that seemed to change by the day. It was at this point that (a) I accompanied Tapley Bennett when we went to have breakfast with Joseph Luns and give Luns our final Presidential decision on the subject, which was a turnaround from what we'd been saying the day before and the day before that and the day before that. Luns couldn't have been more gracious. He sat there and, for breakfast, ate chocolate bonbons and then said he would do all he could to bring the Council along. He was polite enough not to lecture Tapley Bennett, whom I'm sure he knew was as frustrated as he was. Bennett, incidentally, played a brilliant professional's role in trying to influence the decision, and after one of the next-to-last flip-flops, he had drafted three cables to Washington. One was a cable from him to the National Security Advisor, a personal cable which was written in a very straightforward, non-bureaucratic, personal style (brilliant cable. Another was to one of the President's Georgia advisors - Bennett was from Georgia - and he wrote it in down-home Georgiaese, which only one Georgian could have written to another Georgian. I never read anything like it in my life. And he wrote another cable, with a little help from his subordinates, which was your normal embassy or mission straightforward, reporting-with-a-twist, pleading for a specific decision by a specific time. And he laid these all out in front of him and- (end of tape)

Q: You were saying he adjusted and selected and finally sent out these cable, to no avail, essentially.

PENDLETON: No, I may have it wrong. It came out a lot better than he had hoped at one point, but it was just emblematic, his approach, to me, what somebody with a great deal of experience can do, artfully, when they decide that's where they're going to put their energies for a given period of time.

Q: Well, particularly the way the neutron bomb thing ended up. This is when President Carter kept changing his mind. It wasn't really the government.

PENDLETON: No, Carter.

Q: It was Carter, and it was one of the things that I think turned off many professionals about Carter, and essentially the voters(not this issue, but it was this personal managing of things but no real consistency.

PENDLETON: Yes, that was a major problem for those of us who were representing the government overseas. The Carter approach to human rights was also a challenge to us(one with which I agreed. But at the outset of his administration, as he was trying to articulate and then institutionalize an approach to human rights which was different from what his Republican predecessors had had, you can imagine that at a place like NATO, where there is a strong security focus, you did not have adequate appreciation for issues that were messy. And integrating human rights into our overall strategic policies and military policies and defense policies tended to have some messy elements. That was hard to put forward on behalf of the Carter Administration. So it was really rather an uphill battle. At the same time, U.S. defense spending was falling. However, the Administration did send around Andy Marshall from DOD to brief Europeans using overhead spy satellite pictures of the Soviet military buildup (particularly of the Soviet Navy) that had quite a dramatic impact in terms of an understanding of what was being manufactured on the military side in the Soviet Union. We obviously knew precious little about the broader Soviet economy. The briefing effort was useful, but I think that it was initially more of a thrust by the bureaucrats than by the White House.

Q: In this period, '76 to '79, how did we from the NATO side see the Soviet threat?

PENDLETON: Well, we were(and almost everybody at NATO headquarters was of course(quite preoccupied with the Soviet threat, and particularly the naval threat. There was a moment when the naval threat seemed to be the most acute, and we were really afraid of being outdistanced. That possibility was given a great deal of attention, and the sense that there was a naval threat(it proved to be less severe than we had thought, needless to say(was increased by the sharing of the spy satellite pictures I previously mentioned, which had a dramatic way of capturing one's attention. I hoped that we weren't showing the same picture 12 times, but who knows. At any rate, these were shared with European cabinets in capitals and with officials at NATO and others(at very high levels(and they tended to have a dramatic impact, and helped in the process. At the same time, we began to make progress in getting not only Italy to accept missiles but Belgium as well. As a matter of fact, Alfred Cohen, who was the political director of the Belgian foreign ministry at that point, came to my house for dinner, and our most industrious deputy chief of mission, Mike Glittman, was there(this was a dinner party, about 20 people(and Mike looked extremely happy at the end of the dinner but wouldn't tell me why. It wasn't just the wine and the good meat; it was that Alfred had told him that Belgium would accept our missiles. That was a big breakthrough from our point of view.

Q: Well, in listening to you talk and to others who were concerned with NATO, one comes away with the impression that here were a bunch of difficult countries(for whom we had the greatest respect but they're still difficult countries(to get them to do what we wanted to do. How about other NATO countries seizing initiatives and bringing us along on issues?

PENDLETON: Ha, ha! I'm giving you a blank look. I'm laughing, yes. You're getting a blank look because to an astonishing degree the United States drove the Alliance in that era, whether

we deserved to or not, but to really quite an astonishing degree. The French did attempt to put some more conceptual fiber into the relationship near the end of my tenure, but with notions that were so typically French, divided into three parts, that people didn't know what they were getting at. And they eventually made some sense. But in general, we drove it, and there was a saying at NATO that I referred to earlier that the only thing that NATO nations can't stand more than having the United States know where it is going is having the United States not know where it is going and lead the process. And we came up with more than our share, in Washington and even at the Mission, of ideas as to how to get through some of the really profoundly substantive issues but also the theater that surrounds NATO. An example was the two percent annual increase in defense spending. I think we all did a miserable job of dealing with Greece and Turkey, and Joseph Luns tried to intercede without great success and his own love of Turkey, given the passions. But there were not too many initiatives that I recall that really weren't manufactured in Washington or in collaboration with the Mission.

Q: I was thinking in dealing with Greece and Turkey(I've served four years in Greece(that the Greeks look upon Turkey as the enemy, and essentially, the Turks look upon Russia, or the Soviet Union including Bulgaria, as the enemy. I would have thought that the Turks would have been somebody, in a way, you could deal with, except for the fact that the Greeks kept interceding.

PENDLETON: Yes. The Turks I found quite easy to deal with. At the Turkish mission, they were under a lot of pressure because it was the time when Armenian terrorists were attacking Turkish diplomats around the world. But that wasn't key to the relationship at NATO. The United States has always had a relationship with Turkey that runs deeper than that of a lot of European countries, and we are to this day, I believe, blamed for having brought Turkey and Greece into the Alliance in the early '50s. We're the people who sponsored them, and after you've sat through your 180th meeting on subject X or Y or Z, all dominated by Greece and Turkey squabbling with each other, people would moan and say, "Why did the United States ever let them in?" But whether it's with regard to EC entry or with regard to their role in NATO, the United States has taken a robust approach toward Turkey, and certainly in the '70s, that was appreciated by Turkey, which recognized what we were doing. Now in terms of their own preoccupations, yes, they, like Norway, had a border with the Soviet Union. But I recall in 1976 going to Turkey and being in a military briefing room in Ankara and noting that all the maps in the room and all of the indications of where the planes were headed were towards Greece and not towards the Soviet Union. That was a preoccupation in the capital of Turkey that probably went beyond just the military. Incidentally, I found all the Greek maps I saw suggesting that Turkey was the enemy.

Q: By the way, were you concerned at all about, you know, there was a lot of sniggering about some of the troops(I think the Dutch particularly(wearing their hair in hair nets and the Dutch and maybe the Danish navies' not staying overnight or always putting in on the weekends and things like this. Was this a matter of concern?

PENDLETON: Well, it was a matter of concern, but it was a concern we had to temper, to a degree, because it was also a time when European and American TV was doing a fair bit of coverage of US troops in Germany and particularly of troops taking dope, troops overindulging in alcohol, troops who seemed frequently(as portrayed on TV in Europe(as undisciplined. It was

also a time when interest rates were so high at home that the economy was fragile. Our youngest troops, particularly in Germany, who were married but did not have permission to have their wives, in most cases(spouses anyway(with them but who took them anyway were living very much on the financial edge. They were trying to live off-base on very little money and in need of help. And Europeans, who have a social consciousness which is more acute and historically rooted than ours, I think it's fair to say, heard a lot of all of this. As a result, the hair-nets and putting into port, et cetera, had to be balanced in one's mind against what one saw when one turned on the TV(and there were some fairly horrific documentaries.

Q: Was there any concern about anti-NATO political movements within the NATO community at this time?

PENDLETON: There was certainly concern, but I don't think that there was a belief that we could do all that much about it. There would be discussions, even at the political level, but it the kind of thing which one always had to be careful about, and this led to a certain amount of trimming in terms of decisions. I had never, before I went to NATO, heard the word publics used so often. "Our publics will not tolerate . . ." "Our publics will not abide . . ." "Our publics will not stand for. . ." "Our publics will not accept . . ." And this is where you got the line in the sand frequently, in terms of decisions which we might be encouraging other nations to take but which, because of public opinion at home, were unpalatable. Did people think they could change the views of their publics? Not to any great extent. Did people try? Yes. Every permrep would go around giving lectures. Joseph Luns would go around giving lectures, but we all know that there's a limit to the impact that you can have with that. And frequently frustration is based on larger political and economic(in particular(forces that bureaucrats sitting at a mission abroad are not going to be able to affect in any mighty way.

Q: All right, this is a dirty question to ask, but 1979 you left NATO. Were you and your colleagues looking for the collapse of the Soviet Union internally in 10 years? Was that in the cards?

PENDLETON: No. Definitely not. And I don't think I was looking seriously at it until I was in London almost 10 years later.

Q: I think this is true, but I think we should always try to put this into perspective on this type of thing.

PENDLETON: Absolutely, and we were very fearful about what the Soviets could do and what they might do and what we had to do to be prepared for it. There was certainly a very large measure of consensus on that, and that's part of the glue(if not the glue(which held NATO together in that era.

Q: Well, then, in 1979 you left this NATO job, and where did you go?

PENDLETON: Right. I went to be a student at the National War College here in Washington, at Fort McNair. And that was an assignment which I welcomed, and I welcomed it in part for personal reasons. While at NATO I had been discovered to have a very aggressive melanoma,

which I fortunately noticed, and I had it excised (without knowing what it was) at SHAPE hospital, and they told me they would let me know if anything was wrong. I had never heard of a melanoma, but I had something that bothered me on a mole, a birthmark mole. And they forgot to let me know, and I was too dumb to follow up but they called me a month later and said, "Oh, dear, our pathologist was moving into his new quarters, so he didn't analyze it right away, but it seems you have a melanoma and we want you to go to Germany." I said, "Nothing doing," and my wife and I called all over the US and found out where they did the best melanoma work. And to make a long story short, I went back to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and was operated on and returned a couple of weeks later (they excised it) to NATO. But that was an interesting thing to have because when I was discovered with it, basically, I think everybody there at NATO and amongst my colleagues tended to write me off for dead. Then, to prove I wasn't dead, I started working even harder than I had been, and that was probably a mistake. So the assignment to the War College seemed to be a civilized way of transitioning professionally and personally at that particular juncture in my personal life and career.

JACK MENDELSON
Political-Military Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1977-1979)

Dr. Jack Mendelsohn was born in California in 1934. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Dartmouth College and his Master's from the University of Chicago. His foreign assignments include Port-au-Prince, Warsaw and Brussels. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on February 12, 1997.

Q: Jack let's move on then. You left in '77 and where did you go?

MENDELSON: I went to NATO.

Q: And you were in NATO from when to when?

MENDELSON: '77 to '79, two years.

Q: And when you say NATO, what do you mean?

MENDELSON: I was assigned as a Political-Military Affairs Officer to the U.S. Mission, NATO, in Brussels, Belgium. I worked in what would be in effect the U.S. Embassy to NATO. There is a U.S. Embassy to Belgium, and there is a U.S. Embassy to the, at that time, Economic Community, now the Economic Union. So we actually have three Embassies in Brussels. One of them is NATO. That was considered the most important one. Belgium is a small country so it was important, but the big action of course was the Multilateral Headquarters at NATO. I was one of about eight or nine officers in the Political Section. At the time most of us were FSO-3s.

Q: That's about the Colonel level in the old...

MENDELSON: There may have been one junior, and then there was one senior, and there was of course a Counselor for Political Affairs. At the time the Counselor was Orme Wilson and the Ambassador was Tap Bennett. I can't remember his real first name.

Q: William Tapley Bennett.

MENDELSON: I guess it was William Tapley Bennett. Right, thank you.

Orme Wilson was a friend of Tap's. He sort of asked him to come on. They both have died, I guess, since then so maybe I can speak freely.

Q: ...leadership and our mission at NATO and the approach and all.

MENDELSON: Right. Our Deputy was Mike Glickman, Maynard Glickman, who went on to be Ambassador to Belgium.

Tap Bennett was a sweet guy. He was not into the nitty-gritty but there was too much nitty-gritty. I mean there were thousands of different things going on. It was impossible for anybody except a specialist to keep up with each of those individual specialty items. You had a lot of officers there. But Tap was very good at getting briefed and going in and doing what you told him to do.

He was also a people-person. He was an old-fashioned diplomatic type. When he put his arm around you, you felt really good. He could talk you into almost anything. He was very reasonable and perfect from a junior officer's point of view. You know, you'd say he took instructions very well! He did a very good job. He was not a brilliant strategist. He was a good tactician. He ran the Embassy well. He was very likeable. I think his colleagues among the other ambassadors or representatives, as they were called to NATO or the NATO Council, liked him very much and he did a very good job for the U.S.

Mike Glickman was very sharp. He was kind of the brains and the 'sparkly' part of the operation. He was a very good Executive Officer for Tap. If Tap got instructions, you know, to draft a *communiqué* that reflects the following seven points, Tap would give it to Mike Glickman. Mike would do a terrific job, protect everybody's interests and do it very well. I liked Mike very much and I, as an action officer for arms control, worked very closely with Mike. And of course whenever those issues came up it would be my job to brief the Ambassador in the morning meeting before he would go to the Council meeting. He was very good. You had to write up everything for him and he would follow them. You know, he 'took instructions very well.'

The person that I had the most trouble with and who was in a way largely responsible for my leaving early...I got a four-year assignment, which I wanted. I left after two years because it was boring in the following sense. The Political Counselor, who was Tap's man, Orme Wilson, was way too conservative for my tastes. This was a guy who would never make a recommendation that hadn't already been made so he would be sure not to cross a wire. Each of the action officers had various committees that they dealt with. I dealt with what was called the Special Political Committee, which was the one that managed the MBFR negotiations for Jock Dean, who was in Vienna at that time.

Q: Mutual Balanced Force Reductions.

MENDELSON: Which turned into the Conventional Forces in Europe Reductions. It eventually turned into a very successful and important agreement. At the time it had been marking time for six years and was going to mark time for another six years before we really turned it into something serious.

But if ever I made a recommendation at the end of a meeting of the Special Political Committee saying, well, nobody around the table seems to care about this approach, why don't we try this approach, Orme would always try to stop it. He would say, "Are you sure this will be well received in Washington?" I would say, "Well, I don't know, let's give it a try." It was always a fight to say anything because he was afraid of being criticized or of getting the Ambassador criticized.

If he wrote a cable back to Washington I'd come into his office and he would have out the chrons from the last two years, making sure he didn't say anything that hadn't been said before. For someone who had just been wheeling and dealing on the SALT delegation as the Special Assistant to the Ambassador, who had been hawking his wares at the Naval Academy where no midshipman is going to stand up and criticize, well to come and find a guy who was so unwilling to think big... Mike Glickman was not, but you had to get your stuff through Orme Wilson. Sometimes, to Orme's credit, sometimes he would just let me deal with Mike directly and there it was a lot better.

But I just found that so inhibiting, you know. I felt I was a big high flyer and I got there and I was one of half a dozen FSO-3s. It was a comedown in a sense in my own mind. Although NATO is a very good assignment and it is a very interesting place and I liked it very much that was the only, and I repeat this, it was the only Foreign Service assignment that I wound up really not liking as much as I could or should have. I basically liked everything else I had to do in the Foreign Service. This one I didn't because I felt there was no premium for initiative and there was an awful lot of structure. It was a little bit confining.

Q: Jack, one of the things on a job like this, you couldn't fly but at the same time you were learning a structure, you working on an alliance. This obviously played up in later times. This was one of those times when one may be spinning one's personal wills but enhancing one's knowledge of the system.

MENDELSON: Absolutely.

Q: Could we talk about your impression of NATO as an organization and also of some of the individual countries or players at that time, including France.

MENDELSON: I learned a lot and I learned to appreciate NATO and I am a big fan of NATO, even though I happened to be involved in that group of people that are registering their disapproval of NATO expansion. It's not because I don't like NATO, I like to say it's because I like it so much I want it to stay the way it is, an effective tool for U.S. security interests.

I learned to appreciate it. I liked it very much. It was very frustrating at times having to deal in a multilateral environment, but you learn a lot about how to try to get things done in a multilateral environment. You have to deal with some of the major powers. Britain, Germany were obviously the ones we wanted to deal with. There was a lot of fun cooperating with them on what was happening. You wanted to stay on good terms with your other colleagues.

You also had a feeling at the time, and this plays back to what I was talking about at the Naval Academy. This was an important moment. This was '77 to '79, the height of the confrontation. NATO was clearly the most important alliance in the world and the centerpiece of U.S.-European foreign policy. You knew you were in an important place, you knew it was a big deal. You learned a lot about what it was the West was doing in order to respond to the challenge from the Soviet Union and you dealt, again, with military figures.

The people who went to NATO, and this was true I think across the board, good people got sent to represent their countries both in the military and on the civilian side, the diplomatic side. So all in all it was a very impressive place to work and you learned a lot of interesting and important things.

I just was sorry I felt that somehow I wasn't able to fully deploy my wings. And that may have just been me, but in any case it was a very frustrating time for me. As I said I wanted to stay for four years, but I felt I just couldn't. It wasn't worth it; I wasn't getting as much fun out of it as I should. So I left early.

Q: One of the issues I am thinking of at that time, and maybe it wasn't your thing, was the so-called neutron bomb. Another was the SS-20 and those things. From your perspective and you're watching the operation, how did we deal with those and other issues?

MENDELSON: I don't remember the neutron bomb thing. I know the story. When did we decide not to deploy it? Was it '76?

Q: It couldn't have been because Carter was elected in '76 and didn't serve until '77 and it was Carter...I suspect it was right in the middle of your time there. He got what's his name...Schmidt, Helmut Schmidt, out on a limb and then pulled it back.

One of the people I've interviewed is Vlad Lehovic, and Vlad was saying he could hardly wait to get back and vote against Carter after that, he was so mad.

MENDELSON: I cannot remember that well enough to make any good comments. I do remember the SS-20 very well.

Q: All right. Could you talk about that, what are we talking about? What were the responses that you saw within our delegation and in dealing with others?

MENDELSON: Well, what we are talking about is that during the late '70s the Russians began to deploy a new intermediate range missile targeted on Europe and NATO countries, the SS-20

with three warheads. This was replacing the SS-5s and 6s, I guess it was, the previous, rather clunky intermediate range missiles that the Russians had.

Schmidt had basically ticked off a debate when he argued that as a result of the SALT Treaties, the U.S. and the Soviet Union were at a strategic standoff. That neither side was likely to use those weapons against the other side because it meant the destruction of both of the major countries. So that left, in Schmidt's analytic framework, that left a kind of a lower level confrontation in Europe between the Russian threat or the Soviet threat to Europe and the NATO and U.S. response to that threat.

He thought it was unlikely in the SALT environment that the U.S. would use its strategic forces to defend Europe, therefore it had to have intermediate range nuclear forces, tactical nuclear weapons, to respond to the Russian-Soviet tactical threat or intermediate range nuclear threat. And as that threat was being modernized, then the question arose did the United States or NATO in general, NATO countries, need to upgrade their tactical nuclear weapon response to this Russian-Soviet SS-20 modernization?

Now what's interesting, and I remember this very well. The initial response of the USG, United States Government, was that there was no increase or real substantive qualitative change in the threat. The SS-20 was a modernization; it was replacing the 5s and 6s. We had thousands, at that time somewhere between 7,200 and 7,500 tactical nuclear weapons on NATO's side. These were still available and would remain available to counter whatever the Russians... Soviets... I've actually trained myself very well and I don't say Soviets anymore and now it's hard to remember to say that... to counter whatever the Soviets were up to.

I remember. I believe it was in the fall/winter, '77, '78, when I first got to NATO. I got there in the summer of '77. Les Gelb, who was the head of PM, led a briefing team of U.S. Government officials to brief NATO to show them how we had more than adequate tactical nuclear weapons forces available to respond to whatever the Russians were up to. So the initial U.S. response to this SS-20 threat was, hey, we've got thousands of tactics. We've even got some on submarines, which are nominally strategic but which are dedicated to NATO. We've got all the French and British forces. We've got all the other artillery shells, bombs, aircraft carrier launch stuff from the Mediterranean and elsewhere. We've got more than enough stuff to handle any nuclear weapons threat, or any conventional attack that would call for a flexible response and that you might think wouldn't involve our strategic forces, we've got options coming out of our ears. I believed that and I still do. That it was the right thing to do and the right way to go.

I was in NATO, not in Washington, but somewhere between the fall/winter of '77 and '78 and, I guess, '78, somewhere between that briefing and the middle of 1978 we changed our minds. The U.S. changed its mind. At the time, my recollection is under the pressure of the Germans who I think miss-analyzed the situation. There was a lot of pressure from the German military that we had to have a response to the SS-20. We decided that we were going to get NATO to agree to accept deployment of an upgraded Pershing missile, Pershing II, and a new cruise missile that we had been touting for some decades. It was certainly since the early 70s that the cruise missile was sort of the weapon of the future, a new cruise missile that would also have a nuclear warhead.

I cannot now remember. It was going to be some...I'll make this up...it was going to be some 400 odd cruise missiles and some 200 odd Pershing II's we are talking. NATO decided that somewhere between 400 and 600 warheads would be required, not to redress the threat but to continue the deterrent capabilities. There was some fancy language to justify this. And that decision was taken...I cannot now remember, but I think it was taken in '78 or actually in '79. It was worked up to after the decision was made somewhere in '78 that we were not going to argue with our Allies, that we had more than enough. We were going to buy their concerns and then get NATO to agree to accept about 600 warheads.

Basically that decision was made in '79, and I left in the middle of '79. The Russians, of course, were absolutely livid about this. They thought this was an upgrading of the threat facing them. We argued that it was a response, or one of the arguments was that it was a response to the upgrading of the threat facing us. Between '79 and '83, we were in a very bad patch with the Russians; I would say probably the worst patch that we have had in the Cold War. Starting with the invasion in December of '79 by the Russians of Afghanistan, and ending in 1983 when we began to deploy these missiles that had been decided, intermediate range cruise and Pershing missiles. We deployed them, I think in November of '83 at which point the Russians broke off negotiations with us on arms control in Geneva across the board and didn't come back until '85, after Gorbachev came in.

We had, meanwhile, some major political changes in the U.S. Reagan was elected and he had a much harder line vis-a-vis the Russians, and of course Brezhnev was on his last legs in '79, succeeded by Chernenko and Andropov, also on their last legs when they were elected. So the '79 to '83 period was really a pretty dreary one. But all of this in sort of, if you will, the mid to late '70s. We were moving, when I was at NATO, towards deployment of these intermediate range systems.

Two other things were going on.

Q: Before we get away from this deployment thing, obviously this was a political move more than a military move. When you get right down to it, there is a reason to keep from making the Germans feel comfortable, because otherwise this was considered a ploy to turn Germany neutralist on the Soviet part. That was one of our perceptions. Were you getting from your colleagues, both internally in the Mission any thoughts? And what were you getting from particularly the British and the Germans and the French?

MENDELSON: I don't remember my colleagues. But I think the Europeans were gung-ho, generally. NATO generally was supportive of this, the Brits certainly, the Germans certainly. This was not a problem for NATO that I remember. Our problem, as I was trying to indicate, we tried to talk them out of it in the beginning and basically didn't succeed or decided it wasn't worth going that route and we had to show a little force on this.

My personal feeling was it was the wrong way to go. But history worked out fine. Basically we got a deal with the Russians by '87. You can't argue that deploying wasn't helpful. We got a deal in '87 to get rid of everything. But there was a second important fact. The first one is we deployed and therefore the argument would be you had leverage to go to zero. But the other

argument is that in '85 you got Gorbachev and that changed everything. So two things happened. Whether Gorbachev without our deployment would have been enough, or our deployment without Gorbachev would have been enough, who knows. But there were two key things that happened.

Q: From your perspective at the time, this moving to meet the "Soviet challenge" was supported?

MENDELSON: We were not pushing uphill. We were not pushing uphill very much. Actually I think the Europeans welcomed that. I think they were afraid that if we didn't respond that the Russians would have notched up somehow the perception of their threat and the perception that they had somehow cowed NATO, that they had somehow won this war of nerves, war of deployments, war of tac-nukes, which were crazy.

Q: It's crazy but we are talking about psychology, or psychosis, and you had a Carter Administration that was perceived as being rather soft.

MENDELSON: Absolutely right. That's where the neutron thing probably works in. We had a very bad show on the neutron weapon and I think that certainly was a factor back in Washington in deciding that here we are getting a lot of pressure from the Allies to do something. On the neutron weapon we put pressure on them to accept it, and they were reluctant but finally did and then we pulled the rug out on it. Here they were putting pressure on us to make a new deployment of a system that they found more acceptable. I think there was certainly the recollection or memories of the neutron weapon debacle that was partly behind the decision to show we were still engaged, we were still linked.

We also had to respond to the Schmidt criticism. Remember we were also in the midst of and would conclude in the summer of '79, the SALT II negotiations, which clearly did sort of set equal levels on both sides of strategic forces. There the theoretical argument, although I don't believe it had any practical reality to it, was that we had equalized the strategic threats and by equalizing them had neutralized them and were not likely to employ them. Therefore we had to look to European defenses in another way. That was the German argument. We had to somehow to respond to that. That was the German concern.

While I wasn't an enthusiast, I wasn't key and I had nothing to do on the decisions. Where I was, I was the action officer for SALT II. The Allies were very interested in this, not the least reason being their concern that somehow we were undercutting their security by dealing with the Russians at the strategic level. So the SALT delegation, the SALT II delegation, came a couple of times a session to brief the NATO Council. I was the action officer; I did the reporting on it. I kept the Council, or the Ambassador, up to date on what was happening in SALT II. That was fun because I knew the subject matter. They had somebody who really knew it. It was very easy to keep on that.

I was helpful I think to both the SALT delegation and the U.S. Mission with others. Other Missions, and particularly the French, were very interested in what was happening in SALT II. They would come to me on a regular basis to get sort of updated, because I read the cables, the general reporting cables, and kept up on it. The French were very interested in this because I

believe they shared that Schmidt analysis that we were managing with the Soviets to neutralize our strategic forces and to cut Europe a little bit loose from our strategic deterrent by the SALT process.

My major daily job was dealing with these MBFR discussions. Now that was time consuming but it went no where. You were in there trying to get the Allies to agree to throw in another unit of equipment. If we could get the Soviets to agree... you know, it was endless, meaningless detail.

Q: Did you know it was endless, meaningless at that time?

MENDELSON: Everybody did. Everybody knew it was going no where, but it was kept up. It was originally started in the early '70s as a response to Congress who threatened to cut funding to unilaterally reduce U.S. forces. Kissinger argued if Congress did that we would have no leverage over getting Russian forces down. Let us get into talks with the Soviets, see if we can't bring the forces down together. In order to do that you had to keep funding up for ours, blah, blah, blah...so we entered into discussions without either side really having a compelling reason to want to do it.

Q: The discussions were taking place where?

MENDELSON: The discussions took place in Vienna. The instructions were generated at NATO. It was a NATO-Warsaw Pact negotiation, if you will. It wasn't a USG-Soviet discussion. So there were joint instructions that were sent from NATO. This special political committee under instructions from capitals, of course, worked out mutually acceptable positions to send to Vienna. It was very awkward. But again, you asked the question earlier, it taught you a little bit about multilateral negotiations. We always talked privately with the Brits and with the Germans to try to make sure that we had a trilateral agreement on where we could go next. Somebody would introduce an idea, the Germans, the Brits or the U.S., in the Council, in the special political committee, that had already been trilaterally approved. Then we would try to get all the other Allies on board.

You asked earlier about my impression of the other countries. There were very bright people involved in this. The Dutch were very sharp, the Belgians were very sharp on this and they cared. You would have to answer some serious questions from them. Most of the others were not that involved one way or the other and they would not pose problems. The Italians never had any instructions and always spoke at length about the issue. It was great, you knew that they would go whatever way the crowd was going, the Italians would go. They'd have to speak their piece and their guy would always say he hadn't hear from Rome but, and then you'd get a forty minute disquisition on some of the abstract, philosophic principles involved. The Greeks never said a word. The Turks were very sharp. The Canadians would do what the U.S. wanted or go where the U.S. was going. Wanted isn't the right word, but they had no reason to take issue with the U.S. or Britain on this. The French were not involved. They came but they were always a non player and you always had to take a footnote saying, whenever you had a figure, that this was not including French forces, because the French would not agree to anything on MBFR.

Q: What was the feeling, from both your point of view but what you were getting from your other colleagues, about the French nuclear armament and the conventional forces?

MENDELSON: That's a tough question. The one thing that was surprising that you found out, but now I guess is sort of common knowledge, is that the French military was much more relaxed about NATO and cooperating with the Allies. It was much more positively inclined than the French Government, which had sort of political, philosophic reasons for making an issue out of NATO and making an issue out of the United States. But at the military level we always had very good relations and the French military was always very anxious to cooperate and be cooperative. So at the practical level you had much less friction and many fewer problems than you did at the political level. Where for domestic politics read political reasons the French were difficult, they were difficult to deal with.

I actually turned out to be one of the primary liaisons with the French to the degree they wanted to liaison with the U.S. Mission, mainly because I've always been a Francophile. That's a little strong. I sort of understand the French and was willing to go along with them. Also my French was quite good at the time and it was easy to talk with them. My French may have been the best in the Embassy, I don't know, I shouldn't say that, but it was quite good and the French found it easy to talk to me. The French DCM was the guy who always wanted to talk with me about strategic systems and then they had a political officer who wanted to talk about other stuff that was going on. So I was sort of the unofficial, at my level, liaison with the French.

They were always friendly to me, but I found their political analysis just always faulty. It's like that article that was in the paper recently about some business practice where the French said that as a practical matter it was fine, but that in theory it won't work. I was saying it just the other way around, in theory it might work but it had nothing to do with reality. They were very interested, as I said earlier, in the strategic discussions with the Russians because they somehow thought that could jeopardize their security or undercut their security in some way.

What was our feeling about their nuclear forces? This harks back to my days at the Naval Academy where we were always concerned that the French in some idiotic way might go to early use of nuclear weapons. My recollection among my military friends from SALT and the Naval Academy was the old saying, you know, the French were so unreliable and they were so likely to mis-analyze a situation. The slogan was that when the balloon goes up, i.e. when we are really on high alert and we're worried about going to war with the Russians, that the first thing we ought to do is sink the French submarines. I remember that, and I've told the French that from time to time, I've said, you know, in the U.S. military we were more worried about the French than we were about the Russians doing something stupid in a crisis. You could never figure out what they were planning and how their analysis might work.

I know that's a little unfair. Certainly De Gaulle was quite reasonable and understood pretty well what was going on. What the French are trying to do all along, always have been trying to do, is to basically carve a role for themselves in the world. It's very difficult when it's dominated by Anglo-Saxons in the case of the U.S. and Britain, or the Soviets in the case of the Soviet Union-Warsaw Pact. How do you have a French identity, a French independence and a French policy? It drives you to some extremes when the obvious ground is seized by the big powers. In order to

cut a swathe for yourself you have to take some really strange byways. Their analyses are sometimes so contorted and convoluted that they just don't act in a commonsensical way. But this is at the political and analytical level.

At the military level the relationship has always been good. As I said earlier the French have always wanted to cooperate with the U.S. About a year or so ago I met some French officers, I forget in what connection. I asked them what they were doing here and they said they were testing their new carrier aircraft. They were using the U.S. test beds, because they don't have carrier testing. They were at Patuxent, I guess. It's actually a land strip that's configured like a carrier, I guess, and you practice on that before you go out to sea. That's terrific. It's close cooperation and it's a two-year period to test this airplane. That's about as close a cooperation as you can expect to get among militaries and it has gone on and I think the French military appreciate it.

They are not critical of the U.S. The other thing I think people ought to recognize is this great ambivalence that existed about the U.S. presence in Europe. Certainly in the '70s that was there, but it has always been very ambivalent and actually deceptively so. There was always criticism of the U. S. presence and the U.S. dominance and all that, but deep down nobody, not the Russians or the Soviets, not the French, and certainly not the British or the Germans, wanted the U.S. to leave. That would have been the worst outcome from everybody's point of view. You see it even more clearly now where in spite of everything that is in the paper the Russians do not want to drive the Americans out of Europe. They do not want to see NATO expand, but they also do not want the Americans to leave. It's difficult to sort of find a pathway between the two because it is the Americans that make sure there isn't going to be any trouble with the Germans or any trouble in Western Europe.

Q: One goes back to the original idea of NATO where somebody said NATO is designed to keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Soviets out. In a way those things are still going.

MENDELSON: That's right.

Q: You know, my Ambassador to Yugoslavia in the mid '60s when I was there, said one time that Tito said he was highly supportive of having the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, the American Sixth Fleet, because he thought it was a positive force.

MENDELSON: I think everybody agrees with that. They all want the Americans in. How do you get them in? Americans now believe that the only way they'll stay in is if NATO expands. We've created a problem there. But I think that two of the concerns...keeping the Germans down, I don't think anybody thinks the Germans are going to get out of control. They write it, but I don't think anybody believes it. Keeping the Russians out? I don't think anybody believes the Russians are headed in. They can't be headed in. If they decided today to re-conquer Central Europe, it would take them 15 years to get to a position to be able to do it.

So the only issue that is really left...that's Lord Ismay that made that statement, by the way, the first Secretary General, and he was right, I agree with him. The only big issue now is what does it take now to keep the Americans in! Apparently the Europeans have concluded that NATO

expansion is required to keep the Americans in, because we are pushing it very hard. I think, however, we are making a mistake on that.

Q: Were there any other issues you were dealing with at NATO at that particular time?

MENDELSON: No. I was basically the arms control guy, the SALT guy, and the MBFR conventional forces guy. I was also the Soviet threat guy. I continued to brief a lot of people for the Mission, a lot of congressmen coming through, or staffers. My files at home have a dozen or so kind of thank-you notes or letters, but some rather unusual thank-you letters. There is one letter I got from the head of what is now FEMA, Federal Emergency Management...

Q: This is the response to earthquakes, floods, etc.

MENDELSON: Yes, well this was going to be for nuclear war, also, at that time. He sent it to, I think the Ambassador, and he said thank you very much for your warm reception, I appreciated all the briefings, I particularly appreciated the briefings by Al Haig, who was SAC Europe, and Jack Mendelson. I loved that letter that sort of put the two of us, me an FSO-3 and he was the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, together. I don't know if Haig ever knew we had been linked together.

I did a lot of briefing of reporters, journalists. The journalists were interested in the Soviet threat and they were interested in nuclear weapons. They were interested in the arms control discussions with the Soviets. So that was my area. I did a lot of that public affairs work. I was sent on speaking tours. I liked doing that because, as I started out saying, I didn't like working with my immediate boss so much. This was sort of, if I got sent to Scandawije to brief on arms control negotiations in NATO, I was my own man. I also got re-detailed down to Geneva to the SALT Talks. The State Department was unable to staff SALT for a month at one point. I volunteered to go just to get out of the Mission. I went down there and had fun for a couple of weeks, three or four weeks in Geneva. So I did a lot of sort of public affairs work for the Mission as well, and I did a good job at it and they liked having me do it.

Q: Another aspect was that you were sort of the liaison man with the French, too.

MENDELSON: I was liaison with the French, although that was in the building. I went to conferences and stuff. Despite the impression people might get from listening to the tapes, I was a pretty good speaker and I knew my subject very well. I could handle the public affairs part. I remember going to a lot of conferences of, you know, strategic situation in Europe, in England, Holland and places like that. I did a lot of that kind of stuff.

Q: One last thing that I would like to ask you. Could you tell me what you were saying and believing about the Soviet threat at that time? We are talking about the sort of mixed signals we were getting. You had Carter who thought now was a time we could do business with the Soviets, and Carter came with a sort of a Baptist-Christian idea of if you do nice to them they'll do nice to you. Plus the fact that we were getting ready for this group who were going make the most horrendous mistake in the Soviet Union and get involved in Afghanistan. We never really figured out who did it. This is slightly after your time but there was a real threat. We had a sort of a

goody-goody approach on one hand, at the same time we were acting tough. What were we saying?

MENDELSON: My argument had to be, when I was out there selling SALT, that there was absolutely no reason not to deal with the Russians because we were in a fundamentally strong, if not superior, position to them. We could afford to strike any of these deals on any basis that you wanted to look at it except perhaps numerical. We were head and shoulders above them qualitatively. In nuclear forces it probably didn't make a lot of difference one way or the other since both sides could destroy the other. But on any measure that you wanted to take, except numbers, we were better off than they were. We had nothing to fear.

What you had to do was to overcome concern that striking these deals would somehow put us at a disadvantage. My argument would have been there was no way we were going to be at a disadvantage. I actually wrote a piece about this after I left the Government. Even though there was a quantitative disparity in conventional forces, this is different from nuclear forces, we more than compensated for the quantitative disparity by the superiority of our training, our command and control, our aircraft, our tactics and our allies.

People agglomerated the Warsaw Pact and said there were the Russians and then there are the Armenians and the Poles and so on. Most of those people, I said, you could discount totally, almost totally, in terms of aggressive allies. If attacked, I didn't have any doubt they would fight, but we didn't intend to attack them. If forced to attack I had grave doubts as to how useful they would be as allies. As a matter of fact I argued that the Russians showed by the way they deployed their forces that they, the Soviets, had grave doubts about the reliability of their allies.

The quantitative difference between NATO conventional forces and Russian conventional forces was very interesting. The Russians had deployed roughly the number of forces that NATO had and the balance of the Warsaw Pact difference was the Warsaw Pact allies. This said to me, and I think it's absolutely right, that the Russians figured they had to have as many troops there as they thought they needed to balance NATO and the rest of their Warsaw Pact allies maybe they'd help and maybe they wouldn't. But they sure weren't counting on them to counterbalance NATO. They were going to do it all by themselves and then everything else would be gravy.

But the Russians knew, for example, at Stalingrad the forces that cracked were the Romanian and Hungarian forces. If you were a Russian General and you were told to go into battle with a Bulgarian Division on your left and a Romanian one on your right, you're going to protect your flanks, let me tell you. You can't count on those people to do the kind of job you want to have done. I don't mean to say these aren't fine nations and that they don't have fine military traditions. They simply weren't of the (A) quality, and (B) of the ideological drive that you would count on as allies. They certainly didn't have the same affection for their alliance that the NATO allies had for its alliance.

But when you started bean counting these factors didn't play. If you bean-counted you had a lot of extra tanks that belonged to the Poles and the Hungarians and the Romanians, Bulgarians and East Germans.

LUCIAN HEICHLER
Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1977-1980)

Lucian Heichler was born in Vienna, Austria in 1925. He emigrated to the United States with his parents in 1940 where he later attended NYU and was naturalized as a US citizen in 1944. He served in the US Army during World War II. He entered the Foreign Service and held positions in Germany, Cameroon, Zaire, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium and Turkey. Lucian Heichler was interviewed by Susan Klingman in 2000.

HEICHLER: I was offered a very interesting position at NATO headquarters.

Q: *And what was that position?*

HEICHLER: It had a very long and impressive sounding title: deputy assistant secretary general for political affairs and head of the political directorate.

Q: *That definitely sounds impressive. Now this was in NATO headquarters.*

HEICHLER: Yes, just outside of Brussels in Evère, where the Belgians had put up temporary buildings for NATO Headquarters in the '60s, which they always intended to replace with a fancy permanent headquarters complex but never did. So what we had there on the Route de l'aviation was a large group of very ugly two-story tempops resembling nothing so much as a penitentiary without the guard towers, and that remains NATO headquarters to this day.

Q: *I see. Hmm. And what was your job?*

HEICHLER: Well, the International Staff `position to which I was seconded was traditionally held by an American Foreign Service officer, sort of reserved to the Americans. Most of the senior positions on the international staff were parceled out among the member nations. My immediate boss, the assistant secretary for political affairs, was always a German of ambassadorial rank, and his deputy was always an American Foreign Service officer..

Q: *I see. What did you do?*

HEICHLER: I wrote reports for the secretary general, presided over the weekly meetings of the NATO political committee, attended all the NATO ministerial meetings, took notes for the secretary general and prepared his summary statement, which he delivered on the second and final day of the ministerial meetings; and was at the disposal of the secretary general's office for whatever they needed. Once I was asked to accompany Secretary General Joseph Luns (former Foreign Minister of the Netherlands) on a trip to Greece and Turkey, which I found quite fascinating. Only two or three of us went with him and sat in on his discussions with the prime ministers of these countries, discussed the Cyprus problem and other current issues.

Q: What language did you use?

HEICHLER: French or English. My French was barely up to it. I was supposed to be bilingual. I did manage, but just. The French, of course, insisted on speaking French at these meetings, and I did my best to keep up with them and answer them in French.

The political directorate was one of three that came under the assistant secretary for political affairs, the others being the economic directorate and the information directorate; when my boss was away, I, as his deputy, was in charge of all three, in total a staff of maybe 90 people drawn from all nationalities, British, Dutch, Turks, Italians, Greeks, and so forth. By the way, I was quite shocked to discover a number of years later that one of the very nice, polite young economists working in the economic directorate had been a long-term spy for the GDR. I forgot his name now, but he was discovered, oh, maybe 10 years after I left NATO and is now in jail.

Q: He was then supposedly a member of the German Foreign Service?

HEICHLER: No, no, he was a permanent member of the international staff. Only the most senior people were seconded from their foreign service; the majority were permanent employees. A large contingent of the international staff was Belgian, especially the lower-ranking functionaries, the secretarial staff, the security guards, and so on.

Q: What kind of a relationship did you have with the U.S. mission at NATO?

HEICHLER: Well, I was encouraged to keep close ties with the American delegation. I was permitted and encouraged to visit the American delegation daily and read the cable traffic; nothing or nearly nothing was kept from me. At the same time, I was supposed to - and did conscientiously - avoid taking a pro-American position. As chairman of the political committee, I had to remain entirely neutral. Of course I was on very good terms with the American ambassador and the DCM, the political officers and others in the American delegation. The DCM at the time was a man named Glickman. I don't know whether he's still on active duty. It's, after all, now 20 years ago, more. I had very good relations with him. I had very good relations with just about all the delegations, actually. I found only the French difficult to deal with.

Q: Lucian, I would imagine that the U.S. mission to NATO would have also seen you as a person with a wider perspective than they might have had. Did they use you as a source of information?

HEICHLER: No, they did not -- and in fact, I had no information to give that they did not already have. They were very conscientious, very sensitive to the somewhat unusual role I was playing, and carefully avoided trying to compromise me in any way at all. And of course, I did the same. I made no use whatever of the information I was privileged to see during my daily visits to the delegation, where I would sit in a room and read the outgoing and incoming traffic.

The high points of those years in Brussels, for me, were the meetings of the NATO foreign ministers. They were held alternately in Brussels or in another NATO capital. The year after I got there (1978), President Carter decided to hold a NATO summit meeting in Washington, and

so for these meetings, whether they were at the head-of-state or head-of-government or the foreign ministers level, a large number of international staff people came along. We usually had our own airplane. It was a great traveling circus.

Q: *I can imagine.*

HEICHLER: And for very little extra money we were able to take our spouses along if there was space available on the aircraft.

Q: *How very pleasant.*

HEICHLER: There were usually empty seats on these big aircraft that could be bought for our spouses for not very much money. And so my wife came along on that trip to Washington and I think some of the other ministerials. I remember we had one in Copenhagen; we had one at The Hague. And the last one, while I was still with NATO, was in Ankara, just a few months before I was transferred to Ankara.

Q: *That must have been very helpful.*

HEICHLER: It was. I already knew, I think, that I was going to be assigned to the embassy in Ankara and I made good use of those few days to get acquainted with some of the people at our embassy there, especially with my predecessor, the counselor for what was then called "mutual security affairs," which actually meant politico-military affairs. So those were highlights, but the entire job was interesting. As you know, in the Alliance all decisions must be unanimous. There are no majority votes, so that any country, any member country of the 16 (and today it's 19 or at least, or 20 - it was 15 in my time, before Spain became a member), any one nation could veto anything. And it required a great deal of diplomatic ability and skill to find compromise solutions to get something done in the political committee. So to me this was a wonderful exercise of diplomatic craft, especially vis-à-vis the French, who seemed to have instructions from Paris to cause as much obstruction as possible.

I shuddered every time the French delegate would raise his finger - and I can still hear him: "*Monsieur le Président, je vois un inconvenient...*" "Mr. Chairman, I see a problem here..." Oh, damn, I thought - here we go again!

Q: *And were those problems usually substantive?*

HEICHLER: No, actually, not so much substantive as procedural. The French tended to accuse the International Staff of taking too much upon itself in drafting papers; they thought that we should play more of a servant's role than we actually did. It was a fact that we wrote the papers - well, we did not write the communiqués, although we played a role in helping the communiqué process along. It was the tradition at NATO ministerial meetings for the deputy chiefs of all the delegations to sit together all night following the first day of the ministerial and draft a communiqué, which was approved the next morning by their chiefs or even referred to capitals, if necessary, and then issued at the end of the ministerial meeting.

Q: Then this drafting, this development of a consensus, was achieved through fiddling with words?

HEICHLER: Frequently, yes. And then again, these meetings were chaired by senior members of the international staff. My boss, the German ambassador I mentioned earlier, who was assistant secretary general, would chair these all-night communiqué sessions of the DCM's of the 15 member delegations and help them find language acceptable to all, and the like. And of course some of these issues were pretty delicate, particularly when it had anything to do with Greece and Turkey.

Q: Yes. Well, I would assume, then, that over the couple of years that you were there you developed certain formulas that you could plug in from time to time, or was each situation very different?

HEICHLER: I think so, yes... No, no, I think you're right. We were able to fall back on things that had worked before, although I can't think of a particular example right now. And some things were simply best to stay away from.

Q: Right, and so they were just handled by omission.

HEICHLER: Yes.

Q: Okay.

HEICHLER: A lot of it was boiler-plate, let's face it. Being naïve by nature, I found it a bit shocking that the communiqué, allegedly the result of what had been discussed and decided by ministers, was actually drafted beforehand.

Q: Yes.

HEICHLER: I found that rather disillusioning.

Q: But did it bear some relationship to what actually was discussed?

HEICHLER: No, not really.

Q: Not really?

HEICHLER: No.

Q: So it was primarily for public consumption, and even then, I suppose, the public, or let's say the governments that consumed it, also knew that it was rather superficial.

HEICHLER: The more sophisticated public and the media certainly knew this. The real meat of the ministerial meetings was in the secret session which the foreign ministers held without staffs, with only myself present, because I was supposed to keep the notes on that meeting for the

secretary general and prepare the summary of the discussion that he would then read out the next morning in the open session of the ministerial. And to me, of course, these two or three hours of letting-your-hair-down, genuine discussion by foreign ministers was the most fascinating part of the whole thing. This is where I came to know, respect, and admire certain foreign ministers enormously - people like Hans- Dietrich Genscher, whom I mentioned earlier, people like Lord Carrington of Britain. Also, I think it was during my last year at NATO, we were confronted with this terribly, terribly difficult decision of stationing Pershing II missiles in Germany.

Q: *Right.*

HEICHLER: And Cruise missiles, as a response to the Soviet SS-20 threat.

Q: *I remember the period now.*

HEICHLER: You remember what an explosive issue that was.

Q: *Very difficult, yes.*

HEICHLER: It took a great deal of courage. I remember one moment, especially during the discussion of this issue before NATO endorsed the stationing of these weapons, when the then Belgian foreign minister said to his colleagues, "You know that I am sitting here about to commit political suicide. If I endorse this, I'm done for, but I'm going to endorse it anyway because I believe in it." I wish I could think who that man was.

Q: *I don't remember, but - you know - you could look it up if you wanted to, but it doesn't really matter.*

HEICHLER: I keep wanting to say Spaak, but it wasn't Spaak. Henri Spaak was a much earlier figure.

Q: *Yes. Well, did he commit political suicide?*

HEICHLER: I don't remember that he actually did.

Q: *You can't recall that actually happened?*

HEICHLER: I don't think so.

Q: *And what about the German position on this issue?*

HEICHLER: The Germans didn't have much difficulty with it. They were in favor of our deployment because they always felt that they were the most threatened, the most exposed, the likeliest battlefield if actual war ever broke out, so they did not have any problem with more effective deterrence, more effective defense. And as I remember, the most vigorous protests occurred in Britain, where these women held a sit-down strike at Mildenhall Air Force Base and other places. I don't recall that there was that much popular opposition in Germany - maybe on

the part of the Green party, but I don't remember that it was all that significant. You see, this was one of the more exciting times that I went through, this particular question and these decisions.

Q: *Okay.*

HEICHLER: Once again I felt enormously privileged, as I had in Berlin, as Senat liaison officer, to be present at these very high-level gatherings and to witness historic decisions and discussions.

Q: *The U.S. Secretary of State at that time was Vance?*

HEICHLER: Cyrus Vance, yes, under Carter.

Q: *And did he play an active role in this? I'm sure he did.*

HEICHLER: Yes, he certainly did. Once Carter himself came to visit us, sort of dropped in, and behaved rather oddly.

Q: *Really?*

HEICHLER: Well, a special meeting of ambassadors was convoked to sit down and talk with the American President and he showed up, and I was there. It was a little awkward, because Carter didn't seem to be very sure about what he was talking about.

Q: *What he was doing? Yes.*

HEICHLER: And our ambassadors, our own and other countries, found the whole situation rather embarrassing. I wish I could give you an example, but I can't recall.

Q: *Well, that's all right. So, that sounds like it was one of the highlights of your career so far - that and Berlin, as you mentioned already, and... Anything more on NATO Brussels?*

HEICHLER: Not really. We lived well. We had a very active social life within NATO. We did not find the Belgian people particularly hospitable or particularly pleasant. I think the Belgians were tired of having so many foreigners running around, because it wasn't just us; it was the enormous presence of the European Community downtown. It was also the military arm of NATO, with which I had some contact. I got down to Mons occasionally to talk to the political advisor to SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe), but otherwise my contacts with the military side were confined to visits to the PX and commissary near Mons.

Q: *Well, yes - important.*

HEICHLER: To which we had access.

Q: *Very important, yes. All right, so after your time in Brussels - I guess that ended in 1980?*

HEICHLER: 1980, yes.

MAYNARD WAYNE GLITMAN
Deputy Chief of Mission, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1977-1981)

Ambassador Maynard Wayne Glitman was born in Illinois in 1933. He received his BA from the University of Illinois and his MA from Fletcher School of Law and diplomacy MA, and served in the U.S. Army in 1957. His postings abroad include Nassau, Ottawa, Paris, Brussels, Geneva and Vienna, and served as the ambassador to Belgium. James S. Pacy interviewed the ambassador on April 24, 2001

GLITMAN: As for the substance, this began with the Ford administration. We were working on ways to try to help the Defense Department get back on its feet, and our forces in Europe in particular, after expenses and the cost of the Vietnam war. We began that program. I also participated in a briefing of NATO Permanent Representatives, which Secretary Rumsfeld set up, he having earlier been Ambassador to NATO, about the Soviet military buildup. It was on that occasion that I had my first introduction to what later became a major part of my life's work, the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces issue. We for the first time showed the allies the situation we were together beginning to face as a result of the Soviets coming up with some very powerful new missiles. After the change of the administration, I stayed on in that position, working on the same questions with David McGiffert as the Assistant Secretary of Defense and Harold Brown as the Secretary of Defense. I worked very closely also with Bob Komer and our efforts there were to revitalize NATO, to ensure that the alliance would be able to meet its defense commitments with sufficient revenues, new equipment, etc. It was very serious, very important effort to try to get NATO back on its feet after the Vietnam war. I stayed at that job until the summer of 1977. At that point I had an opportunity to go overseas again and to serve as Deputy Chief of Mission at NATO, with William Tapley "Tap" Bennett, Jr. as our Ambassador. That brings us to the next phase.

To round it off, this was a job that I very much enjoyed. I think I made some useful contributions to national security on the job. In a way I was sorry to leave, but on the other hand having an opportunity to deal with these problems in the field, and meet directly with our allies at NATO headquarters was also an important challenge, so I looked forward to moving to Brussels.

The DCM at NATO, in Brussels, had a house assigned to him. We had no need to find a place to live. Very pleasant place. Nice large yard and a lawn. Obviously made for entertaining downstairs. We did a lot of work to make some improvements to the reception room. It was not far from the Forêt de Soignes, which was a large remnant of the European forest that had covered the continent, and it was not too far from where we lived. As I mentioned earlier I very much enjoy the outdoors and one of the pleasures of living in that particular place was that I was able to go out the door, and Chris with me, and the dog, or children, and within a short couple of blocks we were in the forest. You could walk miles and miles in this forest, once you got to know the paths. There were highways that bisected it in some areas, but you could find out

where the tunnels were to walk under them, so it was nice to have something so close to your home for the weekends at least when we weren't working, it was, as I said, very pleasurable. We had to drive to work but at this point I did have a driver. Certainly after I got there, thanks to the security situation we began to drive with armored cars. In the beginning these were make-shift, large lumps of plastic over the windows, I suppose some sort of steel in the doors, etc.

Q: Had there been some problem that brought this about?

GLITMAN: No problems specific to Belgium, but a worldwide problem at this point. It did make a difference in our lives. From there on we would be living in that kind of situation. On the weekends we had our own vehicle and would just go. We had purchased a Jeep Wagoneer, which wasn't the smartest thing to have at that point, but we bought it before we knew we were going overseas, it was with the idea that we would use it to drive home to Vermont. It would have been a good thing. But it was not to be, so we shipped the car over to Belgium. One of the things we went through, with that particular car was that in order to meet Belgian rules and regulation we had to change some of the wiring. Belgians with their fog insisted on a separate fog lamp in the back and they didn't like yellow lights that we had in the front, parking lights, whatever you call them. And they had to be white. They made some other changes in the wiring. I'll finish the story about this vehicle. We then, you'll find later, moved from Brussels to Geneva and we took the Jeep with us, and the Swiss had different wiring regulations, and so all the wiring was done over for Swiss specs. Then we went briefly to Vienna, took the Jeep there and Austrians had their wiring arrangements. And then just to make everything nice and cozy the vehicle went back to Brussels when we returned there later. We did finally ship it home to the U.S. We paid for that ourselves on this occasion. It finally died in Vermont, and you can guess how. The wiring harness burned out. It was too bad, that was the end of the poor car. So many times, with these different rules and regulations. That was another side of life in the service.

While we are still on the more social side, and then I'll get to the substance, we had a very heavy social schedule. Again, social life is work in another form. But at Brussels, at NATO I should say, there really was a lot of activity. One nice thing about NATO events and particularly the dinners, they started at eight and they ended at 11, and everybody arrived on time and everybody departed on time. So you could pretty well count on it. Again, as was the case in other places, the dinner parties and the receptions were opportunities to continue the work that had been going on during the day at the office, but at least in a more informal setting. These events, and particularly the dinners could be difficult for Chris or any of the other spouses. I could see that often she'd be seated between two diplomats, or a diplomat and a military officer, or two military officers, people who were working together all day and had more business to transpire during the evening. She would just find herself sitting there while they talked past her. There was nothing I could do about it and even today, even thinking about that, I feel badly about it. I probably was guilty of doing it myself on the occasion. But it was just the intensity of the work that I think lead into that situation.

The work itself covered just about every problem in the world. It's not the UN, it's NATO, but when you begin to look at the issues that the NATO countries are interested in and the way the organization is set up, sooner or later almost any problem would find its way there, if only for experts' discussion. So NATO doesn't deal say with Latin America or the Far East, but it was

not unusual for NATO Latin American experts or NATO Middle Eastern experts to come to a meeting at NATO headquarters to discuss the subject. And you could see why, given the nature of the alliance and its security role, this would be a perfectly sensible thing for it to do so that the countries could cooperate on issues. It's well beyond the boundaries of the NATO countries or the continents that they were located on. It doesn't mean that we'd actually have a defense arrangement involved, we didn't. But there was at least a discussion of these kinds of issues.

There were fixed meetings, defense ministers, foreign ministers, they would meet twice a year. In addition, the defense ministers would meet as something called the "Nuclear Planning Group." It was smaller, not all the defense ministers participated in that, but most did eventually on a rotational basis. That was another set of meetings, which defense ministers did. Incidentally while I was at the Pentagon working on NATO issues, I would be going to those meetings as well, so I had continuity from that which carried over.

We worked on a number of key issues during this time. One was continuation of building our forces back up after the Vietnam war; In keeping with what was clearly a buildup in Soviet forces. We were actively engaged in that. Something we put together in which Bob Komer played a key role, was the long-term defense program, which he helped shepherd through NATO. Setting specific goals, targets, both for results and for spending, 3% of GNP to go for defense for all of the NATO countries was the expenditure goal. Then there were specific goals each country agreed to meet to improve their forces. Committees and groups were set up to monitor the progress in doing that. It was a pretty thorough operation. I think it proved to be successful in helping NATO not to get back on its feet but to compensate for its forces being drawn down during Vietnam, and now to help deal with matching the Soviets, countering the increasing Soviet expenditure. The other thing we got involved in, and I got deeply involved in was on the nuclear side. That culminated in a key decision NATO reached on December 12, 1979.

Perhaps I could say something about daily routine at NATO, give you some kind of idea of the amount of activity that we had there. We had a staff meeting every morning when we came in to work. Went over the activities that were expected that day. Practically everyone had one or two committees that they were charged with following and attending, representing the U.S. at. Some of these committees would meet on a weekly basis, some a little less frequently, but it gave everyone an opportunity to participate directly in the affairs of the alliance because of the fact that there were enough committees for everyone to have a role to play.

The permanent representatives, perm reps, had two scheduled events every week. One was a perm reps lunch, which took place on Tuesdays. The purpose of the lunch was to allow informal discussion of subjects which were likely to come up during the week in a more formal setting and for countries to try to get a sense of how well their position will be received or what kinds of changes they may have to make in it, what sort of changes they may want other to make in theirs, and the U.S.; ambassador or myself, one of us would always be at these perm rep lunches.

Wednesdays were formal North Atlantic Council meetings. We'd always call that of course, the NAC. The perm reps would be present for that meeting. This was formal occasion, as I said, and countries could put their position on, forward it as a formal country position. The agenda was usually set during the preceding week, or during the first part of the week, but normally you'd

have heads-up that such and such items were on the agenda. The international staff, NATO has international staff as well as country representatives, and the international staff would sometimes be tasked with the job of coming up with the agendas. They would discuss these issues with the countries delegations, national delegations, to get some sort of idea what different countries might be proposing to put up. Those were Wednesdays.

Other days of the week the special political committee, made up of delegation political officers, would meet. There was an economic committee, and those meetings would be once a week. Lot of public affairs activities would go on. We would have frequent visitors from Washington. We welcomed them, particularly from the Congress. I felt that when they came to NATO they came for serious work. We tried very hard to give them a clear picture of what was happening at the alliance, how it would affect the U.S. and how they could help the U.S. in its efforts at NATO. By and large I found most of the congressmen and senators helpful and anxious to be of the assistance to the alliance.

Twice a year there were the ministerial level meetings, for both the political issues, State Department and foreign ministers and for defense ministers. For each of those meetings there was always a formal communiqué. Larry Legere, the officer who headed the defense side of our mission to NATO, and who was formally the Secretary of Defense's representative in Europe, and people working directly for him in our mission would be responsible for putting together the communiqué for the defense ministers activities. I would clear all of those, as would our Ambassador Bennett at this time. We would clear those communiqués, and would make sure that they were in keeping with the broad policy. We never had any serious problems with this. And those would be hammered out by the staffs from the various NATO countries, usually at night. The next morning the ministers would pass on them.

For the foreign ministers' communiqués, the head of the political section would work on the communiqué, during the lead up to the final night and then I as DCM would represent the U.S. at the final session. These sessions usually didn't start till about eight or nine o'clock at night and they habitually went into the small hours. I only know of one occasion, a meeting in Ankara, when we were not able to finish. We heard the call to prayer at night as the sun went down and we heard to call to prayer in the morning as the sun came up. We didn't make it that night, as I recall. Remember, the key issue had to do with a CSCE, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe question. I don't remember the details, but I do remember that my British and French colleagues had very differing views on how to deal with this problem. And exceptionally, they exchanged a few sharp words during the course of the discussion. As always, these things tended to work out. Normally, we'd be done at three, four in the morning.

My task was to get the communiqués to the Secretary of State as soon as he woke up, so that he could read the communiqué at breakfast and then after he had read it I would usually be called in and asked questions about it, why this was that way and how we came to that position and so on. I enjoyed those all night sessions. I did have an advantage, I am more of a night person than an early to rise person, so as the night wore on, others wore out but I was still going.

There were times when there were disagreements between ourselves and the French. Fortunately, I had a very good relationship with Jacques Jessel, who was the French number two for most of

time that I was at NATO. There were occasions, one in particular, where he and I had reached an agreement between us on how to deal with a problem and it felt we had resolved it. But, the person chairing the group, who was normally one of the senior NATO staff members, at the last minute, as Jacques and I were coming to agreement, you could see where the compromise would arise, jumped in with his own solution; which got both of us angry at him; because we could see that we were about to settle it. The Chair was trying to be helpful, but it would have been good time for the person chairing the meeting to sit back and let the two who were causing the problem, so to speak, settle their differences. We did. Working with Jessel was very helpful later, particularly as we got into some of the nuclear issues. And let me turn now to those questions.

The Long Term Defense Program that I had mentioned, where Komer had done a good job in getting it going, dealt largely with conventional systems. This caused some of our allies to wonder whether the U.S. was going to start downplaying its nuclear commitment to NATO. And I made a point when this began to crop up to make sure that Washington was aware of this sensitivity. As a result we decided to add another element to the Long Term Defense Program, which was to take a look at NATO's nuclear requirements. The effort to get that element properly included into the Long Term Defense Program took up a huge amount of time and became extremely sensitive. The Allies, particularly some of the German leaders, had evidenced concern that we were possibly going to give up the prospect of having cruise missiles in the context of our bilateral SALT negotiations with the Soviets.

We conceded to the allies that there was a great concern there, that we might be backing away from our nuclear commitment and that our negotiating on strategic weapons could have the effect of not making it possible for the allies or us to field new systems in Europe with which we could directly protect the allies and directly counter new Soviet missiles, particularly the SS-20; three war heads, about 4000 kilometers range; being deployed in Soviet Union in rather considerable numbers. We had nothing to really counter it as such. Cruise missiles were a possibility, and just to repeat myself to make sure it is clear, the allies were saying, "Yes, but it looks as if you may giving up on them in order to get your strategic treaty with the Soviets, but that's going to leave us in a bad situation." We tried very hard to persuade the allies that there was no reason for concern here. That we could take care of their needs on the nuclear side with what we had. We were not going to give up everything in order to satisfy the Soviets on the strategic side, that we had their concerns in mind; the targets were covered and so on. We made a major effort to do that but it didn't work. The concern was there.

But then, in one of those ironies of history, at about the time that we began to say, alright, maybe they've got a point, the Europeans, maybe if they are concerned we ought to try to have some nuclear systems to back them up against the Soviet threat. At this point, the Europeans began to have somewhat different views. And part of this change on their side links back to the so-called "neutron bomb affair." About the time that I left the Pentagon, an article appeared in The Washington Post, concerning a new war head for U.S. weapons in Europe. The very name itself was questionable. It was dubbed, by The Post, "the neutron bomb." That was a pejorative name for any kind of nuclear bomb, or any weapon, period. If you start talking about neutrons, very unpleasant images will be flashing in your mind, including the prospect that other parts of you could be "neutronized," so to speak, could be radiated. The purpose that the military had in mind with this particular weapon, it was not a toy, was to reduce the blast effect of the weapon. When

you reduce the amount of blast, you reduce the damage to surrounding properties and people. The neutron effect was not the goal, the goal was to reduce the blast. Other effects of reducing the blast was to concentrate neutron waves. Those are dangerous things, but again, it doesn't cover a large area. What that means is that you could use these, or threaten to use these weapons in somewhat more crowded areas. Because you wouldn't be blowing up houses and people. If you were looking for Soviet tanks you could get the tanks and sort of limit the damage around it, "collateral damage" as the military call it. I have to back off for a moment and say there is obviously an element of unreality, lack of reality in all of this. One wonders about the value of these systems. But that's the theory that we were looking at and working from.

The Soviet propaganda machine seized on these articles, they went five days in a row in Washington Post, it was the headline story, and I must say my favorite was a headline that read "Killer Bomb." And I had to say, what did you expect this thing to do? Tickle them to death? But you can get from that headline, the mood that they were in when they used that phrase, "killer bomb." Again, the image was there. This got picked up in Europe, and the flames were fanned by the Soviet propaganda machine. We had some evidence of that having been in effect. Much of this activity was centered in the beginning in the Netherlands. Chris and I went up one weekend, just to look around and see, and we both noticed large full color posters in windows, "Stop the neutron bomb." And there was this awful American weapon, the neutron bomb had to be stopped. We also picked up on a corner, a pathetic mimeographed 8x10 sheet that read "Stop the SS-20 Rockets," but you could see that the heavy funding was going to the opponents of U.S./NATO deployment and not to opponents of Soviet missile deployment. As I said, history articles came out which corroborated the fact that the funding was coming out of the Soviet Union.

There was an effort, still, underway at NATO to go ahead with this weapon, and the U.S. put a lot of effort, and our embassies did, secretary of state did, secretary of defense did, with their colleagues in NATO-Europe to support this particular program. Ambassador Bennett and I were scheduled to have a meeting on this topic with perm reps, I think it was going to be on a Monday, it was unusual, to discuss this, to reach a final conclusion. We sent a telegram in, saying that it was going to be a tough fight, there were some concerns with various other countries, whether they would go through with it in the end. But we believed that we did have the vote, there would be support for this if we wanted to go ahead with it.

I received a phone call, the night before Bennett and I were scheduled to go over and see the NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns, and lay out our posture for the meeting, and get his support for what we were going to do during this meeting with the perm reps at which this decision was to be made. That night, Friday or Saturday night, before the meeting was to take place, I got a phone call from Washington, late at night, I was still up but Chris had fallen asleep, it was after midnight. Person on the other end, I remember who it was but I won't go into it, said to me, "Are you sitting down?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, you'd better because when I tell you this you are going to want to be sitting." And he just said in effect, this was double talk but I knew what he was talking about, and he just said, "It is all off. The position has been changed, you'll have a message in the morning. We know you are going to see Luns, you'd better read this message before you talk to him." And of course the message told us that President Carter had effectively said that this was going to be delayed. We eventually had the meeting with the allies.

I reported back that there was a lot of rancor and anger on the part of the Europeans at the fact that we have gone this far along with them, they were ready to move, and here we were, backing away, delaying the process which in effect meant killing it. That day the Soviets, I think, drew the conclusion that if they could get the European "peace movement" on their side, through a major propaganda effort, they could in effect turn NATO around on issues of this sort. And that had a major impact on our program to improve NATO's defense posture and to include a nuclear element to that. So it was in my view a very costly move by President Carter. From what I can tell, his cabinet secretaries were not aware that he was going to do this either. I have read the president's memoirs and he suggests that they were all on board and that the Europeans were on board with his move. But from my research, I don't see that and from talking to people who were working for other cabinet officers at this time, involved, they also told me that cabinet officers were caught totally off base by this. That so called neutron bomb affair was a very costly one for us. I tried to get the name changed, and tried very hard to get at least ourselves, the U.S. officials talking to one another, to stop calling it the neutron bomb, we could call it the reduced blast bomb, because that was what the scientists were aiming for. But, despite using it myself I could never get anything back from Washington, rarely get anything back from Washington trying to change the name. It was probably too late to do that anyway.

With that in the background, we were still continuing to try to work with the Europeans to determine what we were going to do about the Soviet nuclear build up and how we were going to handle it. Our initial effort was to try to persuade them that there wasn't a problem. We then came around and realized that if they thought there was a problem, then there was. We were dealing here with perceptions as much as reality and if their perception was that we were going to abandon them, then we had a problem we had to work on together. Because, as I said, as we began to move in that direction, the Europeans, particularly the Germans began to wonder just how much they could do. The way that we dealt with this, and I think this was really a very crucial decision, was not to say, "Well, this is our negotiation, we are going to do it all ourselves, with the Soviets." It was essential to say to the Europeans, "We were in this together, we are going to have full, complete consultations, we will set up a separate, new body in NATO. It will be chaired by an American, but it will be wide open for every country to be represented and all of their views will be taken into account."

This began with something called the "High Level Group," which was going to look at the deployments, possible deployments and the "Special Consultative Group" which would look at the diplomatic arms control side. So we began, I attended most of these meetings in my capacity as the DCM. One of the things I did early on was to suggest that there be dinners, which I would host at our house, before the actual meetings, so that we could sit down and have an informal discussion amongst ourselves, all the allies. And if there were any specific concerns or suggestions that countries wanted to try out in an informal session, we could do that. The other idea I had in mind was to create a club. To make this like a club. We had a very small dining room, but we made changes to this so we could accommodate more people, so that we had enough room at the table for everybody. We would usually start off, there were a couple of countries that would have particular issues for us, we would have them come over little bit before for drinks or something, before the dinner. That would be an opportunity for that sort of smaller group to discuss things. The whole point was to make this thing true consultations. The SCG met usually at NATO. Richard Pearl headed up the HLG. Richard had a reputation, I think

“Prince of Darkness” was his nickname. That may be how he appeared to some people but I can only say that in his capacity as the chairman of this international group, he was not anything like the caricature that had been created of him. He was a superb chairman. I must say there were times when I would have been harder nosed than he was in dealing with some of the suggestions. But he bent over backwards to bring people along with him. There was never any sense of threat or that you were going to walk out or arrogance on his part. And he was good company. Because the military had bases here and there, instead of coming to Brussels all the time, he would arrange for these meetings of the High Level Group, defense side, in places like Naples or Garmisch, and so on. And again, he was building a club. People felt that they were a part of this group and that they were building this thing, they wanted to work together. So it was very effective. On the foreign ministry side, State Department side, again they didn’t travel outside of Brussels but we continued the events at our house. We always had those dinners that were some sort of social get-together before they actually went to the conference table.

Now, on the substance. We had a lot of alternatives and objectives. And they had to work together. What sort of missiles would we agree to deploy? How many? And where? And defense, on the arms control side, what sort of arms control regime did we want to field with this? This process took until, as I mentioned earlier, December 12, 1979, when it came together. We came up with, effectively, here is what we are going to deploy: we are prepared to take everything out if we get, everything out from the Soviets’ side. It was from the beginning an effort to try to get to zero. Or at least the lowest possible number. But we didn’t want to put out a huge number. We tried to keep it low. Our own forces to start with. All that had begun, I can’t emphasize enough how important it was, that it all be done in consultation. The numbers were agreed by all of us, the U.S. didn’t impose anything on the others. On the contrary, some of the smaller countries had extremely good representatives. Johan Jorgen Holst of Norway, who was later instrumental in the Oslo Peace Accords for the Middle East, was their representative on the HLG I think, and the SCG. And even though Norway doesn’t have any nuclear weapons, and doesn’t host any nuclear weapons, he had some good ideas. So those ideas found their way to a position. Fred Ruth, the German representative on the SCG, again an important country with great interest in this. But again, his personality, his knowledge, abilities, were put to full value in this kind of circumstance, so you can see his ideas are in there. I could go on and mention many others, but I don’t think anybody would say, “This is mine.” The club put it together. The group put it together. And that was the position that we carried with us into the INF negotiations. Again, the strength of being able to say to the Soviets, “You can’t split this alliance, all of us agree on this.” It wasn’t just the U.S., it’s all of us. And then we will see that Soviets tried their best to split it, but for an American negotiator I had the 1979 decision, in writing, published and those were the principles that we were going to follow. It was an important moment. I think we set the standard for what consultations were supposed to be in that process.

I don’t want to leave the DCM at NATO without saying a few words about Tap Bennett, who was the Ambassador during my entire time there. He was a remarkable man. He was always very calm and went about his work in cheerful way. Calm and cheerful. He knew what he wanted and he had a remarkable way of using his low key approach to get it. His wife Margaret was also an exceptional person. Very cultured. She wrote beautifully. We know that because her Christmas cards were, and are, a delight to receive. In part because of the quality of the writing that she does, in something as simple as that. Tap was very good at dealing with senior people. With the

secretary of state and especially with the congressmen and the senators. He just had a marvelous way of making them feel comfortable and himself being comfortable around them. I wish I had that quality myself. I used to look at that and say, "Well, that's really a wonderful trait."

Q: Where there quite a few congressional visits to NATO while you were there?

GLITMAN: Yes. And I think I may have mentioned earlier that, when they came to Paris when we were there, we had a fair number of visits there and part of it was work but part of it was not. I'd say it was part work and part other stuff. When they came to NATO, they came to work. They came to learn about the organization, how things were proceeding at that time, they had specific questions to ask. Obviously it was of importance to us that they came away from NATO with a correct view of the organization. Its flaws as well as its qualities. And how they might be able to keep it working properly and in America's interest. There were lots of visits and I think by and large, as I said, these were serious visits.

There are a couple of other aspects of this that I would like to mention at this juncture. First, I think it is useful to know who was in charge of the HLG and the SCG during this period leading up to this important decision of December 1979. Dave McGiffert, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, headed up the U.S. team going to the HLG. And Reginald Bartholomew, I don't know precisely what position Reggie was holding at that time, but he headed up the SCG team. Both of them did a superb job. Indeed, we were very fortunate throughout the period of negotiations beginning with this period, this lead up to the '79 decision and continuing until the ratification. The people who represented and chaired the meeting for the U.S. side of the HLG and the SCG were all superb. Each one of them had their special qualities and it just seemed that the right person, with the right qualities, was in the right job at the right time. That was, to give those two people credit for having brought that decision to fruition.

The decision itself merits a little more discussion. I pointed out that it became the basis for the U.S. negotiating position. It had several principles which we carried with us into the negotiations and which we would not and did not abandon. Among these, perhaps, was that we made clear that any future limitations on U.S. systems, principally designed for theater missions, should be accompanied by appropriate limitations on Soviet theater systems. In other words, no unilateral disarmament. Limitations on U.S. and Soviet long range theater nuclear system should be negotiated bilaterally, we said in the SALT-3 framework in a step-by-step approach. There was no SALT-3, but the key here was that it would be a bilateral negotiation between us and the Soviets. That also remained part of the process. A very important issue. The immediate objective of negotiations should be establishment of agreed limitations on U.S. and Soviet land based, long range theater nuclear missile systems and what we were doing here was defining what systems we believe we should be negotiating on. You will note that aircraft are excluded and anything that has to do with ship-based systems would also be excluded from the negotiation. And we stuck with that principle throughout the negotiation. Any agreed limitations on these systems must be consistent with the principle of equality between the sides. Therefore the limitations should take the form of de jure equality both in ceilings and in rights, and that was the key crucial principle. The Soviets had a lot more systems at the beginning of the negotiations than we did. And one of their constant themes was "We have to reduce more to get down to a low number." And our counter to that was, "It doesn't matter who has to reduce how much of what.

There should be no bonus for having produced more and going first. What really matters is, we end up at an equal number for the U.S. and the Soviet Union.” In addition, we talked about adequate verifiability and we made verification a very important principle for us throughout the negotiation. Those were really the basic guidelines if you will, that the American negotiators took into the negotiations. I think we can say without any doubt that at the end of the negotiations all of those principles were found in the treaty, all of those were maintained. And the fact that they came out of this process of consultation strengthened our hand enormously, in insisting upon these principles forming the backbone of the treaty itself.

While we had these principles and a strong agreement within the alliance, we could not move forward to negotiate, unless we had a negotiating partner. Unfortunately, in December of 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. That put a whole new light on the prospects of negotiating with them. I should have added that we also made a move on MBFR, Mutual Balanced Force Reductions negotiation, in December of '79, to try to give some impetus to that negotiation which dealt with conventional weapons in Europe. That negotiation, the prospect of an INF negotiation both looking good as we came off the December 12 decision, but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan put them both in sort of a cold storage for a while. We continued to try to persuade the Soviets to respond to our initiative, to see if they would come to the table; throughout 1980, even with the Afghan thing in the background. But it really wasn't until Helmut Schmidt, German Chancellor visited Moscow in fall of 1980 that the Soviets began to show interest, began to hint that there could be some negotiation. I think it is important to note that it was the German Chancellor's visit that acted as a catalyst for the Soviet response. Germany was crucial in the entire INF picture. Soviets spent a lot of time and effort to try to persuade elements of the German public to take a friendlier view towards them, and more negative views toward NATO. It was a form of battleground in a way for people's support. We'll see in the end that the ballot box was more important than the people out in the streets. But the Soviets at this point were not persuaded of that yet. We'll see that eventually they did become persuaded.

In any case, following Schmidt's discussion with Brezhnev, it took a while but eventually the US and the Soviet Union agreed to preliminary talks, talks about talks, which would involve INF, or Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces, systems and they agreed to begin in Geneva in October of 1980. These talks only lasted for a month. We had an election, as you may recall at this point. But they did cover a good deal of ground. I went back and read all the memorandums on their conversations, verbatim text from both sides that were exchanged, in preparation for going to Geneva. Anything that we had to cover for the rest of the negotiation came up at these preliminary talks, so they were useful in helping define where the sides positions were to start with. Of course, after only a month we couldn't get too much further along.

As I said, there was an election, and Ronald Reagan became the president of the U.S. The change of administration, of course, meant a new look at all policies, which is a normal thing in the U.S., and among the issues that came up for a new look was the INF issues and whether there should or should not be negotiations. There was indeed some question, whether there would be negotiations. There were some in the administration, who were opposed to the negotiations. But in the end, the decision was made to move forward and to conduct negotiations with the Soviet

Union. It took another year after the election, before those negotiations did begin. But they would be a major element of the rest of my career.

REUBEN LEV
International Administrative Officer; US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1980–1983)

Mr. Lev was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York and educated at New York University. After service in the US Navy in the Korean War, he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to Santiago, Chile as Administrative/Personnel Officer. Returning to the State Department, Mr. Lev was assigned to the Bureau of International Organizations working on UNESCO matters. He later served at the US Mission to NATO in Brussels, after which he rejoined the Bureau of International Affairs, again dealing with United Nations Affairs. He also served briefly with the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Lev was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Today is the 6th of August, 1999. Reuben, what are we off to, and what are we doing?

LEV: Okay, should we start with the NATO operation or just bring us up to date now?

Q: Oh, no, the NATO operation.

LEV: In NATO it was a three year assignment.

Q: So you were there from when to when?

LEV: 1980 to 1983. I was assigned as international administrations officer. I was responsible for what they called the Civil Budget Committee where I was the U.S. representative (rep). I was also the U.S. rep on the Coordinating Committee of Government Experts, which dealt with administration and budgetary policies for NATO and for other international organizations co-located in Europe, such as the European Union, the European Patent Office, and the European Space Agency. Because I was the only one in the mission who knew how to deal with the issues, I was able to develop my own policies – with approval, of course, from EUR/RPE. And it worked out very well. It was very exciting; in an embassy you're working one-on-one with someone in a specific ministry; here I was working with 15 other counterparts. It led to some fascinating give and take; we all had to give, and we all had to take. I also established an informal group of five consisting of representatives – all senior bureaucrats – of Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and France, the major contributors at that time to NATO. We just compared notes on the areas of interest to one or the other of us and where we needed support of others in proposing a particular national policy, whether concerning international operations or personnel administration or the budget. And whatever the Five decided, the other eleven followed suit. I was the only member of a diplomatic service. The others came out of their civilian ministries.

I also got involved with terrorism. I was sort of an adjunct to NATO's Special Committee concerned with how each of the member states was dealing with terrorism. At that time it was comparatively quiet. But while I was there, there were several attacks by terrorists, most of them of North African descent. Belgium itself, I think, was an excellent place to be. It drove Marilyn crazy because the so-called "eight-to-five" hours, were nonexistent, and work on the weekends, of course. One day we had to wake up the ambassador at about four o'clock in the morning when a telegram informed us that the U.S. is going to announce that we have a neutron bomb that will kill people but not destroy property. And then our poor fellows in USIA had to do quite a bit of political wordsmithing and to say it's not all that bad. But it came out at the wrong time because in 1982-83, that's when the Marine building in Lebanon was blown up. And there were a couple of other terrorist activities involving Lebanon, and a few of our embassies got hit.

Q: Who was our ambassador?

LEV: At that time it was Tap Bennett, and I had the good fortune to serve with Tap for the full three years that he was there. I think he finished up his tour about the same time I did.

Q: Was he interested in what you were doing?

LEV: He was very interested in it. He was a fascinating man. He knew what was going on and he was interested in what was going on. During the morning meetings, the equivalent of the country team meetings, we all had to report on what we were doing. If something struck him, he would say, "I want you to see my secretary and make an appointment for x o'clock. I want to go into greater depth." He was very interested in the administration of international organizations and NATO: Were we getting economies of scale? Were we really getting our money's worth? Were these people really doing what they're supposed to be doing? And he was a people-oriented ambassador, which made it somewhat easier for me.

Q: When you came to NATO, were you getting suggestions in the corridor or anywhere else of concern that the administration wasn't doing too well? Questions about how well the organization was being administered, and whether we were getting our money's worth?

LEV: Well, this was one of the responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee of Government Experts. Each of the 16 member states had representatives on this group which was supposed to make sure that we were truly getting the value of what we were contributing. Plus, there was an independent body of auditors consisting of five or six members from each major contributor. The U.S. member headed the group, and I dealt quite a bit with him. He had a problem with the others. It was a matter of auditing techniques. Their approach was that if you spend a dollar on pencils, show me the pencils. And our view was, we spent a dollar on pencils, however, were all these pencils really necessary? Our approach was to determine whether a given action was necessary. Is this item necessary? Are additional people really required to perform XYZ functions? Where the others were more straitlaced in determining when you spend something, show me the receipt. When you go to a gas station, and you put in for mileage, show me the receipt.

Q: It was more a straight auditing rather than an efficiency test.

LEV: I guess that would be it. Quality control was the approach we pushed. By the time I left they were starting to move in that direction, and the U.S. auditor and I were very successful in persuading the others that auditing is not only counting pencils but also examining necessity and quality.

Q: But did you find that on the whole, was there a major problem with NATO, or was it rather working with an operating system that wasn't out of control?

LEV: It wasn't out of control. It helped that there were then only 16 states. It worked very, very well, in comparison to the UN. There was a common goal, a specific purpose, as opposed to the UN's more generalized objective. And the experts working on NATO affairs all had specific programs to deal with.

One of the developments at NATO – while I was there and in which I had a hand – involved civilian programs. This was unusual; the usual concerns were with weapons, tactics, oil reserves and so forth. Under this civilian program, Science for Stability, the Southern Tier countries – at that time it was Greece, Turkey, and I believe Portugal – were helped to develop graduate courses in international affairs and science. There was some opposition among NATO members. Somebody said it was “Science for *Stupidity*.” But supporters – the British, Dutch, and the U.S. – prevailed. It was inexpensive – \$5 million for three years. Members sent educational experts to help develop graduate courses in science and international affairs. So we were successful in that. There was also a committee on modern society, which helped members develop NATO infrastructure including common road signs and driver's tests. Belgium at that time was either the first or the second in the world in automobile-caused deaths. Everything had to be decided by consensus, so diplomatic skills were important. It was almost like playing Monopoly, I'll give you Boardwalk for two railroads. At times it did end up with horse trading. But in my little group of five we understood the problems the members were facing at their own ministries, so we were able to work things out before we got into formal conferences and council meetings. There was no bloodletting or questions of who did what to whom. I'm sure it's been your experience that when you hear about communiqués that they are developed long before the leaders ever meet. And the communiqué itself is a matter of give and take and negotiations.

Q: Oh, yes, that's where the negotiations go on. Well, now, tell me, as you were dealing with this, what were the characteristics of some of the groups that you dealt with? I'm sure somebody could say, “Well, that Lev was very American, and he said such and so and worked in such and such a way.” Let's talk about some of these, the French for example.

LEV: By this time, the French were technically not involved with the military, but they stayed in what they regarded as the civilian, dealing for example with the non-military infrastructure.

Q: How about the French delegate in your committee?

LEV: The French delegate was a fascinating person. He was a member of their diplomatic service. Unfortunately, he didn't have enough training in dealing with people. I believe he was a consular officer, which surprised me, because consular activity, day to day, is with people. But

he was from somewhere behind the scenes, and either he had a problem understanding what NATO was about, or his instructions were fuzzy. But when he was replaced in 1981, and succeeded by a woman, things turned around 180 degrees. Working with her, we had a better understanding of the problems she faced with getting certain proposals across or supporting a U.S. initiative or a Dutch initiative or a German initiative. So the French all in all were very, very much involved and after her assignment there were no real arguments or battles. We all understood where we were, what the limits were from a budgetary point of view. We all knew what we wanted from the infrastructure, what we wanted the NATO infrastructure to do for us as a whole, and how we could improve its operations. Could we streamline it any more? Could we bring in more electronic support, whether it was moving away from the electronic typewriter to bringing in computers? There was some opposition to computers. But about '81-82 we started to bring in computers, and in 1983 we were all finally hooked up to a mainframe.

Q: What was the role of the Germans? How did you find the German representative?

LEV: The German, Karlheinz Karl was a fascinating man. He was from their Ministry of the Treasury, and working with him was no problem. He would look at me, and I would look at him, and he knew I was Jewish, and he understood what the situation was from 1933 to 1945, but we had an excellent working relationship. We also had a wonderful personal relationship with him and his wife. His wife, I believe, was a pediatrician.

Mrs. LEV: She was a brilliant lady.

LEV: A brilliant lady, and it worked out well.

Q: From what you've said, it sounded like the Dutch representative was sort of a spark plug there.

LEV: Robert Smits. He wasn't exactly a spark plug. I think he would act as a mediator if thought that things weren't going the way they should be or if everyone was starting to sing together and then somebody was off key. He would say, bring in the bass and bring in the sopranos. He was from the Treasury Ministry detailed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was also a lawyer and a colonel, and part of the queen's front office. So he felt that he was responsible for helping things along. But I think it was almost like a five-cylinder Audi: all of the five cylinders worked together. There were difficult days, as in everybody's life. But basically we all had a feeling for each other. There was not only a working relationship but also a personal one and deep friendships developed. Even after all these years, we're still in touch with some of them. It was an unusual group.

Q: In '80-83, what was the feeling about the "Soviet menace" at that point, because, as you know, it waxes and wanes?

LEV: Well, at that time we felt the threat was very, very real. And then we also believed at that time that they were the ones that were funding the mess in the Mideast, that they were behind the bombing of the Marine barracks and the terrorist groups that were wandering around Western Europe. The feeling was that if it came to a military showdown the two sides were in balance

because we all had the bomb and other capabilities. So everybody was concerned, we all felt the threat was real. There was constant debate going on within NATO about what do we do if an atom bomb hits, how do we prepare? Do we dig deeper down into a Maginot Line, or do we send airplanes up?

Q: And of course we had the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December of '79. Did you get any repercussions during this early period from our hostage situation in Iran? Was that a major concern or not?

LEV: It was a concern, but I think the general feeling was that it was an isolated situation reflecting that the Iranians, feeling their muscles, were taking on what they called the Great Satan. And that if there were to be any kidnapping of any NATO member it would be in order to extort money. There was an incident where a terrorist shot a bazooka at one of the U.S. generals, but fortunately the general was in a well armored Mercedes, and all they ended up with was broken glass. The attack was traced to Soviet-supported East German terrorist groups that had gotten into West Germany.

Q: On the terrorism side, did you feel that any of the members were a bit soft on this?

LEV: Well, one of the things that we were concerned about was the attitude of the Belgians. The Belgians felt that they had an unwritten agreement to provide "safe haven," in exchange for good behavior in Belgium. But then terrorists started to shoot up of synagogues and private offices and to take hostages. I think then the Belgians realized that terrorists don't play by the book. So the soft attitudes at that time became very, very hard locally. At that time Belgium was the only so-called soft spot. Everybody else was in the real world.

Q: And of course the Germans had the Bader-Meinhof, the Italians had the Red Brigades, and the French had the Charles Martel Group, so they had been inoculated against this complacency.

LEV: As far as personal security itself is concerned, we worked very, very closely with the security folks at the various embassies. The American security officer was Greg Bujack, who was a real expert whose views had great weight. He strongly recommended that those living outside the so-called international compound, which was basically at Waterloo, secure their houses with appropriate types of locks and have bars on their windows. He said you can never protect 100 per cent, but improve what you have now. He dealt with the entire American diplomatic family, which included the embassy, those of us at USNATO, and the representative to the European Community. We also exchanged with the other NATO members. It was to make sure that we all were as secure as security would permit. There was some argument about how to deal with NATO security. We were right near the international airport, and a plant manufacturing the Lada, the Russian equivalent of the Fiat. We'd drive by this Lada plant, and you'd see antennas galore. This had its positive aspects because NATO was able to jam the transmitters or intercept their messages. But there was concern, for example, that a pickup truck could stop outside NATO with an 80 millimeter mortar, throw in about five mortar shells in about 10 seconds, and flee down the road. So steps were taken to prevent cars from stopping and for the first time guards patrolled with their FN rifles off-safety and loaded and ready to go.

JOHN M. EVANS
U.S. Mission to NATO
Brussels (1983-1986)

Ambassador Evans was born and raised in Virginia and educated at Yale University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1971 and became a specialist in Soviet and Eastern European Affairs. His foreign posts were Tehran, Prague, Moscow, Brussels, St. Petersburg, Chisinau (Moldova) and Yerevan, Armenia, where he served as Ambassador from 2004 to 2006. In his assignments at the State Department in Washington, the Ambassador dealt primarily with Russian and former Soviet states' affairs. Ambassador Evans was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: All right. Today is the 17th of November, 2009, with John Evans. And John, you have left Moscow and you're going to where, NATO?

EVANS: The U.S. Mission to NATO.

Q: NATO. That's in Brussels.

EVANS: In Brussels.

Q: What year was that?

EVANS: That was the summer of 1983.

Q: Okay.

EVANS: U.S.-Soviet relations were in a very bad way at that point, from a combination of factors. The big political shift that had occurred in the previous elections here which brought in Ronald Reagan and a lot of very conservative thinkers, Cap Weinberger of the Defense Department and so on. And then there had been the troubles in Poland.

Q: Had martial law been declared at that point?

EVANS: Yes, it had been. And there was the invasion by the Soviets of Afghanistan.

Q: Yes, in '79.

EVANS: Right. So all of these things and a few more were adding up to very bad state of relations.

Q: Well let's just take sort of an overall look of when you arrived there; I mean, you were looking at the other side of the moon, having been in Moscow. But how did we view "the Soviet

menace”? I mean, did we feel that this was something that, I mean, they launched out in Afghanistan and things were perking up in Africa and all. I mean, how did we view it at that time?

EVANS: Well, our view was getting worse and worse. That is, our sense of what the Soviets were up to was getting more and more dire and I arrived just before... I arrived at NATO just before the Soviets shot down the Korean airliner, which must have been in September '83.

Q: It was over the Kamchatka Peninsula.

EVANS: Exactly. And that, of course, was an atrocious thing to have happen; 260-some people perished in that. Now, that was during the Andropov years. Well, it was a very short time that Andropov was in power but he was the former chief of the KGB and Washington's view of what Moscow was capable of and intent upon was very, very negative. And it was reciprocated by a view in Moscow of the United States as having ill intentions towards the Soviet Union. The détente of the previous decade was completely dead at this point. Carter had shelved the SALT agreement; we were not talking to the Russians at that point about strategic arms and the Soviets had walked out of the arms talks, I think it was in December of that year probably.

Q: Had they introduced the SS-20 at that time?

EVANS: That was one of the issues. Yes they had, and we were responding -- we had reached a decision at NATO in 1979 to place ground-launched cruise missiles and Pershings in Europe but also to keep the way open to negotiating. And we went ahead with the implementation of that missile decision in the first six months that I was at NATO.

Q: Well, when you arrived there what was your job?

EVANS: Well, I had to take a compromise. I'd just been promoted in Moscow for my work there but I wanted very much to be at NATO and for my first year I took the job as executive officer, which was really a kind of glorified staff position.

Q: Yes.

EVANS: It meant moving all the telegrams and making sure they made sense and that...

Q: It's like being the head of the secretariat-

EVANS: That's right. And so for a year I did that with the payoff that for the next two years I was in the political section of the mission.

Q: Well in the first place you were just hot out of Moscow; were you finding your colleagues in NATO, and I say NATO as a- what the hell's going on out there?

EVANS: I considered myself very lucky at that time because I was just coming from Moscow; I knew the players, I knew what the thinking was in the Western group of diplomats in Moscow and so I was looked to at the U.S. mission as the authority on what was going on, even when I

was XO and participated in staff meetings I was often asked what I made of certain recent developments and I was asked to write memos for the ambassador and so on.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

EVANS: When I first arrived it was Tap Bennett -- right at the end of Tap Bennett's tenure -- he was followed in very short succession by David Abshire and Steve Ledogar was the DCM.

Q: Well what were you, you know, did you sort of keep... this was before the era of emails and all but were you able to keep up with your Moscow connections or-?

EVANS: Absolutely. Embassy Moscow was, and still is for that matter, a very productive shop and every day, by the time we opened in Brussels, there was already a take from Moscow, which kept us fully informed, and for that matter there were fairly frequent occasions when people from Moscow came through Brussels on their way to Washington or London or wherever and we followed things through their eyes as well.

Q: Well was there a feeling, well, actual, were we cranking up our defenses; were we putting more tanks in the Fulda Gap? What were we doing?

EVANS: The main thing we were doing of course was implementing this decision from 1979 to put the Pershings and the ground-launched missiles in Europe, Germany being the main host country for the Pershing missiles. But we were also leaning on the other allies to increase their defense spending, aiming for four percent of their budgets. And there were some very serious exercises that NATO ran at that time which even contemplated...they went right up to the nuclear threshold and there was a lot of talk about what would happen if we really did end up at war with the Soviet Union.

Q: Well was there the thought that NATO as a military force could actually stop the Soviets without going nuclear?

EVANS: You know, the conventional imbalance in Europe was always in favor of the heavy armored divisions that the Soviets maintained mainly in what was then East Germany. And we had never ruled out the possibility of first use; we did have tactical weapons in place and I think there was a general understanding that without the nuclear card to play Western Europe was not defensible.

Q: What was your impression, let's talk about, I mean, you were sort of- you'd been in it all the time so you were coming to a new organization; what was your impression of say, let's take the Germans first, the German staff, the German military.

EVANS: Of course I dealt mainly with the diplomatic side, rather than the military side. Each of the NATO delegations has, of course, both civilian and military components. My main point of contact with the other delegations was through the NATO political committee, which some dismissed as a talking shop but it actually did do some very useful work in terms of analyzing

trends, looking at policies and coordinating the thinking of people from the various NATO capitals.

Q: Well, I mean, as point of fact, one has to only look at the question of the era was what about these response to the SS-20s? And that essentially was a political diplomatic matter.

EVANS: That's right, that's right.

Q: To get it right with the people in the various countries.

EVANS: That's right. The other thing that was very much a front burner issue at that time, of course, was President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, and I remember one of the things that I was called upon to do in those years was to go out to various European destinations and talk about the Strategic Defense Initiative. One of the most memorable of those meetings was one called by the French but since the French were skeptical about SDI they actually had it take place in Monaco, so it wasn't really under French sovereignty although we all knew that it was a French operation or conference, and I actually did that talk in French, although I fear that my audience was not too impressed with my level of French, which was definitely "schoolboy."

Q: Well how did you feel, what was sort of your attitude towards the SDI which was also known as "Star Wars?" That was, you know, that we could come up with missiles to stop incoming missiles that would completely knock out the missile element in any war.

EVANS: I have to confess that I had a certain skepticism about whether this was going to be practical in the short run but at the time I think most of us felt that at least developing the program was a reasonable thing to do under the circumstances. There would be spinoffs, we would learn a lot, as we had from the program to go to the moon, and there were all kinds of different options being bandied about about how you could combine technologies in different ways and whether you used it for stopping short range or long range and so on, so there was quite a literature, a growing literature and debate about this. And so despite a certain amount of skepticism about it I was following it very carefully and it was no difficulty for me in doing what I had to do.

Q: Well also too, it scared the hell out of the Soviets, didn't it, because, you know, they- although we were expressing skepticism, I mean, we had done- we had gone to the moon, we'd done a lot of stuff and the idea that oh, they can't ever do that, I don't think was part of the Soviet thought process.

EVANS: Well, the Soviets had for a long time been thinking about missile defense. They had, after all, the only ABM (anti-ballistic missile) system in existence around the city of Moscow. We had decided not to put one around Washington, although we had something out in the missile fields in the West. But they were seriously concerned about it. First of all, their military establishment was eating up a huge proportion of their national wealth; estimates of what went into their military establishment ranged as high as 40 percent of GNP (gross national product) and so they were very concerned about this new pressure on their own defense effort that SDI represented.

Q: Well let's talk about sort of the diplomatic side of things. How would you- let's box the compass; how about the Germans? What was your impression of the Germans in NATO?

EVANS: The Germans were very ably led at that time by a fine ambassador who went on to be the head of their Bundesnachrichtendienst, the equivalent of the CIA, and they were strong right down the line; they were a very good delegation.

Q: What about the British?

EVANS: The British likewise were superb and I ought to mention that at that time Lord Peter Carrington was the secretary general of NATO and his immediate assistant was Brian Fall, who later came here as ambassador to Washington. They were very good.

Q: The troublesome people, the French.

EVANS: Absolutement.

Q: How did that work out?

EVANS: Well the French indeed were at their most troublesome during those years. It was always a prickly relationship, particularly between ourselves and the French. But oddly enough, on the military side, particularly the navies got along perfectly well. The military people understood each other and, for example, French and American vessels, naval vessels, exercised in the Atlantic without even...they knew exactly what they had to do and there were no problems whatsoever.

Q: Well did- The Dutch and the Belgians; they had a problem, particularly with the missile defense.

EVANS: That's true. The missile deployments were not popular in either Belgium or the Netherlands or for that matter in Germany, and there were some massive demonstrations that happened. But of course it was judged a major success when the first of the Pershings arrived and were in place. That would have been, I think, about December of 1983.

Q: Well did the Italians play much of a role? They were not really on the- what would appear to be the major front.

EVANS: The Italians, I think, always suffered from the feeling that they were not in the Big Four, and they were very jealous of the French for that reason. But they did certainly contribute, and one of their diplomats went on to be deputy secretary general. So they did plan an important role and of course you mentioned Naples and that dimension of Italian participation was very important.

Q: Portugal was, by this time, was in good order, wasn't it? It had been, in the mid '70s it had had its revolution and flirting with extreme socialism and then...

EVANS: And the Spanish had just been brought in. I mean, Portugal had been in for longer and of course the main consideration had been the Azores. The United States had wanted Portugal in NATO because of the Azores. But Spain was a different question. Spain did enter NATO, it must have been in the late '70s after the king was restored and brought about a democratic transformation.

Q: Did the introduction of the SS-20s and the reaction to it in a way reinvigorate NATO, would you say? I mean, it would seem that here was a purpose which NATO really had kind of drifted away from.

EVANS: I think it was a combination of factors. The growing apparent threat from the Soviet Union with the invasion of Afghanistan and the other things that happened went hand in hand with the determination of NATO to deter -- by deploying what was deemed necessary -- to deter the SS-20s. And I think the major emotion, once we succeeded in bringing off that decision, in implementing that decision, was one of great relief. Because it had been a tough fight with the public opposition to it in so many European capitals, when we actually did it, it was seen as a victory.

Q: Well in many ways this is really, looking at it, it's almost the last hurrah of the Soviets, wasn't it, as far as really constituting a threat to anybody?

EVANS: The Soviet Union was in the midst of a generational shift, which turned out to be a very significant one. Gorbachev was in his 50s; the average age of the Politburo member in the early 1980s was something in the 70s. Now, Andropov, who succeeded the long-serving Brezhnev, had wanted to jump directly to Gorbachev but with the old ways very much still in force it was a kind of a "seniority rules" kind of system so they went to Chernenko. But significantly one of the old guard, one of the longest serving Politburo members, was Gromyko, and it was Gromyko who eventually, after Chernenko died, put Gorbachev's name in nomination to be the next general secretary, and that brought about the big change, the generational shift in the Soviet leadership.

Q: Were you in NATO when Gorbachev became-?

EVANS: Yes, I was. Chernenko was sick from the start-

Q: I mean, he could hardly breathe.

EVANS: He could hardly breathe; there were several times he lost his breath as he was giving a speech and had to start over. And it was obvious to everybody. I remember writing a memo for Ambassador Abshire when Chernenko was clearly... I think we had heard that he had died, in fact, and the question was who would succeed him. And one of the old guard was still contending to be next.

Q: Suslov?

EVANS: Well, Suslov was there and Suslov had been very active on the Polish issue. But it was Viktor Grishin who had come out of the Moscow Party apparat; we in the Moscow embassy called this the “Grishin formula,” thinking that Grishin might indeed be the next one to succeed, but it was Gromyko, as we now know, Gromyko put Gorbachev in nomination and we learned that it was Gorbachev when he was named to head the funeral committee.

Q: Were we seeing, from your optic in NATO, were we seeing Gromyko as being a real change in the situation or just a more efficient cast to the Soviet machine?

EVANS: You probably meant to say Gorbachev.

Q: I meant Gorbachev, excuse me.

EVANS: Yes. You know, at first we didn’t know what to think of Gorbachev and one of the great things about being at NATO and being a Soviet specialist of sorts was the demand for discussion and theorizing and it was a wonderful place to be in those years. There were so many meetings of the political committee and various other briefings that we gave and participated in. People didn’t know at first about Gorbachev and it was really when Gorbachev went to the UK and met with Margaret Thatcher; it was his first major...I think he was not yet general secretary but he went to the UK, took his wife Raisa, which was so unusual for a Soviet leader to do, and - they went out to Chequers with the Thatchers, with Margaret and Denis Thatcher, and afterwards she said “this is a man we can deal with.” And then the British shared with us their assessments and eventually this all worked up to the first summit that Reagan and Gorbachev had.

Q: In Geneva.

EVANS: In Geneva, at which they both invited each other to visit each other’s countries.

Q: Well you mentioned the discussion that’s going on, something that’s always struck me as I’ve been doing these oral histories and sort of monitor some of the things that are coming out of the academic world is almost the chasm between the academics who are dealing with the subject like the Soviets and the practitioners like yourselves. I mean, was there much sort of academic participation, somebody coming around saying did you hear what Professor So-and-So thought about this or-?

EVANS: We were all absolutely attuned to what was being said by experienced academic experts but the real cleavage, I would submit, was within the Reagan Administration, where you had on the one side Caspar Weinberger and one of his assistant secretaries was Richard Perle. On the other side you had George Shultz, who was just as horrified as anyone else when the Korean airliner was shot down but who still believed that we needed to deal with the Soviets, we needed to have arms control talks, but there was a huge fight within the administration between the hawks and the, I wouldn’t even call them doves, but the hawks and the moderates, you might say. This was the period when, for example, Ambassador Nitze, once the arms talks got going again, Ambassador Nitze had his famous walk in the woods with Kvitsinsky to try to fashion an arms control agreement and what they came up with in that walk in the woods was too...was unacceptable in both capitals, as it turned out. It was killed by the hawks in Washington and

there were hawks in Moscow as well. And so they, in a sense, the hawks in the two capitals really fed each other.

Q: Well in a way- You mentioned the shoot down of the Korean airline but you were in a military atmosphere and if there's anything one knows when you're dealing with the military it is that things really can screw up. And it seemed to me like this was, you know, a screw up; it was not a calculated decision up and down. But how did you all feel?

EVANS: Well, at the time we didn't know everything that we know now. The Soviets had said that they thought the... First of all, right after it happened they said nothing and they denied... they were in a terrible state of denial and putting out half-truths and so on which just deepened our suspicions of what had gone on. There was a famous... We overheard, apparently, from one of our outposts, we overheard the pilots talking, and one of the most quoted lines was, "the target has been destroyed," and that seemed like a terribly crude way to characterize the shoot-down of a 747 which, as we all know, has that very characteristic dome and should have been recognized by almost anybody as a civilian airliner. It's a huge thing; I mean, it's not... it doesn't look like any military aircraft. But as we now know there had been some very aggressive maneuvers that we had carried out in that part of the Northwest Pacific, testing Soviet defenses, and some of the Soviet military men who were charged with intercepting anything that came over their border had been severely dressed down earlier that year, 1983, and were fearful of being accused of laxness, of laxity, I guess is the word, in defending the Soviet border. It was dark, it was foggy, and there was another... apparently we did have a military reconnaissance aircraft in that area at roughly the same time and it's conceivable that the Soviet radar, which were trying to track the military craft, then latched on to the civilian one. We don't know exactly, even today, exactly what happened, but it does seem to me that it was not an act of cold-blooded murder as we were portraying it at the time.

Now, at that Geneva Summit that took place a year or so later the two sides did agree on some better rules for air transport over the Pacific routes to prevent that kind of thing from ever happening again.

Q: And of course the Korean airliner was on the wrong course, too.

EVANS: The Korean airliner was way off course, was to the north of where it should have been.

Q: Yes.

EVANS: You know, George Shultz I think was very wise, and I would never characterize him simply as a dove, but he used to say "U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union needs to be able to take account of both the best and the worst of Soviet behavior." And I think Shultz and Reagan, actually, better understood Gorbachev than Caspar Weinberger did. Weinberger perhaps was getting advised by Richard Perle and some very hard-line types who actually thought... And then there was Casey, who was in charge of the CIA, and it seems to me that they were trying to argue that Gorbachev was a fake, despite his preference for nice suits and a presentable wife and those sorts of things that this was all for show and that in fact he was just trying to strengthen the Soviet positions.

Q: How stood the Scandinavians in NATO at the time?

EVANS: Well of course the Danes and the Norwegians were members of the Alliance; there had been a period of time during which the Danes were known for taking footnotes to virtually all NATO documents.

Q: A footnote being?

EVANS: Being an objection to, or a distancing from, some element in a report. But the Danes came more and more -- it depended a lot on their internal politics -- but they came more and more aboard. The Norwegians were always staunch members of NATO and one of my best contacts was Kai Eide, who these days is in Afghanistan as the UN representative there. The Swedes, of course, were neutral. They were not there at NATO and the Finns were completely neutral in name but in sentiment they were quite, shall we say, they knew what was what with the Russians and had there been -- had the flag gone up -- there was no doubt about where the Finns would have stood.

Q: What about the Swedes? I mean, were the Soviets playing games with their submarines during this time, both in Finland- I mean both in Sweden and Norway?

EVANS: There was a famous incident called "Whiskey on the Rocks," in which a Whiskey class, that was our designation, of course, a Whiskey class submarine was basically found on a reef right outside Stockholm, if I'm not mistaken. It was very close; it was definitely in Swedish territorial waters. That must have happened in the very early '80s when I was in Moscow because I remember it as an issue and again, the Soviets' inability to confess to anything undermined their credibility and undermined any status they may have enjoyed as a believable partner.

Q: Did you see a change by- when you left in '86?

EVANS: Yes. The worst time was right around '83 when negotiations broke down and we placed the Pershing missiles and it was in the wake of the Korean airliner and so on and Afghanistan was raging. This was a terrible, terrible time. But after the first summit between Reagan and Gorbachev, and I should also say Shultz made a special trip at one point to Moscow to set up the summit and got the dialogue going again, and in particular the arms control talks resumed in Geneva and we got regular reports from the negotiators in Geneva who would come to NATO to brief the permanent council there and there was a committee of people from the Senate, senators, who were very close to the negotiators and they would also come traipsing through Brussels. But the sense that there was a negotiating track, that people were working on trying to solve the various security problems, that sense was recovered with that first Reagan and Gorbachev summit.

Q: Was there any sense by '86 and all that you might say, I don't know, depending on your point of view the poison or the good or whatever it is, of the Basket Three of the Helsinki Accords in right of dissidents' ability for the media to attend meetings and you know, I mean, in other words

these sort of human rights things; was this- did we feel that this was having any effect on the satellite nations?

EVANS: Yes, I think we did. The most notable case, of course, was Poland. Now Poland was under martial law for most of those years of the '80s but there was a culmination of factors again; there was also a kind of an economic slowdown going down in Eastern Europe which was having its effect. There were more and more reports of things going wrong in the whole Soviet domain as Gorbachev tried to loosen things up.

Now, one imagines that Gorbachev was trying to save the system by reforming it. He certainly was pursuing Soviet interests as he saw them but it was seen as a general sort of breaking down of the old Stalinist monolithic political system.

RUDOLF V. PERINA
Political Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1985-1987)

Ambassador Perina was born in Czechoslovakia when that country was under communist control. He escaped with his family to Morocco, then Switzerland and finally the United States. The ambassador was educated at the University of Chicago and Columbia University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1974, Mr. Perina specialized in Military-Political Affairs at posts abroad, including Moscow, Berlin, Brussels, Vienna and Belgrade. In Washington he served on the National Security Council, specializing in Soviet issues. From 1998 to 2001 Mr. Perino was US Ambassador to Moldova. Ambassador Perina was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.

Q: So from 1985 until 1987 you were at the NATO Mission in Brussels. What did you do there?

PERINA: I was a political officer and the Deputy U.S. Representative to the Political Committee of NATO. I had a number of other portfolios, among which were the nuclear and space talks in Geneva. President Reagan started this negotiation. The talks were basically three simultaneous negotiations on START, INF and SDI, headed by Max Kampelman on our side. Kampelman was the overall delegation head and did the SDI talks, Mike Glitman headed the INF discussions, and Senator John Tower headed the START team. It was intended as a comprehensive arms control discussion between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Because the talks were bilateral but related directly to NATO policies, the three negotiators regularly came up to Brussels from Geneva to brief the North Atlantic Council. At the beginning, they came every month or two, though the pace slackened as the talks started bogging down. Nonetheless, I was always the control officer for these visits, as well as for a number of visits by President Reagan, who came to NATO several times for summit-level meetings of the Council.

As I said earlier, this is where I saw further evidence of what an important issue SDI was to the Soviet Union. Everything that Max Kampelman and the negotiators reported to NATO bore this

out. The Soviets were very afraid of SDI and wanted desperately to find ways of stopping or restricting it. But it was something that Reagan—rightly or wrongly—believed in very strongly and would not negotiate away.

Q: I recall that at one point Reagan made a proposal to share the technology with the Soviets so that we could each stop the other's missiles.

PERINA: Right. But the Soviets were convinced it was a trick. They could not believe that we would really share such technology with them, since they would never share it with us if tables were turned.

Q: Were you getting the sense that the advent of the computer age and high tech was playing into this?

PERINA: This is exactly what I was going to say. You have to put this in the context of the revolution that was taking place in the United States and in the West, with average people starting to acquire personal computers, and kids growing up at home and in school with computer skills. The Soviets saw all this, and they were terrified. Their own kids were still working with an abacus in most of their schools. They saw themselves falling behind technologically in a way that would be qualitative and devastating. They never expressed it that way but one could sense it in talks with them. I was not an expert on SDI. I didn't know if it would or would not work. But I saw it as a useful ploy to motivate the Soviets to change to a freer, more open system that could keep pace with Western technological development. Their closed, authoritarian system just could not do that. In conversations, they always tried to pick up on Western skepticism and say "Well, SDI won't work and even your own experts say it won't work." But I would answer something like "Well, you know, if you can build a missile that can fly 5000 miles and hit a square block, don't you think it would be easier to find some way to throw that missile off course?" They were very scared that this was indeed true and we would beat them to doing it.

Q: What was your impression of the NATO apparatus? You had been working with two other allies in Berlin but this was now the entire Alliance trying to work in tandem.

PERINA: My overwhelming impression from NATO was that this was basically a U.S. run organization. One could really sense that. Most of the Allies were quite deferential to the United States, the French always being a certain exception. In fact, most of the delegates at NATO tended to be even more pro-American than their governments, or at least they tried to give us that impression. In my time, we never had a really heated discussion at NATO, even though I think many Allies were skeptical of some of our policies such as INF deployment and SDI. Whenever Kampelman and his colleagues came up, the questions were invariably softball in nature. NATO was a club and largely our club. It was a very friendly environment for the U.S.

Q: What was your impression at the time of how much chance the nuclear and space talks had of succeeding?

PERINA: The talks never got very far. The Soviets could not stop either SDI or INF deployment. The major obstacle to INF was Western European resistance, not Moscow. Eventually arms control talks were all overtaken by events when the Warsaw Pact and later the Soviet Union came apart. It was a whole new ballgame.

Q: From your vantage point, how did you view Reagan and his presidency?

PERINA: When I was at NATO I didn't know that my next assignment would be the National Security Council where I would work with him much more closely. At NATO, I had mixed views. He certainly came into office with very hardline, conservative views that gave me concern. The Iran Contra scandal, which happened while I was at NATO, was likewise cause for worry about his presidency. But I also felt that some of his ideas, like SDI, were quite astute tactically, whether or not they could actually be implemented. So it was a mixed picture, and I had mixed views. But I did not feel I really knew him well until I worked on the National Security Council staff, to which I was recruited from NATO in 1987.

CRAIG DUNKERLEY
Deputy Political Advisor/Political Advisor, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1987-1991)

Ambassador Dunkerley was born in Wisconsin and raised in several states in the Midwest. He was educated at Amherst College and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. In 1970 he entered the Foreign Service, serving abroad in Da Nang, Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, Brussels and Vienna. During his career Mr. Dunkerley became a specialist in NATO and International Security, Disarmament and Arms Control matters, and served as Special Envoy for Conventional Forces in Europe from 1997 to 2001 with the personal rank of Ambassador. He also had several tours of duty at the State Department in Washington, DC. Ambassador Dunkerley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: You were in Brussels?

DUNKERLEY: We both were. I initially went for two years as the Deputy Political Advisor; I then moved up to become the Political Advisor, heading up the U.S. Mission's Political Section for another two years.

Q: Could you talk about our mission to NATO. It sounds like a military thing, but it really wasn't. Explain what our mission to NATO does, particularly at the time you were there.

DUNKERLEY: You're quite right; USNATO was not a military entity. U.S. participation in the Atlantic Alliance as represented by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is reflected on the military side through our participation in NATO's integrated military structure. The Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, always an American senior officer, is based in Mons in southern Belgium. That headquarters and related staffs deal with military and operational matters.

The integrated military structure reports to the political authorities of the Alliance represented by the North Atlantic Council at NATO Headquarters in Evere, just outside of Brussels. The North Atlantic Council meets occasionally at the summit level, regularly at the ministerial level (back then usually twice or more a year). On a weekly or even daily basis the Permanent Representatives of all of the member states meet at NATO headquarters. All of these Perm Reps are supported by national missions to NATO that include both diplomatic and military representation.

During that time I was involved in running the political section for the U.S. Mission to NATO. It was a large political section of ten to twelve State officers. There were also other offices within the U.S. mission, primarily representing the Office of the Secretary of Defense, FEMA, and USIS. The ambassador at the time I first arrived was Alton Keel; he was succeeded by William Taft, the former Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Q: That's William Howard Taft IV?

DUNKERLEY: Yes, that's correct. He was one of the best in my Foreign Service career.

Q: You straddled 1989, the crucial year. How was NATO seen prior to that?

DUNKERLEY: It was, of course, a time of profound change in European affairs. The term "historic" is usually overworked, but in the case of the events that got underway in 1989, that term is entirely appropriate. In 1987 and 1988 our focus was, at least in general terms, in continuing to take advantage of the openings for progress in arms control and the reduction of East-West tensions which had been generated by the policies of Gorbachev in Moscow. We were, for instance, continuing to negotiate for an INF agreement; that remained a major concern for the U.S. and the allies. But there was also the basic question – one that occupied most of my time within the USNATO Political Section in the first year or so – what comes next?

For example, internal Alliance debate over how this question might be answered was reflected in a lengthy negotiation among the allies in 1987-89 on the drafting of what was referred to in NATO jargon as a "Comprehensive Concept for Arms Control." (Given the German parentage of this particular item, it was often called the "GazamptKonzept"). Some of this was rather straightforward in terms of suggesting particular principles and general objectives for the Alliance in pursuing arms control. But the details of how these might in practice be translated into daily policies or negotiations were at the heart of protracted discussions, eventually going up to the ministerial level. At issue was the degree to which – or relative priority with which – the Alliance would pursue the next round of arms control. It was the U.S. approach to consider arms control less as an end in itself, but rather as a complementary means, necessarily taken together with a healthy deterrent and defense effort, towards a more stable peace. At the time, there were marked controversies in two areas.

One revolved about how members of the Alliance should pursue a negotiating strategy and specific substantive proposals for conventional arms negotiations in Europe. Efforts in this direction, involving some but not all of the allies, had been essentially stalemated for a long time in the MBFR (Mutual Balanced Force Reduction) talks in Vienna. What was new was that,

through his various policy announcements, Gorbachev had expressed a willingness to pursue actual reductions – potentially substantial reductions – in Soviet forces then stationed in Eastern Europe. This was seen as a major opportunity that the Alliance had to seize. But in doing so, we had to come up with an entirely new and substantively ambitious proposal.

Q: The fact that the SS-20 introduction and our response of the Pershing and Cruise missile, in a way created a crisis, but did it open up things saying 'hey this whole thing is out of control?'

DUNKERLEY: No, I wouldn't put it that way at all. What the earlier issues of the INF deployments and negotiations did, along with all the accompanying political controversies in the early 80's, was create a situation which apparently made clear to Soviet decision-makers that previous approaches no longer were sufficient. It would, in that case, require not just limits but significant reductions on their side to be able to address the increased U.S.-INF deployments made in response to their SS-20 deployments.

Perhaps even more importantly, it also had the effect of reinforcing a rather close pattern of consultations among the Allies on these issues, and in doing so, conveyed a powerful sense of trans-Atlantic cohesion and solidarity. As I mentioned earlier: A sustained consultative dialogue between Washington and various capitols on these issues helped both the U.S. and Allied governments get through the domestic controversies that the nuclear issue generated. Later on, the period of 1987-88, those consultative patterns held and were instrumental, but only after extended and painful negotiations within the Alliance, in enabling us to come forward with the beginnings of a coordinated Alliance position on conventional arms.

There was an important contrast here between the earlier Alliance management issues posed by the nuclear negotiations and the prospect of conventional arms control. The former affected American and Soviet systems, affording us a privileged position in the formulation of negotiating positions. When dealing with limits on conventional forces, however, you have to deal more directly with the military establishments, budgets and force levels of almost all the members of the Alliance. Some countries such as France, which had previously stayed out of MBFR negotiations, now had to focus close attention on the possible details of any new negotiation. That was one set of issues that was very much to the fore. (And of course I had no idea I'd be returning with a vengeance to this field a few years later).

A second and perhaps even more immediately contentious issue in '87-'88 related to those nuclear systems that were below the range level established under INF: SRINF (short range nuclear forces) to use the acronym of the time. Much of this revolved around the political problems posed by possible deployment of a follow on to the existing Lance missile system, a short range system now growing old. This was extremely controversial with the Germans on whose territory a number of these systems might be deployed. Foreign Minister Genscher had strong views about the inadvisability of moving forward with this and, together with some other allies, pressed the need to pursue negotiations to include these systems as well. They wanted a negotiated reduction, indeed elimination of those systems in Europe. From an American perspective, this began to raise concerns about an ever-cascading de-nuclearization of Europe that, absent a reduction of the conventional imbalance on behalf of the Soviet Union, might be seen as being potentially dangerous. At the time – 1987-88 – all of this was reflected at NATO in

an almost weekly round table of rather tough back and forth with the Germans and with other Allies in trying to establish a construct that would enable possible decisions on all of these issues at the highest policy levels.

Q: Could you describe during the period of 1987-88 how as 'the new boy on the block' you saw the positions of the major allies within NATO?

DUNKERLEY: At that time under Mrs. Thatcher, the United Kingdom's diplomacy within Alliance councils consistently advocated a steady, rather cautious approach demonstrating a fair amount of skepticism towards the Soviets. The German political approach, which had been strong on INF deployments, could be characterized as more open, at times eager to take advantage of opportunities that they believed were opening up through the Gorbachev's advent. Among other allies, France fell in between. Given its unique position in the Alliance – not a full fledged member of the NATO integrated military structure but a very active participant in the political workings of the Alliance – its diplomats were not surprisingly concerned with how individual issues would affect French political-military interests.

Much of this eventually came to a head at a NATO summit in Brussels that President Reagan attended in the early part of 1988. Negotiations on the Arms Control Comprehensive Concept went from a year and a half of debate – first at my working level for months, then among the various national Perm Reps – to conclude at the summit where it went to a post-midnight session involving Secretary of State and the rest of the Foreign Ministers – in their shirt-sleeves – thrashing out a compromise solution. The happy irony here was that – very quickly with the advent of a greater Soviet willingness to consider actual reductions in the conventional imbalance (fear of which was the driving force behind many Western concerns about retaining these short range nuclear weapons) – history quickly outpaced these issues and controversies.

One of the other issues that I recall – though it was of much less political prominence at the time – were early discussions within the NATO Political Committee (the regular standing body of political advisors) on the question of political stability within Yugoslavia. This was in 1987-88. In response to Washington interest, the U.S. Mission had urged a round of consultations --- an exchange of instructed views among the allies – about latent political and ethnic tensions within the Yugoslav state. This was well after Tito's passing but in light of a spate of early disturbances in Kosovo. This was one of the first times that we really discussed this issue at NATO; most of the other allies noted the problems but thought at the time that such concerns were overdrawn – and of course no one at all at the table was thinking of the sort of break-up and violence that eventually occurred.

Another event of note during this period (at least to my mind in looking back) was a meeting of the NAC in the fall of '87 to hear then Vice President George H.W. Bush following a series of visits that he had just made to various East European countries. What was struck me was the message that the Vice President was trying to convey to the NAC: that the Alliance should be looking towards ways to generate greater engagement with these states, hitherto viewed at NATO largely in the optic as steady but secondary members of the Warsaw Pact, and that, in fact, there might be a potential for a degree of positive internal change within some of these East European bodies politic. Again, not many observers at the Permrep level at NATO then seemed

prepared to grant, let alone run with, this sort of view on Eastern Europe. (Which, as I think about it now, may have been in contrast with amount of time the lower-level Political and Economic Committees would devote to analysis and discussion of the course, and unclear implications, of perestroika then underway in Moscow).

During this time, one of my duties was to meet periodically with the Soviet Political Counselor at their embassy in Brussels – an individual who was one of their overt NATO watchers. We would meet periodically, I think once every two or three months, for a rather carefully staged luncheon conversation. At first these were rather predictable – but as we moved into 1989, I noted, with each month passing, my Soviet counterpart's visible surprise and growing discomfort with the rapidity of events in Eastern Europe.

Q: What about the other, almost foreign power at that time, the Department of Defense? We talked about doing something with their toys. How did this work?

DUNKERLEY: Obviously there was State-Defense engagement and coordination on a variety of levels in NATO. The State Department components of the USNATO – in my case the Political Section – were in daily, sometimes almost hourly, contact with the various offices of the Secretary of Defense also resident in the Mission. We were on the second floor, they were on the third. We had a fairly good relationship there, with considerable transparency in our respective concerns and intentions in Brussels.

As we already discussed, certainly in the first term of the Reagan administration there was a difficult and scratchy State-Defense relationship. It was at the Shultz-Weinberger level, it was apparent in the competition between Rick Burt and Richard Perle in shaping policy, and so forth. But the important thing was that by the final years of the Reagan administration, while there continued to be strong views and strong interests held by the different elements of the bureaucracy, the interagency process seemed to be working a good deal smoother. This was at a time in which Secretary Shultz was having frequent trips and discussions with Gromyko's successor, then Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze. The team would include and involve National Security Advisor Powell, and McFarland before Powell, Roz Ridgway, then Assistant Secretary of the European Bureau, and senior members of the Pentagon team as well. And of course, in the following administration of President Bush, interagency deliberations were effective and collegial.

Q: What about some of the other players, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Spain? Where did they fit within this?

DUNKERLEY: I would hesitate to go too far in trying to come up with impressionistic one-liners, subjective characterizations of their policies because a lot would depend upon the issue at hand, the politics and personalities involved, the strength of their representation at any moment among their ministers and their permanent representatives. What your question does lead into is: How does NATO work? How are decisions made and implemented?

NATO is, on the one hand, fundamentally a consensus organization. On the other, there is clearly a difference in the weight and influence that particular countries bring on particular issues. There

is no question but that the United States has a special role and a special voice. Similarly, some of the larger European powers, particularly in terms of the strength of their contribution – not only to the common defense effort but to the common political effort – would also have influential voices. The U.K. and Germany for example. Some countries such as the Netherlands, to use Geoffrey Howe's term, were able to 'punch above their weight' through the strength and sophistication of their representation. They were very, very good in this regard. But again, all this would vary with the issue. On some questions, the contributions of the Italians were quite important and useful. As you moved toward Mediterranean matters, one always had to take into account the balancing of concerns and differences between Greece and Turkey.

Q: Were they almost something you treated with a sigh or rolling of the eyes?

DUNKERLEY: Greek-Turkish issues were always a constant concern. There were a variety of difficulties involved. No surprise there. But the whole point about NATO was that, however strong particular voices might prove to be, you could not at the end of the day run totally roughshod over individual members nor ignore allies, whatever their size or political weight, on those matters they saw as vital to their own national interests. Indeed each country around the table would have certain concerns held exceptionally dear – and to which you had to pay careful attention if serious work was to be done.

And by and large, everyone recognized this. (One European colleague, who had had extensive experience both in NATO and in EU councils, would, I recall, compare the North Atlantic Council to one of the better clubs in London where within the club walls it was recognized that all of the members were inevitably a bit eccentric in their own ways and one simply worked around that fact of life in a gentlemanly manner. He'd go on to draw a comparison with "the more cutthroat zero sum quality" to decision-making within the EU when it came to something like fisheries or agricultural policy).

Q: In this time leading up to 1989, obviously you were all kind of looking at the phenomenon of Gorbachev and what was happening in the Soviet Union. What was your impression of how you and your colleagues looked at what was happening in the Soviet Union? Was this for real or not? Was this an opportunity? How did you see it?

DUNKERLEY: Probably all of the above. The ability to hold differing interpretations at the same time is perhaps the mark of some form of diplomatic acumen (Others of course might just call it cognitive dissonance).

Much of my time at NATO, particularly on the Political Committee, which supported the NAC at the Perm Rep level, was involved in a regular weekly discussion in trading information, opinion, and assessment on the course of events in the East. There was a lot of debate about the questions of just how far, how fast things might be going – the pace and scope, the implications of the policy initiatives underway on the part of Gorbachev. Let's not forget that during this period, there were lots of starts and stops, ambiguities...in effect crab-wise movement on the part of Gorbachev and his political allies as they tried to wrestle with reform of the Soviet economy and polity.

Soviet developments were indeed a mixed picture. They generated mixed reactions. I think everyone at the table at NATO came to recognize during this period that significant changes were in fact underway. There were differing opinions about whether these might succeed. There were differing opinions about what effect they might have in terms of Soviet domestic politics and the Soviet role vis-a-vis the rest of Europe. As I think back to those discussions, and the opinions voiced within the Political Committee in the run-up to the fall of '89, I suspect just about every government represented demonstrated at one point or other a range of views running from deep skepticism to ever increasing interest in taking advantage of these opportunities.

Q: Was there any look at Eastern Europe to see (countries such as Hungary which was going through a major change) if there were opportunities or problems because if one of the Eastern European countries got overly liberal, maybe the Soviets might move in again like in Czechoslovakia in 1968?

DUNKERLEY: Yes, that was one strand of thinking. You identify concerns that some had at that time – just as earlier, I forget when exactly, Kissinger expressed his own concerns about the need for finding a de facto understanding with Moscow about the pace and scope of future change in Eastern Europe.

From the American perspective, it would be interesting to go back and trace the way in which our own interest in having serious discussions about European security with the East Europeans came to evolve. We had long pursued, of course, bilateral agendas with individual countries. But previously – as I mentioned before – there had seemed to be a sense in some quarters that pursuing sustained exchanges with these capitals on European security issues, both general and specific, would likely be a rather empty exercise given their role within the Warsaw Pact (with Romania, of course, playing the occasional maverick).

I think several developments and processes during the 80's started to change that perception. One was the fact that the Helsinki Final Act launching the CSCE had established a series of regularly-occurring conferences on different categories ("baskets" to use the term of art) of political, economic and military issues affecting European security writ large – and that individual East European states increasingly came to be seen as playing active and more distinct roles in this process.

Another factor came to flow, I believe, from our major diplomatic effort to address Allied governments' and publics' political concerns in connection with the contentious INF debate. Our sustained consultative efforts with Western Europe in the early 80's made start-up of a very modest parallel effort with the East Europeans on arms control and other issues that much more natural as a secondary follow-on, as in our initial debriefs on the Shultz-Gromyko meeting in Geneva in the final days of Chernenko. But at no point was there an early expectation that things were going to evolve in the way that they did or with the pace and scope that they eventually unfolded.

Q: Back to Yugoslavia... I served in Yugoslavia from 1962 to 1967 and our concern there was the demise of Tito. Our feeling was that if Tito left and unless things were held together, it would cause a loosening there and offer an opportunity to the Soviets. In other words, we could end up

in a hell of a war over this thing which neither the U.S. nor the USSR wanted, but there it was. What was the situation in 1987-88 period? Was that still a concern?

DUNKERLEY: You touch upon one of the more interesting of historical ironies. In any number of NATO tabletop exercises over previous decades, a favorite scenario had been something like the one that you described: what to do if there were an aggressive Soviet political-military incursion into a post-Tito Yugoslavia. The irony comes that in fact NATO's first real exercise of military power in Europe eventually came in former Yugoslavia in the 1990's – but, of course, under dramatically different circumstances (and indeed with Russian participation under American command in the context of NATO peacekeeping following the Dayton Accords).

The concern in 1987-88 was different from your question. It was generated by certain analysts looking at post-Tito political arrangements in Yugoslavia, noting signs of unrest among ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and raising questions more about the dynamics of internal stability, less the likelihood of external incursion. As I mentioned before, and not to blow this out of proportion, this was one of the first things that I was instructed by Washington to raise in the Political Committee in '87 when few others on the European scene seemed to think that this a major risk.

Q: How well were you served by the intelligence arm of the American government? INR, the CIA, defense intelligence, did they play much of a role in what was happening? Were you using this?

DUNKERLEY: We were certainly using them in terms of the ongoing discussions between the U.S. and the Allies that took place within the Political Committee and on more a rarefied basis in the North Atlantic Council. One of the major assets that we brought to these exchanges was the ability to share extensively, under proper guidance and circumstances, various forms of American analysis of the course of events within the East. There were a number of INR products on Gorbachev's perestroika efforts that I can think back on. We relied quite heavily on the CIA and the Intelligence Community's overall assessments vis-a-vis Soviet military power.

With the clarity of hindsight it is simple to think back on that period and to assume that so many things should have been dramatically clearer once Mr. Gorbachev got into office and set in motion various attempts at economic and then political reform. But of course, as you look back even more closely, it confirms just how very mixed a picture events in the East presented us then – one with all sorts of fits and starts, uncertainties and ambiguities.

Q: All sorts of things could have happened. Gorbachev was not necessarily an elemental force of nature, I mean, he didn't necessarily have to happen or things got out of his control later on too. Were the Green Movement, the Left, the Labour Party in England working against you all?

DUNKERLEY: The high point of those particular concerns in Western Europe you mention came a little bit earlier in 1983-84 in connection with the INF deployments. Within many of the basing countries at that particular time, there were strong political concerns and expressions of opposition to the American deployments. Certainly the Greens in Germany were active in that regard. So was the Labour Party in the U.K. But recall that by the late 1980s – as the issue of assessing the implications of Gorbachev and his policies came to the fore – the Thatcher government had decisively defeated the Labour Party and Chancellor Kohl was still very much

in command in Germany. So, as I think back on that latter period, discussion within the Alliance on East-West issues involved less a question of having to deal with policy opponents on the Left side of the spectrum than in pursuing more of a rolling internal debate amongst standing governments of the Alliance.

Q: In 1989 was there any feeling that times were changing?

DUNKERLEY: Of course there was. In early 1989 we had a follow-on NATO summit in Brussels. President George H.W. Bush used that opportunity to push forward a significant new proposal on conventional arms reductions within Europe on the part of the Alliance. This was an attempt both to seize the political initiative on this set of European security issues, in the face of popular interest generated by various forward-leaning statements by Gorbachev, and to jump over a number of the substantive obstacles that had previously stalled progress in this particular field.

By this time, conventional arms control discussions were no longer in format of the MBFR talks, but rather moving into a new set of negotiations: what became the CFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) negotiations. One important difference would be that CFE would involve a much broader cast of characters including all of the members of the then Warsaw Pact and all of the members of NATO – the major militaries of both East and West Europe.

There was a recognition that the new CFE mandate should not only be broader in terms of participating states and the military equipment that it would seek to cover, but that it should also aim towards much more significant mutual reductions than had previously been envisioned. This new conventional arms control initiative was conceived of as a major step on the part of the Alliance. I recall that at the time, the initial concept was parachuted in from the top – a Washington initiative that National Security Advisor Scowcroft and Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger flew over to sell on a very quiet basis to key Allies immediately on the eve of the summit.

All that was on the arms control side.

On the political side, yes, as signs of change increased, as problems continued to multiply for the existing regimes within Eastern Europe, there was a dramatic increase in discussion of these developments within the Alliance and within NATO committees in particular. Over the summer of '89, with the Hungarian opening of their border to the West, with events in Prague and Warsaw calling into question the Communist monopoly in local politics, these became the stuff of almost daily consultation at NATO headquarters.

Q: Most policies and government people like the status quo: they know what they are dealing with. Was there concern that things were getting loose and things may get out of control? Or did you see the thought that if we have a resurgence of the Soviet Union, they might come in and squash things?

DUNKERLEY: There was obviously a concern about uncertainties and possible Soviet reactions, but I would not overstate the point you just made. I did not see the sort of nostalgia for a Cold War status quo, and any such ostensible stability, that you seem to be alluding to in that regard.

Of course the major issue came to be what all this might come to mean for Germany – or rather, for the future of the two Germanies as a possible single entity – and in turn what the broader implications of that prospect might be for European security. Yes. There was considerable concern, as you suggest, with the question of Soviet reaction and “firepower” – that is to say, its on the ground presence and influence – and what this might mean for Gorbachev’s policies in general.

But it was more than just the Soviet factor to keep in mind. These events affected a number of actors and Europe as a whole. Unlike the situation in Hungary or Czechoslovakia, in Germany there was also in place a longstanding quadripartite political structure, affording a defined role, rights and responsibilities to the United States, United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union with regard to Berlin. Though this was a limited structure dating well back into the post-war era, it now provided a useful vehicle by which at least one key part of a multilateral approach might be organized in response to events as they unfolded in East Germany. It eventually morphed in what was termed the Two Plus Four process.

But that’s to anticipate. All of this really only came to the fore with the torrent of change set in motion by the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9th 1989 – which caught everyone by surprise.

I recall that during the course of the day the Wall fell, there was an emergency meeting of the Political Committee called by the A/SYG for Political Affairs in response to what was happening in Berlin and on the television. It paralleled a lot of corridor conversations and hurried telephone calls underway. But no one among colleagues – even, or perhaps especially, the German representative – had yet a clear sense as to what was likely to happen next, let alone how their respective governments might seek to manage what had been set in motion. What was apparent at that moment, I suppose, was everyone’s sense that this would now be the overriding issue for the Alliance in the year to follow.

In this regard, the fundamental concern among many seemed not so much the one that you identified in your question: would there be a resurgent Soviet snap-back or military incursion – but rather would the pressures, conditions and attractions of integration become such within the German body politic that it would lead to an eventual loosening of German ties, de facto or de jure, with such transatlantic institutions as NATO.

Another major dynamic that was in play from the start – and one we were acutely aware of within our daily discussions at NATO - was that the Germans quite understandably saw this as an issue of primordial importance. Their voice would need to be decisive – and there were periodic expressions of their sensitivity lest the role of others seem to suggest any dilution of that principle. At the same time, this was an issue that involved directly vital interests not only of the U.S. and other big European states, but no less importantly – perhaps even more importantly –

the interests and concerns of the smaller European states, indeed of all of the members of the Alliance.

So an immediate question was how a sense of process might be generated and then sustained which could move discussions and decisions on the future of Germany forward in a stabilizing versus destabilizing manner. The objective would be to enable reunification in a way that would continue to anchor Germany well within the Alliance even while reassuring the Soviets. The process would need to be seen to give the Germans their proper lead role but no less to ensure that not only our own interests were met, but those of all the other European members of the Alliance. Both substance and perception would be critical for all parties. This was a diplomatic balancing act that President Bush and Secretary Baker spent a great deal of time on as the dominant issue in late 1989 to 1990.

Q: Was there a feeling that things were moving so rapidly that maybe NATO would become obsolete?

DUNKERLEY: At the time there were, of course, any number of questions about the future shape and details of Europe. Understandably so. With varying degrees of seriousness and depth, some in the public discourse questioned what this would mean for various transatlantic institutions, the foremost being NATO. But there seemed very little sympathy within Alliance discussions – or rather I should say meaningful resonance – with the notion that NATO should now simply go out of business. I don't think it was ever a serious policy choice in most capitals, but it was one more factor that the Alliance would have to address in terms of popular perceptions: reaffirming the rationale, role and continuing contributions of the Alliance amidst dramatically changing circumstances.

As a consequence, an important task in this overall process – as the Germans and the Quadripartite powers worked on the issues of reunification in a manner that might both reinforce the sense of consultations within NATO and reassure the Soviets – was for the U.S. and the Alliance to be able to put forward a sense of vision as to the future structure for Europe as a whole.

While I would have to think back for precise dates and sequencing, it was in December of 1989 that elements for such a concept began to come together. There was President Bush's shipboard meeting with Gorbachev in Malta at the beginning of the month – which was useful in setting a positive, constructive sense of reduced tensions. On his way home, he swung through NATO Headquarters to debrief Allied counterparts in a very quick summit gathering. It was also at this time that the fundamental U.S. position became increasingly clear: strong support for German reunification in the context of a united Germany's continued membership in NATO.

In mid-December, Secretary Baker drew on certain ideas that we had been working on at NATO in a major speech in Berlin. He described the notion of an "architecture" for a Europe whole and free built around three different but fundamentally complementary institutions: a transformed NATO, an expanding EU, and a revitalized OSCE. These were ideas that we already had in play within the Senior Political Committee at NATO (which we had earlier been able to feed into the Secretary's advisors). Following his Berlin speech, which was broadly supported, these ideas

were subsequently expanded and reaffirmed by all of the members of the Alliance in an important NAC Ministerial later that December. I was involved at that time in the negotiation of that ministerial Communiqué. All this laid necessary groundwork for what followed through the next spring and climaxing at the London NATO Summit in July '90.

During the months that followed, a structure for negotiating the German issue emerged. I recall supporting the U.S. delegation, led by Secretary Baker, to a NATO-Warsaw Pact ministerial conference in Ottawa (ostensibly to launch negotiations on an Open Skies regime) at which the Two Plus Four formula was agreed – involving the two German states and Quadripartite powers – for negotiating conditions for a reunified and sovereign Germany. I recall this was not without some very sharp exchanges at the time between the German Foreign Minister and some of his ministerial counterparts in the NATO Caucus at Ottawa, notably the Italians and Dutch.

Later that spring, the Two Plus Four produced such an agreement on the outline and substance of unification, and Chancellor Kohl subsequently won Gorbachev's agreement to a reunified Germany's membership in NATO – albeit under certain particular self-restraints on the German military in the context of the broader and less specific notion of a transformed NATO.

The London Summit in July 1990 was thus important for two reasons. First, it provided a degree of political validation of the evolution of the Alliance and NATO in light of all these historic events – the “transformation of NATO” marked by, among other things, formal renunciation by the Alliance of the Soviet Union as the enemy and the launch of changes in NATO's military strategy and defense posture. Second, it marked the first step of opening up the Alliance to a working relationship with its former adversaries, both the Soviet Union and the East European states – which by this time were rapidly exiting a soon to be defunct Warsaw Pact. These states were invited to establish permanent liaison missions at NATO headquarters.

Q: As the events of November-December were taking place how did you find your NATO watcher at the Soviet Embassy? This must have been a time of flux. Was it collegial?

DUNKERLEY: He started worrying about his job. Clearly the local Russian diplomats, Soviet officials at that time, were caught off guard. One could see that. It was reflected in our discussions with them at various levels.

In the midst of all these events I've been recalling, one of the most symbolic and interesting was the visit to NATO Headquarters – really at his initiative – of then Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. This was in that crowded December '89. Again it had unique atmospherics, watching as he was greeted by most of the NATO staff as he walked into and through the main building. I remember talking with a Soviet MFA colleague not too long afterwards who took pains to show off his “NATO insignia pen” he had picked up on that occasion while accompanying the Foreign Minister.

For many of us on the U.S. side, much of this related to dealing with misperceptions of what NATO represented and confusion – among the Soviets and many others – as to whether it was a purely military organization or a much more broadly political-military institution. But this also coincided with an increased interest and desire within the Alliance itself to think seriously about

transformation in light of dramatically new strategic circumstances. So several dynamics began to come into play in the period leading up to the London NATO Summit that July.

I already alluded to one of those elements: opening up the possibility of a new relationship with former adversaries. In the run-up to the London gathering, we put forward some rough ideas that met with some Allied skepticism and no little uncertainty about what that might actually entail. But this eventually resulted in the invitation for these countries to establish liaison missions with the Alliance for an expanded degree of consultation. It may seem rather modest now, but at the time it was unprecedented.

But there were a number of other, even more difficult issues related to “transformation” addressed at London. Alliance leaders agreed to commission changes in NATO’s traditional military strategy – the document which up until that time had been known under the term “MC (Military Committee) 14/3” and which had constituted the basic military strategy for defending against the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. They also set new guidelines for NATO force levels and postures: smaller and restructured forces, less emphasis on forward defense, reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, and so forth. They expressed forward-leaning intentions on a variety of arms control measures in the nuclear and conventional fields.

In sum, the London Declaration of July 1990 set out an ambitious work-program for adaptation of various Alliance policies – some quite long-standing. And not surprisingly, not without potential for controversy either. I recall that, in order to jump over extended haggling at the working-level in the run-up to the London Summit, Washington deployed an entirely new draft Declaration at the last moment at the Presidential/Head of State level. That led to no little grumbling among some lower down in the bureaucratic ranks at NATO Headquarters but in the end, it worked.

There were other processes underway during this period, also necessary parts of the overall process for managing the reunification of Germany and in the following year, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. These included bringing the negotiations on the CFE Treaty to closure within a year. As an Alliance project this involved an intense series of discussion at NATO about how to fill out the Alliance negotiating position and how to overcome the final differences.

One thing that I was struck with at the time – observing from my own position as a member of this process underway at NATO Headquarters – was the conceptual and practical contributions that Will Taft and his deputy, John Kornblum, made to some of these questions, particularly as they related to balancing German concerns with those of the smaller allies and the intense consultative effort in which Secretary Baker and the President were active.

Q: Looking at this after interviewing for a long time, I am struck by the effectiveness of the Bush-Baker work on this. Was there a feeling that you were on a strong team?

DUNKERLEY: Very much so. Being at NATO at this time was to be in a privileged position at a pivotal point in this larger process. As a consequence, we saw a lot of the Secretary, Bob Zoellick, Ray Seitz and other members of that Washington team. There was much interchange with them on their visits to NATO both on substance and on tactics.

Q: At the events of November-December and the fall of the Berlin Wall, was there an effort on instructions and on your part to be sure we weren't indulging triumphalism?

DUNKERLEY: The tone was set by the highest levels. There was clearly a conscious effort to avoid any notion of triumphalism on our part; that was an example set by the President and read as such by everyone. But I don't recall any specific Department instructions saying "don't be triumphalist."

Q: Did Condoleezza Rice, she was the Soviet watcher at NSC, did she come across your radar at all?

DUNKERLEY: Certainly by name, but not by direct engagement on my part at that time.

Q: You were there until 1991?

DUNKERLEY: Through the first half of '91. In August 1990, immediately on the heels of the German reunification project, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait took place. This then became the dominant preoccupation at USNATO through the spring of 1991.

Here again, a great deal of consultation took place at NATO Headquarters on this particular issue. At the very first, there was some reserve on the part of some delegations about the degree to which formal NATO discussion revolved around Iraq – in those days, that part of the world was still seen very much as "out of area." But that sentiment quickly diminished as it became apparent the degree to which trans-Atlantic and European interests were directly affected by this issue. Not least, there was the fact that a NATO member, Turkey, bordered Iraq and was seen as potentially threatened. As Desert Shield/ Desert Storm played out, much of the attention was devoted to CENTCOM's activities in the immediate region. But NATO and the European Command played an important role in terms of ensuring Mediterranean security and the use of Turkish air space, as well as a variety of anti-terrorist precautions.

Q: I recall that we were given the opportunity to take out significant military units and move them either to Iraq or to Kuwait and then eventually back to the States.

DUNKERLEY: Yes. There came to be a large movement of units, forces, and equipment from the European theater to the Gulf. What is noteworthy about that development was the degree to which all of those NATO plans and procedures for U.S. reinforcement from North America, practiced so regularly during the Cold War, worked quite well for a very different purpose and, in this case, going in a different and unexpected direction. Further, the degree to which individual Allies provided critical, if un-dramatic, support in facilitating that movement was a major factor. There was much that individual countries and the Alliance collectively did to facilitate success of the overall operation.

Q: Did your meetings take on a Kuwait oriented focus?

DUNKERLEY: To a certain degree – though there was still a good deal going on elsewhere in the world as well. The basic business of the Alliance remained East-West, and there was still much to be done with the Soviet Union and East Europe. But there was no question but that the Kuwaiti and Iraqi issues assumed increasing importance and that we had a particular interest in using NATO as one of the basic and proven vehicles of consultation with the Europeans (though we were of course talking with them bilaterally, through the EU and very much in the Security Council context as well).

I recall a particular example of such consultations came in January '91 when Secretary Baker met with Tariq Aziz in Geneva for what some termed “the final warning.” Immediately following, Ray Seitz, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, flew directly from the session to give a verbatim read out to the North Atlantic Council. There was a special sense to that NAC. Seitz spoke and described in some detail Tariq Aziz’s unsatisfactory response to Baker. It became increasingly clear as he spoke that some last-minute diplomatic fix involving an Iraqi pull-back was not going to happen – that war was going to occur very shortly. You could look around the room at the various national delegations and see that recognition dawning with individual ambassadors and colleagues. I thought it a quiet and tense moment.

Q: Was there towards the end a feeling of concern within NATO that maybe the OSCE was going to supplant NATO because it had a broader enrollment than NATO did?

DUNKERLEY: Occasionally one would hear particular concerns in that direction, but in fact these did not develop very far. Obviously, at that time the Russians would like to have seen such a development; some of their statements argued for such a course of evolution in the organization of European security affairs. At the same time, the Germans and other Europeans wanted to see a much broader role, an enhanced role for the OSCE in the future. And indeed, the U.S. itself – as in Secretary Baker’s Berlin speech on a future European security architecture – foresaw an important role and growing function for the OSCE process.

But the notion of OSCE somehow coming to replace NATO was really a red herring. That is to say, given that the OSCE was itself still finding its way within a new Europe, and NATO was clearly continuing to play a major role in European stability and security, this was not in fact a serious proposition – nor at the end of the day, a truly serious concern for U.S. and Allied policy-makers.

Q: By the time you left was there any official discussion about whether we would see Hungary or Poland in NATO?

DUNKERLEY: In the first instance, I think policy-makers in capitals, let alone the officials and working level in Brussels at that time, were still wrestling with immediate issues and implications of implementing what had just been determined and decided in this remarkable period of 1989-91. That is to say, the Alliance and its members faced tough questions that flowed from German reunification and the accelerating dissolution of the Warsaw Pact: a host of political, economic and military issues.

It would take, for example, some time for the Soviet forces in Germany and elsewhere to withdraw entirely. There was in addition a complex of issues related to how the newly signed CFE Treaty would be implemented, involving not only significant reductions and destruction, but also an unprecedented degree of verification and monitoring that would have to be undertaken – even as, I’d note, the Eastern bloc within this Treaty structure was breaking apart. One example of the sort of knotty operational issues that had to be thrashed out in NATO at that time involved finding practical ways for members of the Alliance to coordinate among themselves to ensure that this new network of national verification and monitoring responsibilities could work in the most effective manner – a highly technical question but with major consequences and political implications.

At the same time, there was a new Open Skies Treaty to conclude and implement. There were political consultations and preparations at NATO for a meeting of Alliance members and Warsaw Pact members resulting in negotiation of “The Charter of Paris” – in essence an occasion to draw a ceremonial political line under the Cold War and to lay the ground for a major follow-on CSCE Summit in Helsinki. There were new liaison arrangements to be worked between NATO and these former adversaries. And throughout all this, there was also much of NATO’s day to day political-military business to manage.

So there may have been some people thinking at that particular moment about eventual membership in the Atlantic Alliance on the part of countries such as Poland and Hungary, but this was a rather more of a vision than an immediate prospect.

At this same time, of course, in the aftermath of Desert Storm, policy-makers in capitals and officials in Brussels also had to face the drastic deterioration of the situation in Yugoslavia. From the perspective of being at NATO headquarters in the first half of 1991, one could only suspect that one reason why the Western response to the violent unraveling of Yugoslavia was less than effective may have been political and psychic exhaustion from all that had taken place in the previous immediate two years: having to deal with German reunification, dissolution of the East, and the whole Iraqi episode. By the time storm clouds had gathered over Yugoslavia, ministers and governments may not have been able to give it their best.

Q: Was there concern on the part of our delegation in 1987 that the presence of so many American troops that had been there since 1945 – their interaction with citizens, tanks roughing up the country – were we concerned that the hospitality of the Germans was getting a bit strained?

DUNKERLEY: What you describe was an ongoing set of issues that had always been there; both the German authorities and U.S. military at EUCOM had over time developed a whole structure of well-established procedures for dealing with these sorts of daily civil-military problems. It was my sense that the more fundamental issues with Germany at this time were less on that local or operational level but rather revolved about the constant tweaking required at the highest political level to insure broadly complementary political strategies, especially regards the tone and nuance of our respective dealings with the East.

Q: Bundestag members said ‘I can get those low flying, attack planes out of your area.’

DUNKERLEY: That's always an issue – and not simply in Germany but elsewhere overseas - and that is not to say that there wasn't the political need to focus periodically on specific local problems involving U.S. forces in Germany. But the point I would make is that as one looked at U.S.-German relations in totality, and particularly in the context of the Alliance and Alliance strategy during this important time, such problems tended to constitute constant background noise; they were in themselves not the main issue.

Q: By the time you left, had the Poles, Hungarians, etc. established liaison missions?

DUNKERLEY: They were in the process. This was a new and strange relationship for all concerned. Lots of practical housekeeping details – but the sense of significant history being made. I particularly remember the excitement – no better word for it – on the part of some of the East Europeans.

Q: You left in 1991?

DUNKERLEY: Summer of 1991. I came back for “Senior Seminar” at FSI that ran to the summer of 1992. I then went out to Vienna to be the deputy head of the U.S. Delegation to the CSCE.

R. BARRY FULTON
Public Affairs Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1987-1991)

R. Barry Fulton was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He earned his B.A. and M.A. from Penn State and after graduating in 1962 served in the U.S. Air Force. In 1968 he entered the Foreign Service and during his career served in Pakistan, Japan, Italy and Belgium. Mr. Fulton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.

Q: Who was the Ambassador and sort of what did the mission to NATO do at that time?

FULTON: When I arrived at NATO...

Q: This is in Brussels, of course.

FULTON: In Brussels, of course. You know multilateral organizations in the Foreign Service are always kind of, the step-cousins of traditional diplomacy. Most officers have been at bilateral missions and bilateral mission activities and quite clear and multilateral activated, whether it's the UN, New York or Geneva or EU or NATO, others look on not knowing exactly what they do. I didn't know when I got there, I arrived when Dave Abshire was Ambassador, and Abshire was just on the verge of leaving. I mean literally a few days after I arrived. He had brought some distinction to that post because he was a name, at the time well-known in this town because

remember, at one point to be coming back as secretary of defense and he was of that stature. He was succeeded by Alton Keel.

Q: How do you spell Keel?

FULTON: That's K E E L. Keel, far well less known, had been the deputy to John Poindexter when Poindexter was head of the NSC (National Security Council), and as you know Poindexter left in a rush along with Oliver North and others over the Iran-Contra affair. Alton Keel actually moved up for a couple of weeks to be acting director of the NSC, and then he was reassigned to NATO as Ambassador. Alton Keel was not a skilled diplomat, although he was a very smart person.

Q: What was his background?

FULTON: He was an engineer by training, and he actually was that person who led the investigation, he was the staff director of the investigation of the shuttle mission that blew up in the sky.

Q: The Challenger.

FULTON: Yes. He had worked at the Pentagon and then came over to NSC. Keel, as I say, not trained in diplomacy was nonetheless very skillful in understanding the issues. Somewhat less skillful in pursuing them with his colleagues. I think it would be generally acknowledged that he had a way of irritating some of his colleagues. But he was right on target for pushing the American agenda, and the American agenda at that period was very much in flux in 1987, it was not at all apparent to anyone what was about to happen in 1989. But we did have a very aggressive program of arms control, and those arms control problems involved both nuclear long range, short range weapons and conventional weapons. A lot of the policy was being formed with our allies at NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and NATO was the action point for those operations, and Keel with his background, Keel had a doctorate in Engineering, so he had really no equal when you were talking about the technicalities of some of the arms control issues. He was a very able Ambassador up to the point where his inexperience showed in dealing with some of the allies and also in dealing with his own staff. I enjoyed a good relation with him, and he was open to the press and did what I think a good Ambassador ought to do, kept the press well-informed, was willing on some occasions to take some risks, I think you must do that in dealing with the press. He debated at Oxford, he joined the floor with the reporter of the Economist and other major papers, he spoke in major conferences around Europe. He kept the American message in the European press and with European academics, so I couldn't personally have been more pleased with my relations. Others in the mission would have a somewhat different take on that.

Q: Did you find, you were saying that he wasn't skilled in some of the diplomatic arts, which is often keeping your colleagues, other diplomats and all, happy and all. I take it that's part of the situation.

FULTON: At NATO.

Q: At NATO.

FULTON: Where there's sixteen people with equal rank.

Q: We're talking about this '87 to '89 period before Germany sort of fell apart and pulled together again, did you find, I mean this was not particularly your expertise, I mean the military, the whole military side of things, you've been exposed to it. But did you find that you, one, had a problem with learning the military side of things, and also, did you have problems with the Pentagon spokespeople and all?

FULTON: I had a bit of expertise when I came into the job. I had spent, as I indicated earlier, I had spent three years in the military, and when I was in Rome as Deputy PAO (Public Affairs Officer) I had, for the USIA, I had the security portfolio. We were talking, and when the decision was made for the Italians to agree to the hosting of nuclear, short-range nuclear missiles on their territory. When I came back to Washington after that assignment, during the time I was working in Foreign Service Personnel, I had a detail to coordinate the overall USIA response worldwide to the question of short-range nuclear missiles. So I had that kind of experience which weighed in my favor in getting the assignment. Now having said that, when I arrived at NATO I of course discovered quickly that I was a mere amateur next to the people who, some of whom had spent a career there. The head of one of the offices in our mission from the Pentagon, Dr. Larry Legere, had been in NATO for about fifteen years, and he had no equal there or in the Pentagon in terms of his knowledge of NATO issues. So there was an awful lot of learning to be done, but I was very comfortable with that, was comfortable with the subject matter and I was eager to learn. I think that the people who watched me found that for the first couple months I didn't say very much, I was a very quiet person trying to learn a lot. I realized that unless I got myself up to a certain speed I'd basically be ignored in the mission. It's an integrated mission so that the military, political, economy, USIA were all operated as one, and we more or less got called on to the extent that we had a contribution to make. I carved out my role and my staff carved out their role with the media in terms of being able to speak the language of NATO and interpret it into the language of the press.

Q: How did you find the press at that time?

FULTON: The press that covered NATO was very, very able. There were a couple of thousand people accredited to NATO that had press credentials to NATO headquarters. They would show up, but for the most part we dealt with maybe a hundred people. And most of those covered NATO part-time. At the time I was there the NATO press office was on a very short leash and basically had permission to say very, very little and was not much of a source for the press. We were very much in flux during that period even though the Berlin Wall, even though neither had it fallen nor had anybody predicted it would, but we were still very much in flux because it was clear that Gorbachev was changing things in the Soviet Union. And we, I went to support the economic summit in Venice right after I got to NATO in which President Reagan participated and then he participated in the NATO meeting as well. Then George Bush came there once as Vice President, and I think three times as President during the time I was there. We had during that period, totaled this up when I was leaving, we had fifty-odd ministerial meetings in the four

plus years I was there, so we averaged a ministerial meeting once a month. Ministerial meetings were decision meetings. We therefore made a lot of news and the press came to depend on the U.S. mission for its major source of news, along with, after the U.S. mission, the British mission, the German mission, and to a lesser extent the French mission. We were their source, and we had to be, we had to be up on issues or actually we wouldn't get called. We had to know what was going on, and I found it intellectually very exciting. I had a very able staff, small staff; there were just three of us. We worked long, and I told people after I left that I had the greatest respect for the press that was there, certainly most papers have their own angle and you could predict how this story might be represented here or there, two different lands, that's fair it seems to me. We had a couple of inaccuracies in the press, only a couple, and when we did on every occasion we had, any major inaccuracy we managed to have a retraction on a subsequent day. That reflected, I think, on the good relations that my staff and I had with the press. That we could get the retractions, we offered good reporting to the European press.

Q: Let's talk about this early period, maybe it carries over. Did you see any differences that you can characterize or examples of different approaches or relationships between the French and the Germans, the British, maybe the Italians, you know, their delegations or their missions?

FULTON: Oh, yes. That's what made it so interesting. Their ambassadors were representing policies that were on some occasions quite at odds with the U.S. Each of the Ambassadors brought their own personalities to amplify or minimize those differences, as the case may be. If you talk about just in our own mission the difference between Alton Keel and William Howard Taft, you know after policy was made, and as I said, strongly influenced from the mission itself, because there aren't a lot of places in the city where DOD (Department of Defense) and the State Department sit down and come up with common policy. There is only one place that that happens and that's in preparation for a NATO meeting, and that happens either physically on the ground at NATO or it happens with principals coming back to Washington, holding meetings. Because when a meeting is held, both DOD and Defense have to sign off on a particular issue. So each of those two Ambassadors took American policy and did their best to execute it. Now the difference between the two was that Keel would attend to a certain policy and pound the table and insist that others get in line, and with William Howard Taft the others weren't quite sure what our policy was until they agreed to it. All of a sudden they were supporting something that Keel had, that William Howard Taft had worked diplomatically with great skill. I remember an occasion once, an issue not of great consequence, but it was an issue that I was involved in on a fellowship program that was being done, sponsored by NATO, managed by their public affairs office, and there was a council meeting on the issue because of some differences within the council. But it wasn't one that the U.S. cared about deeply, and I was accompanying the ambassador to the meeting of the North Atlantic Council and I had prepared the briefing paper for him, and he had read the paper. We hadn't really talked about it very much, and as we walked into the meeting, the Ambassador, our Ambassador ran into the French Ambassador. The French Ambassador said, "What position will the Americans be taking today?" And it wasn't that the French cared a lot about it. Taft said, "We will take the same position you take." The French Ambassador said, "And how do you know what position we're going to take?" And Taft said, "We don't know. But when you take it we will second it, we will vote for it. Whatever it is." And the French Ambassador says, "Why are you doing this?" He said, "Because we respect your leadership in this area." So the French Ambassador spoke up with some passion, he said we

should do this. Taft raised his hand and said, "We agree completely." And the chairman at the meeting said, "I think this is a first." Those kinds of chips that he gathered with such actions paid off on things that we cared about.

Q: Was there the feeling of, particularly the French-American relationship, the French were in NATO but not in NATO at that time. It was still that very peculiar thing where the military forces technically weren't in, but they'd been running exercises. Was there sort of a NATO view and a French view?

FULTON: Well, the French would, a representative here today would rapidly correct your assumption and say at no point did the French leave NATO, and the French were full members of NATO, and the French participated in all NATO meetings, except the military command.

Q: Which was what NATO was about.

FULTON: Well, NATO was about politics, first and foremost NATO was about politics. Secondly, NATO was about combining military command which had never, through that period of time, been used in hostilities, in exercises, yes, but had never been used. So what that meant in practice was that the North Atlantic Council, which is the supreme decision-making body, the French were not on the sidelines in any way, and they were full participants, and all decisions were made at the North Atlantic Council by consensus. This whole decision making process at NATO, just parenthetically, is just ripe for a whole host of doctoral dissertations on the decision-making process. It's a very, very complex and very interesting situation. But the French as a consequence could, if they wanted, could become anything, and they did, in fact. Or for that matter so could Iceland, or the Danes, or anybody. So these ministerials I talked about, half of those ministerials were meetings of Foreign Ministers, and the French were at all of those, and the other half were groups like the Defense Planning Group or the Nuclear Planning group, which were all command-related and those that were, the United States would be represented by Caspar Weinberger or Dick Cheney, and those the French did not participate in, because those were meetings of fourteen. The Icelanders did not participate either because they don't have a Defense Department, so there'd be fourteen at the meeting at best.

Q: Did you feel that there was a special burden of trying to bring the French on board on a lot of things?

FULTON: Yes, the French exercised their political authority with great skill, they assigned people to NATO who were very, very fine diplomats. It was during that period that the French were in a position of entertaining change. There was talk then about them joining the Integrated Military Command. The French were very active in all the political decisions, but, yes, there was always the kind of French counterview to a lot of positions. You would often find that American-British agreement on issues, that did not need a lot of special nurturing. The whole question of, as the Berlin wall fell and the future of Germany was being considered, the U.S.-German, the British-German, the French-German, the everybody-German relations became very, very important. Because it was not at all clear from day one that we would end up with the consequence that we have now, an integrated Germany, all of which belonged to NATO. When that idea was first proposed, it was considered by the French, by the British and by many of the

Germans to be preposterous. That was an American idea, and it was something which, I think it's a story that's not been fully written, but it's a story that reflects very well on secretary James Baker and reflects very well on William Howard Taft and reflects well on the staff around Baker that managed to persuade a number of other players, including our allies, including the Russians that this was a stable, desirable option.

Q: When you arrived in '87, Gorbachev was beginning his program. I mean it's kind of pretty clear that things really were happening.

FULTON: Glasnost...

Q: Glasnost, Soviet Union. Was there, would you say, a certain amount of disquiet? I mean we'd gone for forty-odd years with a rather stable situation of two major powers glaring each other over a divided Germany and all of a sudden one of the major powers was going to change, and nobody knew exactly where it was going. Was this of concern or not, or was it delight?

FULTON: Well, it was a great concern. I suppose the height of the concern was the meeting in Iceland between Reagan and Gorbachev, because although they did not reach agreement, it was quite clear from the press reporting that Reagan was prepared unilaterally to overturn NATO policy. People at NATO were very nervous by that, and I assume, I assume we can read some of the accounts, people on the Reagan staff were nervous by that. If Gorbachev had been just a bit more daring, there would have been a major reversal of policy at that meeting. I think that meeting, nonetheless, although it ended in what was reported at the time as failure, changed the whole landscape for the future, and that is the kind of meeting then that gave real energy to the conventional arms talks and the nuclear arms talks. The conventional arms talks in fact had been going on in theory for years and years, and as a consequence of the mood that was created there, then they became very, very active as well as the nuclear talks in Geneva.

Q: Was there a certain amount of discomfort that things were beginning to open up? You know, the bureaucracy group, I mean they're comfortable with the status quo, and things were beginning, like arms control and all this which lip service had been paid to. But all of a sudden, I mean people were talking seriously about, not just arms control, but arms reduction, both nuclear and conventional. Were you dealing with a bunch of people kind of wondering, "hey, wait a minute, where's this going?"

FULTON: Now interestingly not, and it comes down, I think, to the bureaucratic question, because bureaucracies can't uphold the status quo forever. The reason, one of the reasons I think that NATO is such a right place for study in the decision-making process. NATO has a relatively small staff compared to say the EU across town. I don't have the figures, but maybe it's one percent of the size. Three percent or something. With the exception of a handful of people who have been grandfathered into permanent positions at NATO, if you get an appointment on the international staff at NATO, you get that appointment for three years initially. If you're doing well, you can get it extended to four or five or maybe six years. You almost never can get it extended beyond six years, and the rule is that if you're there seven years, then you can get permanent status. There was a period, I think, under Secretary General Luns, when he was there for a long time, where he extended a number of people, and there are a number of people got the

permanent status, and those people are now at the cusp of their career. Some of them were retiring when I was there and by now a lot of them have retired. There are relatively few permanent members of the NATO bureaucracy. The bureaucracy, it's important in the decision-making process that all of the decision makers are there on temporary assignment. The Ambassador stays three, four, five years. The Secretary General stays three, four, five years. Like all people who go to any assignment, people go in and want to make a difference. I think there's the human tendency if you haven't created the policy to want to improve it. Therefore you see at NATO without that permanent bureaucracy, you see the momentum to change things. When there's an outside opportunity to change things, NATO moves very quickly. It doesn't move quickly in the decision process because all the people who want to change things don't necessarily want to change it in the same way. But if you have a skilled Secretary General and if the major Ambassadors are skilled in the art of diplomacy and the art of compromise, if they're skilled in that, you can find very rapid change. From '87 to '91, I watched, and in some ways participated, because our relations with the press were very, very rich and we understood that the press was going to affect public opinion and affect the change. We watched NATO change. I'd not say a hundred and eighty degrees. We didn't change that much, but I bet we changed ninety degrees.

Q: Well, when the Bush administration came, that's when William Howard Taft IV came in?

FULTON: Yes, he came in then.

Q: Well, the events of '89, first place, nobody sat, I mean, was there a policy that if Eastern Europe, the Soviet role in Eastern Europe collapses peacefully, this is what we'll do?

FULTON: No, not... you know one of the great pleasures I had there was I inherited from my predecessors a pattern of the USIS staff sponsoring European-wide conferences. These conferences gave the whole mission license to think outside of the box, and to say what's going to happen, which was something that was more difficult to do when you were making policy. But my predecessors thought that if you could have these kinds of open conferences, you could begin to, at the margins, affect the discussion of policy and begin to change the nature of the policy itself. So I had, as head of USIS at NATO, had been able to sponsor or co-sponsor about four major conferences a year, and we tried to have representation from all the NATO countries at least. We decided in the fall of 1989, before the Berlin Wall fell, but because there was a lot of movement, we decided to invite some East Europeans to the conference for the first time. That required some thought around NATO headquarters of whether that was a good idea and what signal were we sending. Everybody thought well, okay, it's a good signal to send, if we find who can come, and we had a couple of East European participants. We sponsored a conference called "Values: East and West." So it was well outside and beyond the usual security issues, but we thought that values were part of security issues, and we had as one of the keynote speakers a representative from Stern Magazine, German.

Q: West German.

FULTON: West German, a joint popular magazine, and he was posted in Berlin. We asked him to address the question of what Berlin would be like thirty years from now or something like that.

This is in September, two months before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Stern is basically a left-wing paper, and in a way we knew this person would be a thoughtful person and we assumed in inviting him that he was going to describe a Berlin after unification. We didn't ask him to do that, everybody chose their own topic. I remember, it was so dramatic when he started. He said, "Well, I thank the Americans for inviting me here, it was very nice of you to pay my air fare and it's good to be among friends." And he said, "In a way," he said, "I'm kind of guessing, because the Americans are always doing this, but I was invited here today as the person who is going to describe the future of the united Berlin. Well," he said, "I'm going to surprise you, there will not be a united Berlin." He said, "This is an American fantasy." And he went on to describe all the reasons why there would not be a united Berlin in our lifetime, why it wasn't going to happen, why it wasn't desirable. Of course, it happened after that. So we were trying to test the limits of what might happen in this quasi-official forum, because that was not NATO sponsored, it was sponsored by the U.S. Mission and we were kind of outside of official policy.

You asked earlier what it was like to deal with Department of Defense Public Affairs people. I found in my experience that Department of Defense Public Affairs people were far more open to thinking about alternative futures than the State Department. The State Department tended to want to hold the discussion within certain bounds. We had some real encouragement from DOD (Department of Defense) and we were able in doing our programs to call on DOD people. Paul Wolfowitz came and spoke at one of our conferences and talked about alternative futures. I simply found, perhaps it's because military planners deal with contingencies of all stripes, that they were much more open to those discussions than the State Department.

Q: I'm thinking this might be a good place to stop, Barry, because we really want to talk, and I like to talk in some depth, about the fall. I mean we're starting, my first question will be, "How were we reacting when Hungary opened up its borders and the Czech business and looking at Poland and on how did we react at that time from your perspective and the people in NATO?" And then we'll come to, after this momentous occasion, come to Operation Desert Storm and NATO. And then what we're, by '90, late '91 there was time to begin to figure out what the hell NATO's mission was.

FULTON: Indeed. Good time to stop and maybe just to remind both of us that we open up next time with a short discussion of my debate with a First Secretary from the Russian Embassy at this period. It will set the stage.

Q: Wait, Soviet Embassy at this period.

FULTON: At that period, Soviet Embassy, great, thank you.

Q: Great.

Today is the 24th of February, 2000. Barry, you want to talk about the, talking to the Soviet diplomat?

FULTON: Well as relations began to change, Gorbachev was practicing *glasnost* (openness) as Eastern European borders were becoming more porous. There was certainly a sense at NATO

headquarters that a new world was in the making. The conventional arms talks were back on track, the discussions on nuclear weapons were going ahead in Geneva. At about that time, this must have been about 1988 or early '89, there was a proposal from a university in Belgium that there would be an organized public debate between a representative from the U.S. Mission to NATO and a representative from the Soviet delegation. As it turned out, I was invited to represent the U.S. Mission in that debate. It was with some trepidation that I agreed to this knowing full well that there could be a good bit of press coverage (it turned out there wasn't any.) Knowing their might be, and knowing the Soviets at least in the past had used these kinds of occasions to make charges and claims that were outlandish. So with a good bit of preparation I arrived at the University for the debate, and the moderator had maybe fifty, sixty students, faculty members, in the debate hall. Asked which of us wanted to go first, we each said well we didn't care, it was up to him. So he asked that I go first, and I spoke, I thought convincingly, for ten or fifteen minutes on why it was in the interests of both the United States, NATO countries and the Soviet Union to try to reach agreements on reducing arms and why it was in the interest to try to reduce tensions, all those things that one might have said. Then the Soviet debater was called on to make his presentation, and he said simply, "Well, I agree with all that." Period. "I agree with all that." The moderator looked at him and said, "Do you have a statement?" And he said "No. I agree with all that." So it was, at that point I was obviously bemused, the students weren't clear what was going on, and the room was open to questions. There were questions and answers, and the debate which was scheduled to go on for most of the afternoon ended well short of the prepared time, because there was nothing to debate. In some ways, although he was ahead of his hard-line comrades in the Soviet Union, he was representing a very progressive delegation that had come to Brussels to see if they could do business with NATO.

Q: What was this delegation at that time? Was this an exploratory group or what? Had they established relations with NATO?

FULTON: At the time that I've just described, no, but it subsequently happened. It happened that Shevardnadze, then Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, was invited to NATO headquarters. It turned out that he was the first Soviet official, certainly the first Soviet official of any rank, to have been invited to NATO headquarters to meet with the Secretary General, Manfred Wörner. When he arrived, he was greeted in the entranceway by a hundred or so NATO international and delegation employees, and they applauded his arrival. He went up and met with the Secretary General. I am told that he asked the Secretary General if that applause was arranged or spontaneous, and he was told it was spontaneous. At the end of the meeting I'm told he asked again. He said he was surprised by this applause, and indeed was it genuinely spontaneous. The Secretary General again said yes, it was. What the Secretary General did not say, insofar as I heard the story was that in fact the NATO employees were asked to not assemble for the arrival, and it was genuinely spontaneous. On his way out he was greeted by the International Press at the front of the NATO building and he was told by the press that while the meeting was taking place that Ceausescu in Romania had ordered the military to strike back against the demonstrators and that so many people were killed and this and that. He was asked for a comment. Shevardnadze said on the steps of NATO, "Well I'm not thoroughly informed on what has happened, as I've been in here meeting for the last two hours, but if what you say is true, the Soviet Union condemns that." This was news. That a fellow Warsaw pact member was being condemned on the steps of NATO by the Soviet Foreign Minister.

Q: At NATO you were all watching developments in eastern Europe. As I recall, one of the first major cracks is where the Hungarians said, "We're going to open up our borders." How was this, were there other things going on at that time? I think things sort of moved from there.

FULTON: Even my sense of dates and time isn't good enough to comment on what was the first thing. I have a clear recollection of the sense of change around me, but whether it was the Hungarians opening their borders or not would be better left to people who are better informed on the dates and times. Then I recall, what I would want to convey is that the whole, starting with, say the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, aided by Gorbachev's *glasnost*, certainly moved along by the near-agreement in Reykjavik between Reagan and Gorbachev. I suppose if there were any catalytic cause of the opening, it was as I observed it in NATO, an understanding by Jim Baker and his immediate staff of the window of opportunity that had come to United States and the NATO countries to try to change the old relationship, in particular as the Berlin Wall fell. Baker's early seizing on the chance for a unified Germany, which many talked about, a unified Germany within NATO, which as far as I recall no-one else spoke about except the United States. I think, looking back on that, that that was a fairly small window. If he had not moved at that time, and engaged the allies with a team of his senior people who moved around Europe to very quietly develop support for this idea, I think we would have had a very different outcome.

Q: You know, looking at this, this trickiness of it, it was superb diplomacy. I'm not sure but I think the Hungarians sort of opened their borders to Austria, then the East Germans started coming into Czechoslovakia and going to, was it the German Embassy I guess, and you know getting in the compound. The Czechs weren't handling this, they didn't know what to do. Then they started shipping out, and then the East German people started. Day after day there would be demonstrations, peaceful demonstrations in Berlin and elsewhere. This must have been a very nervous time in NATO, do you recall? Because I mean the conventional wisdom up until then was, well the East Germans will call out the troops, and you know they'll shoot 'em down, and we want to keep the German, the West German righteous anger from doing something, and you know this is always the fear I think that we had.

FULTON: It certainly was the fear. In retrospect there was every sense that the change that was happening was momentous. There was no sense that it would take place so quickly, that it would happen overnight, and in fact what one wonders even had the policy been no different than it was from the East German side an anxious or trigger-happy young East German soldier with a rifle in his hand killing a few people might have changed it all, it might have changed it all. So I think that the flow of history was with us, and luck was with us, and the fact that we had some very wise policy on the NATO side, and I think in fairness a wise policy on the Soviet side.

Q: Did you, at NATO, was there a sense of, I mean, first place, with the wall coming down, you know, what the hell did this mean? For years we've been concerned that something might happen, and a unified Germany, a neutral unified Germany would have torn the heart out of NATO. Was this something that was buzzed about in the corridors of NATO?

FULTON: I don't think there was, certainly it was raised as the one scenario, but it wasn't the scenario that was predicted by anyone seriously at NATO. We had in Manfred Wörner a German,

West-German Secretary General. We, the Germans and Americans, British were very close on maintaining a NATO unity, and that was never in the cards. What was not at all clear was what status after the Wall came down East Germany would have and how long it would take for unification. As I said earlier, very few expected that the final outcome would be for East Germany as part of a unified NATO.

Q: I think we were fairly fortunate, too, that you had a politician such as Kohl, Helmut Kohl, rather than a Socialist, an SBD person, because the SBD's always been a little softer in this. With Helmut Kohl, he was not a man to make concessions.

FULTON: Well, Helmut Kohl was very eager to establish his place in history and to preside over a unified Germany. It was probably earlier in his career only a dream that as it became close to reality, of course, there was no-one stronger than him. There was a sense of jubilation and hope at NATO during that time, and it was that I believe that, and the decision by the United States that helped move along this train much faster than it might have otherwise. I recall an occasion when after the fall of the wall, when the Soviets, and still then the Soviet Union before the breakup of the Soviet Union, when the Soviets were invited to have representation at various NATO meetings, first informally and then more formally. One of the conferences that USIA co-sponsored, we invited the Soviet Ambassador to Brussels and he'd speak at that conference. He had recently arrived in Brussels with a special portfolio on NATO matters. We were going to publish the speeches and transcribe parts of the conference, and of course I invited the press to these conferences. The night before the Ambassador spoke, one of his aides from the Soviet Mission that I came to know called me, and he said, "Could we ask you a big favor? Do you have somebody who could type the Ambassador's speech in English on a roman-character typewriter? We don't have time to do that." That signaled to me a kind of trust that would not have happened years before, and of course, we called somebody out and we did the typing, which gave us a number of things, the opportunity to see the speech twenty-four hours in advance, and a trust that worked there in a lot of ways because both sides wanted it to work, and both sides were fairly open to change.

Q: As the German thing moved rather rapidly towards unification and all, was there a sort of in everybody's mind the question of the need for NATO? You know, I mean, if Germany were united, I mean obviously the Soviet army threat was essentially gone. I mean things were happening in Poland and all, and there were still troops there, it meant that the Soviet border, military border was moved back what, five-hundred miles or something like that?

FULTON: Well, immediately after the wall fell, all of these discussions began. Some of them continue through today, as you know. But the person who had enormous popular following in Eastern Europe and also the United States because of the role he had played was Vaclav Havel. Vaclav Havel's early public position was that both the Warsaw Pact and NATO should fold. After some time, Vaclav Havel changed his mind, and that must have been over a period of six or eight months, when he said that he had come to understand that NATO was not an analog of the Warsaw pact, that NATO was a political organization whose purpose was to defend. He then thought, pronounced, that it would be useful, as the Warsaw pact was crumbling and by then I guess officially had crumbled, for NATO to continue certainly in its political role and its future role. He was invited to speak at NATO and he spoke to a meeting of the North Atlantic Council

which I had the privilege of attending, as did Lech Walesa, and we heard from both of them about their division of being part of a united Europe and a united Europe that was protected by NATO. There is no question, or certainly there was no question after that in eastern Europe, nor in western Europe, with the exception of a couple of countries, about NATO's future role. There was probably more discussion in the United States about that than there was in Europe.

Q: One of the prime reasons for our NATO Atlantic policy was to keep the French and the Germans from going at each other, and certainly to have a military and political command that keeps an arms race from developing, and sort of keeps both these people under control is to everyone's advantage. I mean, once you strip away the initial rationale for this with the Soviet Union, but that was always only one part of it.

FULTON: Well, one of the first Secretaries General of NATO is reported to have said the purpose of NATO is to keep the Americans in, keep the Russians out and keep the Germans down. That, fifty years later, with a more sophisticated rendering, still has merit. Europe does not want a Germany that is the predominant power, and Germany does not want to be the predominant power in Europe. The United States and Europe have so many things in common that there is almost no need to argue the need for a close alliance. There is some obvious need to argue how that alliance should manifest, and what level of American commitment and American resources and American troops, that argument goes on. But as the then-Ambassador to NATO, William Howard Taft said frequently, and I believe very convincingly, that let's suppose that we were starting with no American troops in Europe or Asia, and we nonetheless decided that we wanted to have a standing military, as we do, and somebody said to you, what are the chances that you would require this military to be used in the United States? To defend our borders? Might say, well, very, very, very, very small. What are the chances that you would require this military to be used on some other continent? Well, they're greater. Would you then like to have some number, let's say a hundred-thousand troops, pre-positioned in Europe and a hundred-thousand troops pre-positioned in Asia with the host countries paying for a substantial amount of the cost of the bases in which these soldiers serve? Would you want to have that? And he says, yes, I think you would probably say yeah. I think that sounds like a good deal. And that's the deal we have.

Q: Well let's talk about Desert Storm. Desert Shield, Desert Storm. You were in Brussels in, what was it, August of 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait?

FULTON: Yes.

Q: How did this, I mean was this, initially, just something happening in a far-off land or something like that, or did NATO see that it might get involved?

FULTON: NATO, the NATO allies conferred on a whole range of issues, both in and out of the NATO area. NATO has always been a forum for exchange of information. I think all of the allies welcomed that kind of exchange, so as soon as that happened there were any number of emergency meetings at different levels from the North Atlantic Council to the Defense Council and so on. To discuss the issue. There was no sense that NATO would send a NATO force, as that was clearly outside of the NATO charter, as it was interpreted, but would NATO be

involved politically? Yes. And eventually, would NATO become involved logistically? The answer was a resounding yes, and probably more so than was appreciated at the time, perhaps more so than it was appreciated today, there, NATO served as a coordinating means for what was a logistical exercise of nearly unprecedented magnitude and speed.

Q: Well, correct me if I'm wrong, but in a way we're saying, okay, NATO wasn't involved. But these were people who were using all the instruments at hand, including the men and women and equipment and the logistical things of NATO which you all had been holding in anticipation over the years to put it into action.

FULTON: By this time, I would emphasize in what I said that NATO did not send a force, was not involved in that way, but absolutely it was very richly involved in the logistics end. If you look at that whole operation, that the movement of five-hundred thousand American troops and armor in a relatively short period of time along with the contributions that were made by most of the NATO allies in one form or another, with ships or with fly-over rights or what have you, and then the whole, using the whole NATO logistical apparatus was a major contribution for NATO.

Q: Were there any, as this was developing did you see, were there problems with some of the countries, were NATO members unhappy or slow to respond or not?

FULTON: There, I don't think there was anything that has happened at NATO where some countries aren't unhappy with something or where some countries aren't slower than other countries. That's always the case. The amazing thing about NATO, as you gathered from my comments up to now, even after four and a half years, I was always surprised how NATO would, in a pinch, meet the challenge with a consensus that was often very wise. Now getting to that consensus was often very difficult, and there were moments of high frustration and moments of anger. I have seen people storm out of meetings. I have seen a Secretary of State sit at a meeting saying nothing for hours and hours and hours as the battle raged on around him and he decided, "I think our role here is to say nothing. Because eventually these two or these three combatants in this room are going to be very close to a decision and then maybe we can tip the balance."

Q: Very astute, very difficult to do. I take it this was Baker.

FULTON: Yes, it was.

Q: What I'm gathering, you were coming away with a very solid impression of Baker as an able Secretary of State who dealt with a very confusing situation and helped bring things into proper order.

FULTON: He had a very strategic view, he and President Bush had a clear view. George Bush was, twice as President and once as Vice President at NATO headquarters, and also to a NATO summit in Great Britain. He was actively engaged, impressively engaged in the issues and in leading as has been traditionally the American role, leading the NATO alliance to make these considerable changes that were required when NATO put on the table conventional arms reductions and nuclear arms reductions. It wasn't necessarily popular with every constituency in the United States. When NATO began its opening to the east, it wasn't clear where that would go,

and all of the questions that were first asked, some of them still are with us, well, why do you have NATO if everybody's a member? I think if you watch what happens in the give and take of consensus building in Brussels, the answer is very, very clear, I don't know that we communicate that clearly if you're not present.

Q: On Kuwait, what was the French response? Because usually the French are often the odd-man-out, how did you find them?

FULTON: To tell you, I don't remember the initial response of the French. The French, as I think I said earlier on, traditionally sent very able diplomats to NATO and played a very strong role in the political decisions. Their role as it developed was, it was very supportive. What their initial role was I just don't recall.

Q: How about with the Germans? They couldn't send their troops abroad and all that. Were the Germans uncomfortable?

FULTON: Yes. The question of deploying German troops outside of German borders was represented as a constitutional issue, and Germans on one side of that question had no doubt that the constitution forbade it. Germans on the other side of the question said no, the interpretation is wrong, it was not forbidden under certain circumstances. But at least through that period of time there were both political and military considerations about German deployment outside of German borders for any cause, for supporting the effort logistically or otherwise. Will the rest of the world think this is a new expanse of Germany? Will Germans think that's their role? What will the rest of the Europeans think of it? It was a huge debate which I understand has been resolved sort of since that time, and there have been of course German deployments outside of the area now, and the constitutional issue has been settled.

Q: As an aftermath of the Kuwait campaign, did you see any change? I mean, here in a way the weapons which had been developed which hadn't been used, particularly American ones. Were you getting any concerns saying the Americans really have moved a quantum step ahead of the rest of NATO? Was this a matter of concern?

FULTON: I don't think there's any question about American capabilities even before Desert Storm. In the annual exercise of force planning, all the NATO allies know what each other country has. The United States traditionally talks about burden sharing, wants the allies to do more, wants them to pay a higher percentage of their GNP (Gross National Product) on defense. Some of them would like to spend more, have domestic constituencies or other constraints. The economies are not that strong in Europe right now. That means the change is very, very slow. But there were no surprises certainly among the military planners about American capability. Among the European public, on the other hand, to watch on CNN (Cable News Network) those missiles going down the streets of Baghdad and making a left turn at the stoplight, I should say astonished them, astonished all of us.

Q: Astonished the world, I'm told places in Africa, things stopped to watch this war on TV.

FULTON: So, yes, to see that happening in real time with live camera in downtown Baghdad surprised most people.

Q: The aftermath of this. When did you leave NATO?

FULTON: I was with NATO through the summer of 1991.

Q: So was there any disquiet about, you know we took a big hunk of our armor force and all, and then it didn't come back.

FULTON: Well, that was in the cards before then. It probably would have happened a little slower. But at the time, at the height of our involvement in NATO we had over two-hundred fifty-thousand troops stationed in Europe. As we began to redefine the NATO role and the need for deployment it was clear before Desert Storm that that number would come down. It was clear through budget hearings. It was clear through statements of intention that that number would come down to the order of a hundred-thousand. It was convenient for some of the units that had moved out to not move back, as you say. But that was not a surprise, the timing was a little different.

Q: Are there any other issues we should talk about before you left NATO?

FULTON: The last thing I would want to say, because many of these questions that you could ask of some of our political and military planners who were inside these meetings, could give you a much better description of the subtleties of the give and take of decision-making than I can. I was attending to the U.S. dealings with the European press, and cared a good bit about public opinion during this time. It was my role as Public Affairs Counselor. There are a couple of things to be said I think. One is the press itself, the European press, those that were not dispatched to the Gulf to cover the war, but those who were covering the U.S. political role as it was manifest in NATO, were surprising. I shouldn't say surprising, were particularly careful and objective in their reporting. If you were a European citizen reading serious press in most of the European countries, and I don't pretend to know what was written in Iceland or Luxembourg, but in the major European papers, you would have found a quite balanced view of the U.S. role, and the U.S. consultative process with its allies. The Americans are always in danger of being seen as a country so powerful that we make the decision to roll over our allies and inform them later. That did not happen. The consultation process was very, very rich, politically and militarily, from both DoD and the Department of State. I can't imagine how it could have been better. We did our best on the Public Affairs side to make sure that was accurately portrayed. The Press had very open access to what we were doing. We kept them informed, and I think there were a few things that were going on apart from actual targeting in Desert Storm. There were few things that were going on that we didn't know about as soon as decisions were made. As a consequence of this quite accurate reporting that we got, we found the American, the European public were very supportive of the NATO role and the U.S. role, with the exception of Greece and Spain. Spain was in a period of transition during that time about its role in NATO. So with those exceptions there was quite grand support all across Europe, and as the threat seemed to increase to all of the allies because of Saddam Hussein's invasion, we found support was very, very high for the

American role. That was particularly comforting to me given the role that I was playing in public diplomacy.

Q: In Europe, as in the United States, but particularly in Europe, there were some visceral left-wing, and I'm not talking about far left, but I mean we have them in the United States, I mean anti-military, anti-government, what you tell us isn't the right thing and all, and this is built up at that time. Did you find that because of what Saddam Hussein had done that this cynical anti-establishment spirit was dampened in the press, would you say?

FULTON: I don't know if I could relate it in particular to Saddam Hussein. Certainly the trend in the '80s and '90s was for the public to be more supportive of the government position. These would be the Soviet Union and other perceived threats, in part because the threat level was seen to be decreasing with the Soviet Union. In part, people understood that even if you attributed to a particular time an event or leader, they understood that standing fast over a long period of time had a big payoff. And yes, Saddam Hussein's threat was seen as very real, and government policies were backed. So this leftist cynicism that you described was not very much in evidence. I think if one had been there in the '70s and early '80s that would have been a major issue. It was not a major issue. I just wanted to give enormous credit to the responsible press in Europe for the way they reported these very dramatic changes. Europeans have a diet, practically every day, of such issues, far more than we have here. One does not pick up the paper every day and read about NATO. During that period, you certainly could read about NATO, at least a couple of times a week, in most European papers.

Q: You mentioned Greece. Was Greece at this time very much the odd-man out?

FULTON: The Greek public is not very supportive of NATO, has not been for years and years. Historically this takes us back to some very strong anti-American feelings. NATO means American. Takes it back to even stronger anti-Turkish feelings. Turkey is a key member of NATO. The Greeks wonder if they're getting treated fairly vis-à-vis Turkey. There are historical reasons for the Greek public opinion. The Greek government has been largely supportive of NATO actions even when the public did not support the government. There were some difficult issues on conventional arms negotiations between the Greeks and the Turks, and therefore between the Greeks and the Americans and between the Turks and the Americans. On the western position on some of the arms negotiations, I would say that the Greek government, particularly because it did not have public opinion behind them, had to take some fairly bold moves in NATO to support and join the NATO consensus. When there is a ministerial meeting at NATO and a communiqué is issued, the first thing the reporters look at is whether there are any footnotes. The footnotes will signal that this country or that country did not agree with the consensus but decided not to break it. But it signaled that the country is willing to allow the consensus to go forward, but has not joined it. There was a time, if you look back over NATO communiqué when there were a fair number of footnotes. There were very few footnotes in the period '87 to '91 while I served there, and I'm not sure that there were more than one or two actually during that period, and that is one overt signal that there was a fairly broad consensus on NATO issues.

Q: Summer of '91, where'd you go?

FULTON: I left NATO in August of '91, came back to Washington as Deputy Associate Director of the Bureau of Educational Cultural Affairs of USIA.

Q: And you did that from '91 to?

FULTON: I was Deputy Assistant Director for a year, and the then political appointee who was Associate Director of USIA for Educational Cultural Affairs, Bill Glade, returned to Texas, to Austin, to teach before the '92 election. As there was not time to name another political appointee, I became Acting Associate Director of the bureau, a position that I held for about twenty months.

Q: I would have thought having had the momentous events of the fall of the Soviets, the Eastern Europe, the Soviet Spear and Desert Storm and all, to come back and do cultural and educational things in Washington... It was a change. After raw meat all of a sudden you were eating vegetables again.

FULTON: Well, you know the bureaucracy is a funny affair, the way it counts one's role in things. Yes, NATO was a heady experience. I suspect there were a few people who observed at NATO, or I'm guessing some other international organization, who have not returned from those tours believing that they'd had A. A rich experience, and B. As a consequence of that experience that they had a contribution to make beyond that, that they understood a kind of dynamic that's hard to see from a distance. I was one of those. I came back and I thought, "I'm four and a half years richer in NATO understanding, and I surely hope that there is a way in my Washington assignment that that knowledge can be applied." Who in the Foreign Service has not said that? But the bureaucracy rules otherwise, if the bureaucracy had decided that I would go in some unit concerned with that, of course that would have gone on, but I went to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. From those people looking from the outside who had not had that experience, that was perceived as a big move upward. I was in NATO, I was head of a unit consisting of three officers and a miniscule budget. All of a sudden when I became Acting Associate Director, I oversaw a budget of two-hundred and fifty million dollars a year. People used to say, "What do you do in the job?" And I used to say, "Well, I figured out we worked about two-hundred and fifty days a year and it just happens to match our budget figure, I have to spend a million dollars a day wisely." So the responsibility in bureaucratic terms was much larger, and indeed the management, the challenge was much stiffer. Because there were a lot of people, beginning with people on the Hill, and extending through possibly forty or fifty NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations), and any number of Universities who were concerned about the health of things like the Fulbright exchange program, training programs for the former Soviet Union at that point, and on and on and on. It was a challenging assignment, but totally, totally different, as you said.

PHILLIP MERRILL
Assistant Secretary General, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1990-1992)

Mr. Merrill was born in Maryland and raised in New York City. Educated at Cornell University, the University of Chicago and New York University, he joined the State Department in 1961 after service in the US Army and media work in the private sector. His assignments in Washington include Aide to Under Secretary of State Chester Bowles, as well as assignments dealing with Management. Following several years as Counselor at the Department of Defense, Mr. Merrill was appointed Assistant Secretary General of NATO in Brussels. Mr. Merrill was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: Let's move on to NATO. Could you tell me how the appointment came out and what you were doing?

MERRILL: In January of 1990 I was appointed Assistant Secretary General of NATO. This was in the Bush administration. I was nominated by Dick Cheney although the job itself is technically in the Department of State.

I served on the Defense Policy Board until taking this appointment. And of course I knew Dick earlier from the Reagan Administration when he was an influential Congressman. Lynne, Dick's wife, had also been a senior editor at Washingtonian, before leaving to become head of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

After Dick was appointed Secretary of Defense he had a mutual friend, Ken Adelman, who had run ACDA, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, sound me out about the job to see if I was interested. Then he called personally to offer it.

Earlier he had asked me to see him about a job in the Defense Department. Having served a few years full time and several years part time, I was less enthusiastic about being part of the inter agency process again. There were three or four Assistant Secretary of Defense jobs that were mentioned and a couple of international negotiations. I simply wasn't enthusiastic about any one of them. I would have done one if somebody had come to me and said-- this is not likely-- we need you to do this. But they didn't turn me on. And there was never anything really specific on the table.

But the idea of going to Brussels, of being the senior American in NATO, rather appealed to me. There was no single country that would have interested me as ambassador, except perhaps India because the government does business in English and because of my prior experience and expertise there.

I realize I'm talking to a career Foreign Service officer who probably thinks of being ambassador as the ultimate career achievement. Sam Lewis told me once that even after he had been an Assistant Secretary of State two or three times, when he was appointed ambassador to Israel, everybody he knew in his native Texas called up to say congratulations, you finally made it.

But I'm just not interested in any single country to the extent that I want to go there for three years. Whereas the NATO appointment ranged across the whole of Western and Eastern Europe, so it had great appeal.

Also I liked the idea of living in Brussels and so did Nancy, our then 15 year old daughter, and Ellie. They were also part of the decision process since it meant moving all of us. So to a lesser extent were Doug and Cathy, then both in college at Cornell.

I'm not a real fan of London, Paris, or Rome any more than I am of New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles. Washington is a low rise city. So is Brussels. So I liked the idea and we said yes.

It turned out to be a complicated job. The actual title is Assistant Secretary General of NATO for Defense Support. It is not a high profile job in the United States, but it is the senior American in NATO.

When I say senior American it is important to understand the context. We have a deal with these 16, now 19, countries which cooperate in a common alliance with an integrated command and control structure and a substantially harmonized defense industrial base.

The deal is we, meaning the United States, get the top general. That is called SACEUR, which means Supreme Allied Commander for Europe. Eisenhower was SACEUR. So was Alexander Haig. John Galvin was SACEUR when I was there.

They, meaning Europeans, get the civilian leadership. Manfred Woerner, the former German Minister of Defense, was Secretary-General when I was there. Previously it had been Britain's Lord Carrington and currently it is Spain's Javier Solana.

In short a European is always Secretary General as in Secretary of Defense. An American is always SACEUR as in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. The idea is to insure civilian control of the military, just as we do in this country and in all the member countries of NATO.

We Americans then always get the Assistant Secretary General for Defense Support, and they, the Europeans, rotate among the other three Assistant Secretary Generals. There are four and their functions follow.

One is for policy, which during the Cold War meant mostly arms control issues, but from 1990 on meant dealing with the opening to the East resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. When I was there he was German.

A second Assistant Secretary General had the responsibility of insuring that each country put up each year what had been pledged in dollars, force levels, and equipment. The total annual budget of NATO was about \$200 billion, all of which had to be appropriated by national legislatures. Roughly one third of the U.S. Defense budget was devoted to Europe and NATO one way or another. So this is no small job. When I was there Michael Legge of Great Britain had it. If you will, he was ASG for how much.

The third ASG, a Canadian when I was there, was responsible for all infrastructure and logistics which is self explanatory. It is fixed installations and logistic support.

The fourth ASG, my job, involved everything that flew or fought, and all communications systems. It was, if you will, ASG for what with.

Five directors reported to me. One, a retired British general, was responsible for all air communications which in practical terms meant the military FAA for all of Europe. In the U.S. there is a single civilian air control system and of course the military flights conform to it. In Europe there are literally 42 air control systems -- each country has one -- and the only really unified one is the military one, the integrated air command system of NATO.

The second Director, and also my Deputy when I was away, was a German former Deputy Defense Secretary, who had armies, navies, and air forces. Under him was an Italian three star Admiral for navies, an American defense official for armies, and a Dutch general for air.

A third director was another British general who handled all communications, including nuclear command and control codes, and all C3I. In English that means all communications including encryption, intelligence, and everything that had to do with information and battlefield awareness systems for the integrated NATO command and control structure.

The fourth director, also British, handled air defense. That was not the same as the FAA system. Air defense meant more or less the kinds of systems that stemmed from the Battle of Britain in WWII. The British had a lock on that directorate for obvious historical reasons and insisted it be operated as a definable integrated air defense system for all of Western Europe.

Fifth and finally there were the cross-cutting issues of defense trade, U.S. and European formal and informal protectionist systems, and conceptual as opposed to service specific issues of standardization and inter-operability. This directorate was handled by a retired French 3 star general.

Although the French were not part of the formal command structure at NATO they interpreted the NATO equivalent of our Defense Department to be civilian control of the military and thus played at that level. They also kept technical observers at every military level so they could in fact operate with us without being technically under NATO military command. This is rather mind-boggling to explain. The simplest way is that all 16 countries met on a political level but the French would leave when we met on a military level. Literally they would leave a meeting or it would reconvene at 15 instead of 16.

In general I had the force structure of NATO and all of the problems involving arms cooperation, standardization of everything from bullets to telephones, and inter-operability for everything that could not be standardized.

It was insuring that everybody communicated on the same wave lengths and could operate together in a combat mode. There are a lot of cooperative programs, and as new weapons and systems are developed, more are always being added and others retired. The largest, by way of

example, was Sea Sparrow, a standard missile system which had 14 nations participating. Keep in mind that Iceland and Luxembourg, with 250,000 and 400,000 citizens respectively, are full NATO members but have no effective forces.

It was an immensely interesting assignment, and for the time I may have been the ideal kind of choice. It needed somebody who had some business judgment because of all the arms trade, cooperation, and competitive issues. I am a businessman with defense experience who had sufficient State Department background to understand the political and economic dynamics taking place at a time when the end of the Cold War was cracking Europe open.

The job has gone to technicians and to politicians including a former United States Senator and a former House member. It is now filled by a very able four star admiral who retired in Europe to take it. The job can be a technical person in a technical era or a policy person in a political era.

Given the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, obviously political and economic issues were more in the forefront. I found myself dealing mostly with openings to the East. Together with Chris Donnelly, the Sovietologist at NATO, I am among the architects of Partnership for Peace.

Together we were reaching out to Russia and all the Eastern European countries. I was a guest of Stolyarov, the head of the KGB, at his guest house. I had him in my house in Brussels. I was the first senior NATO executive to speak to the Hungarian general staff, the Bulgarian general staff, and the Baltic General Assembly. I visited all of the Baltic countries, met with their Presidents and Defense Ministers and received them in NATO headquarters. I can go on at length.

The bottom line was that I accepted the job from Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. It required an odd, perhaps unique, confirmation process. You are nominated by the Secretary of Defense, approved by the Secretary of State, and appointed by the President. It is analogous perhaps to being Under-Secretary General of the UN. But at NATO you are both an employee of the alliance and an employee of the State Department. First you take the oath of office to the United States, and then you take another oath of office to NATO.

It is the kind of a job in which you want somebody who is practical, non-ideological, and can maintain bi-partisan and multi-jurisdictional support. I was a natural candidate. Years later I found out that there were other candidates from Booz-Allen and from the acquisition side of DOD, both of whom I knew and both of whom were excellent men. But I wasn't aware of any competition at the time. They asked. I went.

Q: Let's get the dates here. You were asked in late 1989, but then you went into the job in 1990. And when did you leave?

MERRILL: I was asked about Christmas 1989. I went in during the first quarter of 1990, and I left in August 1992, having given six months notice.

Q: When you arrived at NATO what was the status of Europe really at that particular time? Then we'll talk about the issues .

MERRILL: The bureaucratic force of the integrated alliance was still running at full sweep. This was a military alliance in which the other side was in the initial stages of collapse. But even though the Berlin wall had come down, it would be roughly the equivalent of joining an Army command in the Spring of 1945 just at the end of the war. There was an impending collapse of Eastern Europe, but nobody knew whether it would happen peacefully or not.

One of my friends, Will Taft, was ambassador to NATO at this point. Another one of my close friends, Jim Woolsey, since Director of the CIA, was in Vienna negotiating the CFE Treaty, the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, the implementation of which had a major impact on NATO deployments and thus on my area. We were still thinking in terms of dealing with the Warsaw Pact which was the military form of the Soviet bloc.

Q: Germany was still divided at that point.

MERRILL: But the wall had come down. So you knew this was an historic period. It was clear that the consequences were going to be far reaching, but it was not at all clear exactly what they were going to be. What was clear was that we had to reach out to the Russians.

Q: Was Manfred Woerner Secretary-General? How did you get along with him?

MERRILL: Very, very well. Before finally accepting the job Ellie and I flew to Brussels, stayed with the Tafts, and I visited with Woerner. We talked for a couple of hours, hit it off, and I decided this was someone I could easily work with. I liked him a lot. He subsequently died of cancer. He was a first class person, and a great international public servant.

When I arrived for permanent assignment I said to him it would take me three or four months to get on top of this job. He said it would take a lot longer than that. He told me to come to the staff meetings, do whatever made sense on the job, and come back for an in depth visit when I had it under control. No other instructions.

Among the job responsibilities was to host and chair quarterly meetings of the armaments directors of all NATO countries. In the U.S. this is called Under-Secretary for Acquisition and is the technological counterpart of the Under-Secretary for Policy. In other countries there are other names but the idea is the same. It was called the CNAD for Conference of National Armaments Directors.

To provide some flavor for the size and complexity of the issues the U.S. acquisition budget was \$80 billion per year at the time. Other countries were proportionately less but still very substantial. Since the alliance by definition is a fully integrated fighting force the coordination and inter-operability issues are immense and intense.

We would meet at NATO headquarters in Brussels to coordinate arms procurement, sales, and of course who gets which contracts. Some of this is military but all of it is political, just as most defense contracts are in our own country. Everybody wants a share of the budget or, depending on your point of view, of the pork.

In order to deal with this intelligently, much less capably, indeed to survive and be able to hold the meetings down, it was essential to understand what each country wanted, what it had to have, and what it could not accept.

It was important to know, for example, that the Norwegians were interested in a couple of specific missiles they make and certain kinds of coast artillery. The Portuguese were interested in certain kinds of aircraft. The Spanish make a carbon fiber type material for wings. And so on. Everyone had both an open agenda, a NATO agenda, a hidden agenda, a political agenda, and a sales agenda.

To figure all these submerged agendas out I visited each of the NATO countries except Iceland where bad weather canceled my only window of opportunity. These visits gave me a wonderful insight into the political, military, economic, psychological, business, and intellectual establishment of all of Western Europe and subsequently Eastern Europe as well. And of course I, and often Ellie, was treated royally on these trips. It did more than simply help me on the job. I received an education no University could match.

For the first few months of course it was the principal countries of the Alliance. After four and a half months, I came back to Woerner and said, "Okay, I'm on top of this job." Now what do you want to talk about. He said he already knew it. We went on to a tour d'horizon. He was really a very great man, but also a rather lonely one. He had no close friends that I know of.

Mastering NATO in 1990 was not dissimilar to mastering the defense budget in 1981. I surprised myself again. It took less time to get on top of it than I had thought. And living in Europe was fun. Brussels is a very international city and both Nancy and Ellie enjoyed living there.

Nancy, our youngest, completed her last two years of high school at the International School in Brussels, a superb institution. There was good news and bad news about this. The bad news was that the field hockey team at ISB only had three away games. The good news was they were in London, Paris, and Vienna.

Q: You've talked about your initial getting into the job of Assistant Secretary General of NATO, about how you learned the various motivations of the Western powers. So let's talk about some of the issues.

MERRILL: There is the establishment of the Partnership for Peace, meaning the opening to the East. There is the issue of conventional forces in Europe. We want to talk about the special problem of the French, a permanent special problem. There is the excessive extent to which the Soviet Union was a military state.

The four big developments were the re-unification of Germany, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the dissolution of the Soviet Union's empire, and the collapse of Russia itself.

Q: Today is May 12, 1997. Shall we talk about the Partnership for Peace?

MERRILL: The Partnership for Peace was a result of all these collapses. Currently we are engaged in a large argument over the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe. But in 1990 and 1991, as these institutions collapsed, obviously a vacuum was opened up in central and eastern Europe, and Russia.

The question was how NATO could reach out to that vacuum in order to help insure that what developed there were peaceful countries. We wanted to encourage a reasonable sense of the place of armed forces in hopefully democratic societies, an understanding of civilian control of the military, and a sense of how to think for themselves about their own national security and all of the purposes of armed forces.

Many of these countries had been totally subservient to centralized Soviet power. Hungary was number 16, so to speak, in the Warsaw Pact line of battle. Now, for the first time in many decades, they each had to learn to think for themselves about the cost and objectives of their own militaries. At the beginning the principal interlocutor was obviously NATO.

It developed shortly that the European Union also had a key role to play once the FSU, as the former Soviet Union is known, began to stand on separate feet. In the context of this military collapse security issues came first. But economic issues quickly became a close second and of course dominate today as they should.

With respect to NATO If you can't go forwards, and you do not wish to go backwards, the obvious solution is to stay in place. This is what I favor by the way. I have not and do not support the expansion of NATO eastward. The addition of new members into the Alliance means explicit nuclear and conventional military guarantees from us under Article 5 of the NATO's founding treaty. The wisdom of this is dubious.

In 1990, however, we were very interested in meeting on a military to military basis and involving as many of the FSU countries as wished to participate in extended discussions with NATO.

Accordingly together with Chris Donnelly, the NATO Sovietologist, who is a British Andrew Marshall (the U.S. Director of Net Assessment), and with the enthusiastic support of Manfred Woerner, we started to open lines into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Somewhat to my surprise, we were very successful.

Maybe the ground was fertile. Maybe it was part of the natural context of the time. The fact is we basically invented the Partnership for Peace concept which was picked up by President Bush and highlighted further by President Clinton.

The essence of this was to invite these new nations to participate in NATO, each in a separate dialogue, to meet with NATO councils, but to do so without being formal members of the Alliance and in accord with each nation's natural interests.

The interests of Latvia, for example, were very different from those of the Ukraine or Kazakhstan. Pretty soon we had a dozen or more new nations sitting around the NATO table with names and languages I did not know existed. Who ever heard of Nagoro-Karabakh or Western Moldavia?

Of course there was the problem with the French who tried to resist all this. I thought it was possible when I went to Europe to make love to the French. Somehow, like so many others, I thought that courtesy, warmth, and sweet reason would make them more amenable. Of course I failed. I must have made a dozen trips to Paris talking to colleagues and armaments people there. I was treated wonderfully but there was no change in policy.

Nancy will confirm that many times at home in the evening, after a day of meetings, somebody would ask how it all went. Whatever the issue, almost invariably some guest would say it went well except for the Goddamned French. Indeed we kidded about Nancy having been in Brussels for three months before she realized the name of the country was not Goddamned France but simply France.

The same thing happened as we reached out to Eastern Europe. Under the impact of a collapsing Soviet Empire, the NATO Council reached an agreement to make contact with all these nations. The French then involved us all in many months of protracted argument about whether contact means one contact or multiple contacts. That is literally true. The mind reels.

Incidentally, Nancy's diplomatic skills at entertaining, and her editing skills, were very helpful in forming my thoughts on policy papers and speeches. She would remind me of the principal points, such as the quote from George C. Marshall in 1938 about the necessity to design for uncertainty, an especially useful mind set after forty years of bi-polar antagonism.

Also, people tell things to 16 year olds in simple terms. In a cross-cultural environment this can be very useful in receiving ideas from others and in getting one's own points across. She certainly met a lot of different nationalities including a great many Russian generals.

Q: As you sat down with your non-French colleagues, what was the analysis? Was this just the French being French or did they have an agenda of trying to tie you down? What was France's purpose?

MERRILL: It has to do with French delusions of grandeur and glory. They believe that they can still function as an independent world power projecting force and culture in a world where they have 50 million people, about the same as the Ukraine, and the United States has 265 million, Russia has 160 million, the Chinese have over 1 billion, and India has 800 million. Even Indonesia has 140 million.

The French government is just a pain. They think they are acting in their own self-interest when in fact they are doing the opposite. As I write this, the Chairman of Thomson CSF, the huge French industrial and computer conglomerate, is being personally sued by the French government for working more than 40 hours per week. Is this in their national interest?

Why, when their great national fear is the domination of Germany, is it in France's interest to push the U.S. out of Europe? The U.S. Is the only effective counterweight to a unified Germany that has twice the size and power of France.

France is governed on a dirigistic basis, which means a centralized top down bureaucracy. Sixty percent of the country's leadership attended the same college. Forty percent went to the same high school. It is an inbred elite.

For France being grown up means being able to poke your finger in other people's eyes. For most grown-ups, being independent means doing what you want to do allowing for the sensibilities of other people.

It has to do with a culture and an attitude toward the world that is uniquely French. There is immense Gallic charm. There is also the Gallic shrug. They were not helpful in exploiting the opening to the east because they saw it as a national responsibility, not a NATO one. The attitude would drive President Bush crazy. A meeting with French President Mitterrand would go very well but two days later there would inevitably be leaks back about how difficult, non-cooperative, and Anglo-Saxon the Americans acted.

Q: The French are poking their fingers in other people's eyes. What was the attitude of the others, not just the American delegation?

MERRILL: It was to do what we had to do, and somehow mollify, pacify, and get along with the French. The difference in NATO is the French vote at the political level but not at the military level. It was called working at 16, including France, or at 15, excluding France. They just don't participate in the military committees. The French thing is, however, a diversion. The serious business at hand was dealing with the FSU by opening real lines of communication into Eastern Europe.

We did this by making visits ourselves and sending our technical experts, many of whom were in the hundreds of military cooperative groups that came under my jurisdiction.

So we started to make trips. Chris Donnelly would use his contacts to set up conferences. I would speak to various general staffs, and to others in the FSU, about the role of the armed forces in a civil and free society. Often others from NATO would attend, or make similar visits.

Most of these countries wanted to ally themselves one way or another with NATO and the West. They wanted to look outward. They wanted to share in our security blanket particularly that of the United States. They wanted to make human contact with us which was of course something new for them.

I visited Moscow as a guest of the then head of the KGB, General Stolyarov, staying in the KGB guest house where I certainly had never expected to be. And later on Stolyarov visited us in Brussels. While there, I had a long meeting with Lieutenant General Miranov, the Russian Under Secretary for Acquisition, and his Deputy, at Russian military headquarters in downtown Moscow near the Kremlin.

General Miranov had 12 million employees. He was the equivalent of the Governors of Pennsylvania, New York, California, Texas, Virginia, and Illinois combined, plus the chairman of all of the DOW 30 industrials, in one person. One-third of the Russian federal budget, and entire cities devoted to military production, came under his command. He was their equivalent of one of our armaments directors.

Q: This is prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union.

MERRILL: Yes, but after the impact of glasnost and perestroika had left the country virtually bankrupt. It began as a very stiff conversation through an interpreter. They were interested in how these 16 NATO nations operated together, and of course we were interested in how they operated at all.

I explained how our four ASGs divided responsibilities and how the military command system operated on an integrated basis with a mixture of commanders from many countries working under and with one another. They explained how their procurement and acquisition process worked. It was very formal.

Finally Miranov remarked that Army officers returning from East Germany were living in tents and suggested that there wasn't going to be any procurement budget at all. I might note this hardly bothered me since our principal objective was certainly to eliminate their arms procurement budget entirely. He said most of the budget would simply go for payroll and maintenance. He said they had no place to put all these Russian soldiers coming back from Eastern Europe. He asked if I had any thoughts on this.

I suggested doing the kinds of things the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does. They built the Panama Canal. They maintain the inland waterway systems. I suggested that Miranov consider building housing all over the country by turning more of the military into an army corps of engineers. Let us call it civic action programs.

Miranov said he heard our military didn't do so well when all the lights in the City of New York went out.

I took mock offense and said what do you mean we didn't do well? Exactly nine months later there were more children born in New York City hospitals than any day in previous history. Obviously the troops did their part. The hospitals were overloaded. Fortunately the translator was excellent but it still took two efforts to get through. The two of them started to laugh. The ice was broken. We then had a really good exchange.

They simply could not understand how NATO could have 16 countries collectively providing a defense in an integrated structure; Germans working for Dutch working for Italians or Spanish. They could not grasp it.

All they could see was one commander at the top and 16 countries lined up as 16 divisions each one responsible for a sector. Why? Because that's the way they ran the Warsaw Pact. The

Russians were at the top and all other members were subordinate corps or armies in the line. The Hungarian Chief of Staff under the Warsaw Pact was assigned his sector. He was in fact a corps commander called a country, Hungary.

Subsequently I invited Miranov to visit NATO and attend the next CNAD, which of course caused considerable bureaucratic uproar and many French objections. They did visit, together with a bunch of other Russian Generals.

I took them to Jack Galvin, then the SACEUR, at SHAPE headquarters in Mons, about 30 miles from Brussels. There were many other meetings and exchanges. Our object was to expose them as much as possible to western life since most had never been out of the Soviet Union before. We also wanted to insure that they left believing NATO was a very effective alliance.

We hosted a party at my house where we invited what amounted to the 400 of Brussels. It was not only the embassy and military crowd from the different countries, but the representatives from French aerospace and Deutsch aerospace and Lockheed, and the other great private and public defense contractors. I introduced them all by name to make the point that everyone knew each other. They saw how everybody mixed and had a warm social relationship.

NATO is not just integrated on paper but in fact is a real working alliance. It was quite an eye opener for them. I also had a couple of aides standing by with plenty of vodka which provided the intended effect. One of these generals wanted to know if all Americans lived like this -- the house was a Belgian mansion that could hold 400 --and of course we pointed to a picture of our house in Annapolis which is even nicer in its own way.

Q: Go on about the Partnership for Peace and the relationship with the FSU.

MERRILL: What we were trying to do, not only with the Russians, but in all these new relationships was to deal with three principal issues.

The first is what is meant by civilian control. In a military society, the concept of civilian control is not easily understood. For example, in one country the President told me of course they had civilian control of the military; "they report to me. I'm a civilian." There was no concept of the richness and depth of civilian control of the military in Britain or France or the United States or any of the western powers.

We have layers of layers of civilian administrators in the defense department from the Secretary down through under-secretaries and assistant secretaries and office directors. This is in addition to a division of authority between the White House and the Congress plus the Office of Management and Budget and the entire judiciary.

In the former Soviet Union, and their satellites, when the military wanted something, they went to the chief of state and simply got it. The military always had the first claim on national resources. They want an extra Typhoon class submarine. They want some extra port facilities on the Kola Peninsula. They want a larger fleet in the Pacific. They want more missiles. They get what they want.

In free societies, civilian control of the military means an open competition for control of resources that is publicly published. Of course every single item purchased by the Defense establishment may not be public. But the claim for national resources by the Department of Defense, appropriated by the Congress, or by any of the parliaments of western states, including Japan or even India, is public.

The budget allocation is public. The competition for whatever the military gets is against health, housing, transportation, and other demands. The money cannot be allocated except according to law. In the United States Constitution, there is a little phrase about due process. But every other democratic country has a similar practice. So number one was civilian control of the military and what it means.

The second great issue was the role of armed forces in a democratic society. There are lots of armed forces besides the military. There are border guards, police, militia, customs police, even postal inspectors. Who controls the military and the nation's various police forces is a very rich subject that goes to the heart of a free society.

The third issue was what the military was for. What was the nature of the threat? Under the Soviet bloc system literally no one outside Russian headquarters had thought about this. Subject to Soviet military control, the Russians did their thinking for them. The threat was the West and each of these countries, as well as the rest of the satellites, were plugging the line.

Now they have to think for themselves. Who is the threat? Is it internal or external? Should defense be focused at the borders, and which borders, or kept in the center? Should the strategy be offensive or defensive? That of course means numbers of tanks, among many other things. Are border guards included in the military? What about riot control? How is the military going to be raised? By conscription? By voluntary service? By draft for a limited period of time? Or by professional military as in Britain and the United States? Is the Finnish or Swiss system of compulsory service plus reserve duty appropriate? Or would the Norwegian or Swedish systems be better?

There is a difference between a militia and a standing force and a conscript army. On these and hundreds of similar questions we sought to develop the kinds of think tanks and military institutes that would help these countries begin again to think the issues through for themselves. In free societies reasonable people will come up with reasonable answers not likely to be threatening to their neighbors.

Q: You say these were your objectives. Was there a NATO policy as the Bloc fell apart? Had there been any prior planning?

MERRILL: Zero! The answer is very simple. Zero!

Q: All right, as things are rapidly changing was this just you setting off with a few other people or was there a concerted effort of some kind? Where did responsibility lie? Did someone say all

*these bloc troops are a problem and we want them to be rational so we don't get into trouble?
What went on?*

MERRILL: At one level you are asking whether anybody anticipated this entire collapse of the Soviet Union? The answer is no. Common sense tells you that. Many, many books are being written on this. So we didn't anticipate it. Therefore, by definition, there was no planning.

As the process was unfolding, however, it became obvious we had to do something. There were endless meetings and conferences. The net of these was to reach out and talk. To make contact.

That isn't just NATO or the United States. It meant a series of relationships between all the Western countries at every possible level. But NATO was the natural vehicle for communication. NATO is a military alliance and these bloc countries had been military societies. NATO had the military officers in place. It had civilian control of the military.

For example, I was the first senior American to speak to the Baltic General Assembly. I believe I was the first western civilian defense executive to speak to the Bulgarian General Staff or the Hungarian General Staff.

I remember welcoming the first Bulgarian delegation to NATO. I opened my remarks by saying that even in drizzly Brussels I hoped they had all left their umbrellas at home.

That was a reference to Bulgarian assassins who were used regularly by the Soviets and whose favorite tool was a poisoned umbrella tip. They would assassinate somebody on a London or Madrid street that way.

I got a chorus of answers from among this 50 person group saying they weren't doing such things any more. So there was no secret about all this. These Bulgarians knew what their society had been about.

Here is an example of another kind of conversation. After speaking to the Hungarian general staff about the role of armed forces in a democratic society I had dinner with the then Foreign Minister, Gábor Jerzinski, who is now ambassador to Washington, and several others including the Deputy Chief of Staff.

During dinner I asked what was the biggest problem he faced. I meant of course security problem since I'm obviously there representing NATO. This general replied that their biggest problem was how to privatize 20,000 restaurants by next Wednesday. That is an actual quote.

Now you ask me whether we had plans and whether the NATO countries got together to deal with these kinds of issues. We weren't expecting this. They in fact did privatize 20,000 restaurants even if it was an unbelievably sloppy business, or so I was told later.

Think about what it would take to privatize the State Department cafeteria or any restaurant in any national park. Does somebody own the restaurant? Do they own the furniture, the land? Do they have a contract? Whom do the employees work for? What kind of pension do they get?

What rules are they governed under? What happens if they quit? What kind of severance pay are they entitled to? Who are the purveyors of food and supplies? What happens to the garbage?

To privatize 20,000 restaurants required the establishment of a bank, which would hold the debt of these restaurants, since there was no private capital available to pay for them. Most of course went bankrupt, but if somebody could get the furniture, or the land, or the building it became used in some market-oriented way. In the end, in Hungary, the privatization worked. It was better to do it, however sloppily, than not to do it.

The Hungarians had the advantage of having had many of their young people educated in Italian and French universities, even during the Cold War. And they had a history of being a free enterprise society before World War II. As a result there was a good understanding of market forces and capitalism there.

To return to things military, I spent a couple of days traveling around Hungary together with Chris Donnelly and various Hungarian military and diplomats. At every kiosk there was a map with an inner circle of Hungary's borders today and an outer, much larger circle of Hungary's borders as they used to be.

Remarking on this I was told that the real threat in the area was themselves. Their problem was to convince their neighbors that they had no intention of trying to regroup the numerous Hungarian populations in surrounding countries under a single Hungarian government. In other words, Greater Hungary was not something they were about to fight for. That was a wise attitude and of course was central to thinking about their own security.

After a similar visit and speech in Bulgaria I attended a dinner hosted by the country's new President, a philosopher. In a lengthy conversation with the new Bulgarian Secretary of Defense, an academic economist, I was treated to a very long list of the problems he was facing in trying to get control of the military after years of Communist rule.

To effect change you need managers. In Western society we pick from lawyers, businessmen, and academics. They wanted to change the Stalinist-style military. There were barely any lawyers, and virtually none with management talent. There isn't any business community. You can go to the academic community if they have had any training outside the country. You absolutely cannot go to the other military or governmental institutions such as police or security forces because they are full of KGB types. These are the same kind of people you are trying to replace.

So management tends to be the academics. You find a professor of music trying to run the military or trying to get control of some other huge bureaucracy. What does the bureaucracy want? It sees the country is changing. It wants to keep the jobs. So it tries to learn how to be democratic and representative.

What is unique about the Communist collapse is that it was and is a revolution made by people who want to be like us, not by people who wish to be unlike us. I'm not sure there has ever been a revolution quite like this. Most revolutions are against. This revolution is for--for democracy,

for representative government, for free markets, for the things that have produced so much in the West in contrast to the system that has produced so little in the East.

So in Bulgaria the new Secretary of Defense asks for Western help saying that the window of cooperation from the bureaucracy and the people is open now and he must take advantage of it. He said the World Bank had helped in his previous position of finance minister by sending in a team of experts to help get control of Bulgaria's economy. He said they had helped with the currency and the central bank and he needed similar help with the military. Could we do something?

He said he needed to restructure the intelligence component away from KGB internal security thugs and toward regular military intelligence but he didn't know how. He said he had to do something about the Bulgarian navy, which, among other problems, had one big submarine. Why did it have a submarine? The Navy wanted to go out in the middle of the Black Sea with a submarine because that is what navies do. There is of course no use for just one submarine. It would be like having an army with one tank or an air force with one plane.

How, he asked, did he develop a justification for the extent and nature of the force Bulgaria should have on the Black Sea? How did he get people involved in planning and planning for what? How did he replace the existing military leadership or did he retrain it and keep it? What kind of training should troops receive? What is the model on which the Bulgarian military should frame itself? Is it the US model, the Swedish model, the French model, the Swiss or Finnish models? How much should be spent on modernization?

All these questions and decisions were never openly debated there before. They were all kept secret, and when the military wanted something it received it. They never had to explain to a civilian legislature, to an appropriations committee, what their justifications were.

I knew that NATO would debate how to respond forever. Instead I sent a cable back to Dick Cheney reporting on the conversation, outlining the series of requests, and suggesting we put together a multi-national team of military experts to help these good people establish control, and do so on an urgent basis. I suggested three retired generals I knew by name who had the capability of acting quickly and with sound judgement.

The result was we did put together such a team and I understand it was very effective and very helpful.

About a month after I sent this cable, which ran more than a dozen pages, one of the aides in Secretary-General Manfred Woerner's immediate office finally read a copy which of course I had provided. He sent a note to Woerner saying I should never have done this. It should have gone to the NATO Council and been subject to collective decision.

Woerner, who had read the cable, told me it was a superb piece of work. He then shows me this staff note. He said the cable was the kind of initiative he admired immensely, thanked me for doing it, but said that if I was going to send any more like it for God's sake do so through a back

channel where copies do not get into the hands of his staff. It had rather a nice ring to it from a first class manager.

As a 16 nation cooperative, in which all decisions are subject to veto, NATO was not prepared to act quickly. It is a cumbersome entity. But so is everything that is representative. It is part of the cost of democracy.

The flavor of the time was to open up lines to all of the Eastern European countries and to the Russians as well. My view was that every American officer, every Western officer, should be required to befriend an Eastern European officer, the way you have to get a haircut and shine your shoes. No Eastern European friends, no promotion. These were military societies, and there is a filial relationship between military to military.

It is hard to overstate the size of this change. For the Russians to withdraw 350,000 troops from Germany required fifty troop trains a day, 55 cars each, for 2 ½ years. It was a huge withdrawal reflecting a huge change in the political environment.

Our reaction came to be known as the Partnership for Peace but it took several months to a couple of years to pull it together even into a conceptual phase. Eventually it came to mean dealing with all the Eastern European countries as closely as they wished, holding out an open hand, depending on their circumstance and their requirement. Kazakhstan has a different relationship to NATO and the West than Poland or the Baltic countries.

Q: Was there concern within NATO about what might happen with these troops that were being withdrawn. Might there be a military putsch in the Soviet Union? I mean there are dangers as well as opportunities.

MERRILL: That is a perceptive question. The answer of course is yes. But there was also a certain Mickey Mouse aspect to what could have been very volatile issues.

For example, about a quarter of the 350,000 troops leaving East Germany were officers. The Russians had one officer for every four men. There were more officers in the Russian army than there were troops in the United States Army. They had kind of a different definition of officer. One of the reasons why they did so poorly in Afghanistan, not that we did so well in Vietnam, is that their non-coms cannot operate on their own.

The kind of initiative we expect automatically from a squad or platoon commander, that I expect as a publisher out of a press room foreman or a circulation district manager, had not been built in to their system.

This army was loaded onto trains and were supposed to stay in Belarus and the Ukraine. As they arrived, there was no place to stay. They had a returning occupation army of at times as many as 100,000 people wandering around in the woods living in tents and campsites, almost as though they were bivouacked. There was a whale of an argument inside the Soviet Union, as it was collapsing, about where these officers and men should go.

The Germans had to give them \$35 billion to build bases. Then Belarus and the Ukraine said they didn't want all these Russian soldiers, only those of their own nationality. Meanwhile the construction had started.

The first major contract was given to a Finnish company which just drove the Germans wild. They had expected it to go to a German firm, but hadn't extracted that as a promise. So the Germans said no more money unless you use our construction companies but your people. But what people? These semi-countries didn't have mobile construction employees that a West German company could hire temporarily.

There was absolute chaos. The troops were getting on trains and no one knew for certain where the trains were going to stop. Thus the concern was over chaos, not over the organization of a putsch. Yet no country can survive with very large numbers of very well armed and trained men wandering around in the woods.

General Miranov told me on a subsequent visit to Moscow, and again in Brussels, that 85% of the Soviet procurement budget had been canceled and he was virtually certain that the other 15% would be devoted to salaries for the officers. They would send the enlisted men home, but viewed the officers as career people, who needed every kopek to keep up with the rampant inflation.

There was a point when I was in Moscow at which for one dollar you could fly to Vladivostok and back, 50 cents each way. It was just an unbelievable set of circumstances. Pensioners were badly hurt. People were buying up their apartments, if they had the right connections, for peanuts. Meanwhile the military was almost totally demoralized. There was not only no procurement but there were no flying hours and the fleet was stood down.

In fact, there turned out to be a kind of putsch. The assault on the White House, the headquarters in Moscow of Russia proper, could be described as a putsch. It was certainly an attempt at counter-revolution.

I was actually sitting in a big NATO meeting next to Manfred Woerner. When 16 countries meet with staff, to hold the meeting down takes some strength. You've got several hundred people.

The one phone at the head of the table rings. It is for Woerner.

"Boris? Boris who?"

"Boris Yeltsin, you idiot."

"Boris. Nice to hear your voice. What can I do to be helpful?"

"I've got kind of a problem."

"What's the problem?"

"I'm here in the White House in my office, surrounded by a bunch of army troops. I'm not sure which way they are going to go. I need some help from NATO."

Woerner essentially puts the phone down and says, what are we going to do? I don't know what to do.

Woerner was called because Yeltsin was running down his Rolodex calling everybody he knew long distance. I later learned the next phone call after Manfred Woerner went to Carlos Menem, the President of Argentina. Same conversation. We've got a putsch going on here. What can we do?

Because Menem was under Menem, Carlos, as opposed to Manfred Woerner, the two were called in succession. Even their Rolodex wasn't accurate. It had last names and first names occasionally reversed.

What happened of course was an attempted putsch. The combination of phone calls, faxes, E-mails, and CNN type television reports so confused these 12 gray Communist plotters that eight of them got drunk, and the other four couldn't handle the situation. They couldn't capture the means of communication. Their own troops wouldn't fire. There was a stand-off in the streets. The whole thing failed.

On yet another visit to Moscow, in a dacha out in Stalin's suburbia where the nomenklatura had their country estates, I was a guest of a ranking general whose name now escapes me.

When he heard about this coup, he took one of his grown sons and drove to downtown Moscow in order to support Yeltsin. At the time there was a real question about whether these Stalinists were going to take over again. He and his wife both thought they were going to die. It is quite a story of turmoil.

This putsch or coup was certainly serious business. But the whole collapse also had comic opera aspects to it.

In another NATO meeting, after the formal establishment of the Partnership for Peace, the Soviet ambassador also got a message. He said I'm sorry to have to announce that I am no longer the ambassador of the CIS. The CIS has broken up. I am now the ambassador of Russia, not the USSR or the CIS. The USSR no longer exists.

This is not hearsay. I was there. During this period not only were all the FSU countries accredited to NATO, usually by double-hatting their ambassadors in Brussels, but so were the Russians. The Russian Ambassador lived about three blocks from us on the Avenue de Fre.

All of these countries became accredited to NATO and frequently met with us. What a change for a military alliance! Your original question was whether all this was orchestrated and organized? Did we have planning about it? What happened was we reacted as quickly as we could under a rubric of making human contact with as many of these Eastern European countries and the Russians as possible. That process evolved into the Partnership for Peace.

Q: At the same time you and your cohorts are in charge of this big war machine, which is designed to fight these people, you are also trying to help them. While you were doing this were you trying to disassemble or tone down? You are talking about procurement. Maybe we don't need as many tanks.

MERRILL: Of course we don't. There has been a huge peace dividend. Western countries were and are still going along on their normal budget process. The Pentagon is still producing its great rolling five year budget. Contracts have been let, jobs are at stake, wars will still be fought, modernization continues.

But the U.S. military has been reduced by nearly 40% and most other NATO countries have cut even more deeply.

We focused on sorting out what was happening in the east. My friend Jim Woolsey, who became head of the CIA, was busy negotiating the CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe) treaty while I was at NATO. This treaty dealt with where the Warsaw Pact could place varying kinds and levels of troops in Eastern Europe and where NATO would place opposing forces in Western Europe.

The Treaty became irrelevant. When the troops are going home, when they can't pay the soldiers, when 300,000 officers and their families are living in tents in the Russian winter, when the Soviet Union is collapsing, the issue is not military deployment. The issue is obviously how to deal with this.

They took most of their tank battalions and shipped them back behind the Urals where they are still parked never to be operational again. If you park your car outdoors for two winters in Northern Minnesota all of the rubber gaskets and fractional horsepower motors become useless. The same is true for their tanks and airplanes. What the Russians were doing was standing down. We understood this.

We dealt with it by being politically accommodating and doing everything possible to convince them that a defense budget of 2 to 3% of GNP was as right for them as it was for the rest of the world. We continue to engage them in thinking for themselves about what they really need for their own security and defense. And of course the process of trimming our own military forces began as we adjusted to the consequences of our deepening understanding of the extent of the change.

The assumption is that in a representative society competing claims on the patrimony of a state will come out about right. Our best security here rests on promoting free markets, open societies, and representative government there. It is the jury system of life. This was expressed in countless communiqués in NATO and from the White House. Of course the standard bureaucratic language of government is often hard to comprehend.

Q: Armies really can't play against each other. But the Air Forces and Navies are used to playing games. They are used to testing each other all the time with the Navy following

submarines and airplanes testing defenses. This is standard practice on both sides. What about that sort of thing?

MERRILL: Most of these exercises, but far from all, were vastly reduced or stopped. In many cases we really were not capable of controlling our own military training. Air Force and navy exercises continued, although at much lesser levels, because that is what was normal practice during the Cold War. It continued absent a comprehensive revision of doctrine and political concern. And some of it was necessary just to insure that there really was a standing down.

We bumped a couple of submarines that shouldn't have gotten bumped near the Kola peninsula and also in the China Sea. The underwater ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) game has been recently explained in a brilliant book called "Blind Man's Bluff" which has been on the best seller list.

This ASW competition was a world of its own. Sometimes you want people to think they are following you. You know that they are following you but you want them to think you think they are not following you. Sometimes you want them to know that you know they are following you. You want them to follow you but you don't want them to know that you know they are following you. There is also a major intelligence component to it. A similar competition took place in the air as airplanes hurtled toward opposing borders, turning aside at the last moment, or penetrating slightly to see if air defenses rose or not.

One of the areas I dealt with at NATO were nuclear command and control codes. This came under C3, which one of my directorates coordinated. We had a number of airplanes configured for nuclear bombs. They are stationed in different places in Europe, not always at the same places as the weapons. They had targets. In order to hit the targets, they had to have command and control codes. The codes are extremely highly classified. The policy for them is made by what was called the high level group inside NATO. Only the U.S., Britain, and France were nuclear powers. France of course was not part of the military command. But other countries, such as the Netherlands, had NATO planes and pilots for these weapons.

One of our responsibilities was to insure that these codes were in place. A very interesting question came up. What are we going to target? In point of fact, we had airplanes in multiple places, and nuclear weapons in other places, and there were no codes to deliver them anyplace. What was the point of targeting a re-united East Germany or a free Poland or Czech Republic?

Nobody was willing to take responsibility for which codes to use. And I certainly had neither the authority or capability to develop them. That is a military function. Thus there was a gap for the period I was there between the purpose of these codes and their application or lack of it. There are still about 500 iron nuclear bombs in Western European depots. They should long ago have been removed and returned to the U.S.

Virtually all of these were designated for battlefield deterrence and were on short-legged aircraft such as F-16s. They could reach East Germany and a bit beyond but not the Soviet Union proper. After the collapse there were no credible targets.

If the United States wants to keep Russia targeted as they have us targeted that is a separate issue. In fact both of us have gone off the hair trigger and both, I believe, could safely reduce to about 1,500 such weapons. (At the height of the Cold War there were nearly 30,000. It is now down to below 10,000 each.) Some will always be necessary to deter or defend against any third world crazy and to insure that no one really tries to compete with us in this arena.

For the record, I do not believe there is any time for any reason when the United States or NATO would have in fact used a nuclear weapon first. This does not mean I ever favored a no first use declaratory doctrine. I did not. But the weapons were there so that the Soviets could not use their overwhelming conventional forces, especially massed tank battalions, without having to worry about delivery of battlefield nuclear weapons.

Even those weapons could have been delivered if necessary, and could have served as an effective deterrent, from sea or air or from the continental U.S.

The point of having them in Europe was totally political. It dealt with the classic issue, continually exploited by the French, that the U.S., would not fight a war on European soil if it meant putting the United States at risk. And conversely we would not put the United States at risk to fight a war on European soil. So the only solution to this “have you stopped beating your wife” type conundrum was to station plenty of weapons in Europe as well as at sea and at home.

These testing military exercises eventually were vastly reduced. In the new world of advanced precision guided missiles, defensive technologies, and transparency through global positioning systems, deception and guile will still be with us in full force. Those games are about deception and guile.

One more point: There was a Korean civilian airliner that was forced down 1000 miles inside Siberia about 20 years ago.

Q: It was inside the Soviet Union. It landed on a lake.

MERRILL: Then there was the one that went over the Kamchatka Peninsula. It was shot down around 1981. The reason that plane was shot down was that after the earlier one landed on the lake about a dozen members of the air defense command were summarily executed on direct orders from the Soviet High Command. They held responsible commanders who had allowed a thousand mile intrusion even if it was a civilian airliner and even if they could see by examining the plane that there were no secret photo cameras or anything military on board.

The next set of commanders remembered that when another Korean airliner went over Kamchatka. Although clearly civilian, they ordered it shot down with the loss of 300 lives. They didn't want the risk of being shot themselves.

The difference between Brezhnev's Soviet Union and that of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze was the difference between killers and two decent people. It doesn't mean one has to agree with them on economics. Indeed Gorbachev is now perceived as almost a tragic character. Both of them thought they could reform the system. Neither would do what was done in Hungary in 1956.

Somehow out of this evil system up rose two civilized human beings. It is not that their military wasn't honorable, but the country wasn't civilized. The previous leadership wasn't civilized. Nobody who runs a Gulag Archipelago is civilized.

So the answer to how the military drew down there was very rapidly. We will be in the business of trying to integrate Russia (and China) fully into the community of civilized nations for a long time to come. We may succeed; we may fail. The attitude of 1990,'91, and '92 was how to start? The answer was by human contact and particularly by military to military contact. That is why NATO's role was key.

Q: How did you find the NATO officer corps, American and others? How did they respond to this? How did this work?

MERRILL: It was not a problem. The objectives were really common sense. The NATO alliance in a military sense is really three countries, Germany, Britain, and the US. Even if one includes France, which only has an army of 220,000 men, four countries really count.

The smaller countries, such as Norway, held many command positions. A separate conversation is required for the four neutrals -- Finland, Sweden, Austria, and Switzerland. Although not members of NATO no one, including the Soviet Union, was ever in doubt that an attack on them would have been defended by NATO. But being a neutral is pointless if there are not competing parties. Neutral between, or among, what?

The Germans obviously wanted the Russians out of East Germany, so they were willing to do anything. Putting up \$35 billion to help them move was a no-brainer. The German view was to make friends quickly and help them as well.

The British loved the idea of bringing back their troops and reducing their military. Because British officers are better educated than American ones, they tend to have more of a sense of history. It doesn't make them better in a purely military mode, but it was easy for them to understand the geostrategic forces at work as the collapse hastened.

There was also the skyrocketing cost of the new equipment based on precision guided technologies and information warfare. The materiel utilized in the Gulf War, for instance, highlighted the increasing cost of airplanes.

The French Raphael, their advanced fighter plane, was priced at \$130 million a copy. The U.S. could produce an F-16 for \$16 million a copy, about \$25 million today. So the French were hardly competitive. In order to stay in the aerospace business they were forced to join with other Europeans in joint development and procurement.

That in a way is what the Airbus is about. It is a good thing. The U.S. objective in NATO and in Europe is to insure that Europeans cooperate on anything that is military or military related so that never again will any of the big five countries of Western Europe be able to nationalize their

respective defenses and fight with one another. An integrated procurement structure, like the integrated command structure, precludes that.

A B2 at \$360 million a copy sounds extremely expensive until you learn that a regular Boeing 747 is \$180 million per plane. That is a lot of money. So as the Reagan military buildup, and our investments in such areas as defensive technologies, squeezed the Soviets into recognizing they could not compete, an analogous development was taking place in the West.

The cost of modern defense was squeezing European budgets. So when you ask about how the US, the British, the Germans, and the French felt, they felt a great relief at the prospects of what was called the peace dividend. And in fact all Western budgets have been dramatically reduced in the defense area. On the whole the Europeans have cut by half or more.

The \$300 billion U.S. defense appropriation is now a little more than \$250 billion, which allowing for inflation in constant dollars is a reduction of 40%. Put another way, had the U.S. defense budget as a percentage of GNP remained unchanged it would now be \$250 billion higher, or roughly double what it now is. There has been a real defense saving from the end of the Cold War. And this saving has helped spark the current growth of the private U.S. economy.

The feeling was one of victory, even of a kind of triumphalism. I share that. To have stood off the Soviet Union for 45 years until their collapse is one of the greatest military, political, and economic successes in the entire history of the world.

There was a particularly easy relationship among the military. The group of four -- Britain, France, Germany, and the U.S.-- would always coordinate informally before major meetings. The Italians were not included in this and it annoyed them. On the other hand the Italian GNP is now greater than Great Britain's which means they surely have been doing something right.

The issues on the table were no longer dominated by the Soviet threat. Rather the issues were how to deal with their collapse. What to do about Lithuania or Moldavia. How to handle the draw down of nuclear weapons? What to do about CFE agreements which have been overtaken by events? Other than the French, whose usually petulant position was that each of these issues should be done by a national entity rather than by NATO, the general idea was to make friends with our former adversaries.

Q: Did the collapse of East Germany have any specific repercussions?

MERRILL: It certainly had direct repercussions on France. It also scared the daylights out of every country in Eastern Europe that wasn't legitimate, in the sense that by then Bulgaria, Hungary, what became the Czech Republic, and Slovakia had new representative non-communist governments. East Germany was never a legitimate state, but the impact on countries like Romania, which still had Ceausescu as dictator, was considerable.

Following their defeat in WW II, the French had adopted a three way policy of handling Germany.

First, after three wars in 75 years they decided to embrace the enemy and lock themselves together economically, militarily, and in every other possible way. Cooperation rather than confrontation was the genius of de Gaulle and Adenauer.

Second, lock the currencies and economies together.

Third, maintain a French nuclear deterrent, which of course the Germans didn't have. The idea was that with French elan, and skillful leadership, together the two of them would dominate Europe with the French being more in the driver's seat.

This policy never really made long-term sense but it appeared rational. Once Germany was re-united everything changed. The French nuclear power became irrelevant. Their force de frappe, the immensely expensive land based missiles, could only reach East Germany. What to do with them now? Ditto for their four nuclear submarines. Did they abandon them. Did they build new long-range missiles? Against whom?

This technical military problem was dwarfed by the conceptual ones. There are roughly 50 million Frenchmen. There are 60 million West Germans, and there are 20 million East Germans. But when you include the Deutsch speakers in surrounding countries, such as Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Holland, there are nearly 120 million people who speak German. The ratio is more than 2 to 1.

So this idea that the French would dominate Europe through a 50-50 partnership with Germany became utterly obsolete once Germany was re-united. Mitterrand said he loved Western Germany and especially the partnership with Western Germany, but he wasn't sure he wanted two of them.

German banking dominated the financial system of Europe and French nuclear power or elan had zero value. The result was to freeze France in place like a deer in the headlights.

They had to cope with two unpalatable alternatives. One was playing second fiddle to Germany inside a future Europe. The second was playing third fiddle to Germany and the United States. From their point of view, either was unpalatable. They are still frozen on this point. I do not know how to get out of it without accepting the fact that they are a tertiary power in the world.

It became clear that the dominant force in the future of Europe was going to be Germany, and that the center of specific gravity of the continent had moved from slightly East of Brussels to slightly East of Berlin.

It moved into central Europe, where the Germans had immense advantages over France. The traditional French alliance had been with Romania. That was the worst of all these countries. The traditional French policy had been we're friends with the Poles against Germany. Here is Germany with natural business interests there as well as in the rest of central Europe. So the biggest impact of the collapse of East Germany was on France's inferiority complex. Is that a surprising answer?

Q: No. I can really understand it. Let me raise something else. Was the United States pushing the idea of a volunteer military towards France, Germany, the Soviet Union, or other FSU countries?

MERRILL: What we pushed was think for yourself. Let us help you set up think tanks. Let us help you get sound advice. Let us send you combined military advisory teams from multiple countries. Decide for yourself what kind of military you want and what is the function you are asking them to perform. You might wish to have a conscription system. You might wish to have a militia system. You might wish to have more police, border guards, or riot control and less formal military. You may not wish to have any military at all.

It is one thing for 5 million Finns to say everybody must serve. It is a national ethic after the Soviet Union took a third of their country in 1940. The Swiss have a similar attitude based on different historical experience. Five million people is kind of a minimum critical mass necessary to maintain any kind of military staffed with young people who can fight.

Does it make sense for Estonia, with a population of 1.5 million, half of whom are Russians, to maintain a military? Could it stop or even delay Russia? The point is not what we think but what kind of military should they design for their size and their role and their perception of the threat? Our object was to get each of this vast array of countries to assess the threat and their national objectives in measured and rational terms.

There is Moldavia, and potentially Western Moldavia, and the Ukraine, where we have a great interest in maintaining as an independent nation. It alone is the biggest check on some future Russian revanchism.

There is Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Georgia. And so on. There are countries deriving from the collapse of the Soviet Union that most educated Americans have never even heard of. All of them were visiting NATO headquarters seeking advice on how to organize themselves militarily and of course also seeking some measure of protection.

The kind of person that rose to senior rank in the Soviet bloc bureaucratic system is often not all that different than the kind of person that rises to or near the top in a very large western corporation. All large organizations, corporate or governmental, develop certain common traits. Among these are people who are quite skilled at figuring out how to stay in power.

What are the new buzz words? If the new buzz word is civilian control, I can learn civilian control. If the new buzz word is armed forces in a democratic society, I can learn the role of the armed forces in a democratic society. If the new buzz word is think for yourself, I can learn to think for myself, I think. You had very subtle and skillful people, many of whom were quite capable of making the transition from a totalitarian society to a free one. Many, many others of course were not. But still everyone in the society was being asked to make the same transition.

Q: How did the Gulf War between the United States and its allies and Iraq impact on your work?

MERRILL: It impacted in three great ways.

First is 38 countries participated in the Gulf War, and they all flew and fought on NATO signals. There were six kinds of airplanes with eight nationalities of pilots flying in different places under multinational or different kinds of commanders. That is a lot harder to do than most people realize.

When air forces are not regularly trained together the result is nearly always fratricide. Lots and lots of people get killed in wars through mistaken friendly fire.

The daily air tasking orders in the Gulf War ran to 1,000 pages. Nearly all of the 2,000 to 4,000 sorties a day that were flown required in-air refuelings. To have all these countries work together, fly together, sail together and fight on the ground together was an incredible validation of NATO's integrated training.

The Gulf War could never could have been carried off had it not been for the years of exercises that took place under NATO auspices, for the experience with the integrated command structure, and of course with NATO's infrastructure that enabled us to get there.

The second thing that worked was the logistics. We moved the 7th Corps from Germany to the Gulf in a month. This was a heavy army, never intended to be mobile. It took 6000 barges and 30,000 railroad cars--virtually every one available in Europe.

The 7th Corps was loaded into barges and shipped out of Rotterdam and Antwerp. Elements were moved by rail through Switzerland and Austria, with of course their permission, and shipped out of Genoa and Naples. They were transported to Saudi Arabia, reassembled within a week, and went off to fight.

There was also a lesson in the cost of not cooperating. The French had 15,000 men out there, the equivalent of a full division. Incidentally, France adds a star for all commanders compared to other countries. If, for example, a division commander in the U.S. Has two stars, the French give three stars. This applies in all services. The reason is so that the French can rank everybody else. It's part of what they do, and everybody understands and accepts it because there is no alternative.

The French commander in the field, ordered to operate as an independent command, refused to do so telling his civilian superiors in Paris that it would be suicide. They had to back off and allow him to operate under the integrated command structure for the duration of Desert Storm.

What this meant in practice was that every French airplane had to be escorted by two U.S. or British ones. Because it was an integrated war and we wanted everybody to participate it was politically important to utilize French planes and pilots. But since they lacked inertial navigation, night vision, and precision guidance systems every French sortie required escorts.

They flew to their targets, dropped their bombs, and returned. But in Iraq's featureless terrain it was like flying a blind man. Indeed it reminded one of the scene from Henry the V at Agincourt where the blind French King John insisted on being in the battle. Courage, yes. Effectiveness, no.

The pretense of being an independent power means that France tries to build some of everything in a military sense. But what is built is usually incomplete. Airplanes lack critical avionics.

The third impact was on me. I had to get a gun. There were now guards in the house and a guardhouse outside the house. I kept a pistol by my bed and another one in the car. The reason for this were these terrorists that had been detected in Belgium. Indeed two U.S. Generals had been tracked and one only narrowly escaped from a raid on his home.

The Belgians, like the French and Germans, had sold the Iraqis a lot of war materiel. The Belgian construction companies had built a lot of the fortifications especially those for command and control facilities. Iraq sought to insure that these plans were not disclosed by terrorizing various Belgian military executives. There were also intelligence warnings about targeting U.S. generals.

NATO and the U.S. didn't quite trust these terrorists to distinguish between a real general and an assistant secretary general. Therefore, the four of us got extra protection which frankly I was grateful to have and did not argue about.

The real major point was the utility of NATO as a training ground for integrated operations. Without the standardization and inter-operability that NATO incorporated a multi-national endeavor would be very, very difficult, perhaps impossible. In this respect the best military training venue in the world is NATO.

To have control of the air requires secure faxes, computers, and air tasking orders. You had to have the capacity for all services from all participating countries to know where everybody was at all times. You had to have a picture of the battlefield which was provided by our AWACS and through Joint Stars. But that information needed to be disseminated in usable form. One is back to integrated command and control, NATO's great achievement.

In the Gulf War two percent of the weapons scored 50% of the hits. These were of course the new precision guided ones. In many ways the Gulf War was similar to the Civil War in the extent of the change that was initiated.

Until the Civil War the concept of mass armies conducting 3 or 4 day battles under central control never existed. With the Civil War came the telegraph, the repeating rifle, the railroad, and the exploding shell. The world, and warfare, changed from foot and horse to energy and firepower.

The Gulf War signified a major change in warfare technology, too. A new chapter in military operation based on targeting accuracy and battlefield awareness was clearly opened. But the basic principles do not change. Only the tactics.

Q: You left NATO because a job had been completed, or were you ready to go?

MERRILL: It was a combination of factors. Most political appointees serve for two or three years. The average time in appointive public office is 22 months. Our daughter, Nancy, did her

last two years of high school in Brussels, graduating in June of 1992. In NATO terms, European terms, everybody goes home for August. If possible, that is the preferable time to leave.

I didn't want to spend another full year in Europe. That would have gone beyond the election, by the way, although at the time I gave notice at the start of 1992 I never suspected President Bush would lose. He had 90% approval ratings.

This job required so many approvals that I wanted to give Dick Cheney time to find somebody who could get through the process. We had enjoyed living in Europe but I didn't want to spend another three years overseas.

I can also take off easily from my company for two or three years. It is not too easy to do that for five, six, or seven years. Think of it as a private yacht going through the water. Funny things happen with the crew if the owner isn't on board for that extended a period of time.

Then there were perhaps more important factors. I arrived just after the collapse of the wall. By the end of this 2 ½ years, the completion of the collapse of the entire Soviet bloc had taken place. We had the Partnership for Peace well under way and were reaching out to the Eastern European countries.

All these programs to which I contributed or in some part helped devise were in place and running. Inside NATO a number of initiatives were in place. The C3 mess that had been costing a fortune had been brought under some control. A defense trade cooperative charter had been started. I had brought in some good people who were doing their jobs very well. It was a good time to leave on a high note.

All these reasons came together. There seemed no particular point to staying another year. In really all government jobs, and perhaps all new challenges, including business, the first six months you learn the system. The second six months you define the problem. The second year you get things done. The six months after that you correct the mistakes you made, and then it is time to go. You've done all the good you can do. So we went home. The job is currently held by a very able recently retired four star admiral, Norm Ray, who had previously headed the NATO military committee. It is in good hands.

We hadn't lived abroad since India in 1965. This turned out to be an equally wonderful experience. We immensely enjoyed living in Europe and gained substantial insight into virtually all of the countries of NATO as well as those of the former Warsaw Pact. It is more fun to be where the victory is. Better to be in Europe in the early 1990s than the early 1940s.

Q: It is the fall of France as opposed to the collapse of Germany.

MERRILL: The experience of living in Europe had a big impact on how I think about the United States. Europeans have mobility of management, but not mobility of labor. That makes a very big difference in their ability to compete with the United States. Americans move voluntarily from state to state in a giant common market.

It is very hard to picture 3 million Italians moving to Germany the way Americans move in or out of California. This, and the human capital generated by the phenomenal U.S. higher education system, is what is fueling the explosive growth of our economy. That growth is the central fact of our time.

Another thing I had not fully understood prior to living in Europe was the extraordinary depth and strength of NATO, even though like most Americans I had long supported it.

The integrated command and control system has Germans working for Dutch working for Italians working for Americans working for Norwegians and so on.

There is also the vast number of people in all these military forces who knew one another in previous service as lieutenants, then captains, now admirals. After 40 years it transcends three generations. The commitment is real.

Also there is the extent to which the defense industrial base of all these countries has been integrated and harmonized. It isn't simply the capacity to fight. It is the capacity to procure the wherewithal to fight that has been integrated. Everything is produced in multi-national frameworks making it impossible for any single country to field a nationalized defense force of any size.

Taken together these integrated command and procurement systems represent a great victory for civilization over 300 years of combat in the modern European nation state and thousands of years of tribal combat prior to that.

It is now impossible to even think about fighting one another because everybody in NATO is inside everybody else's armaments factories and command headquarters. It would be like Maryland declaring a real war on Virginia or vice versa. It is just not credible.

It is worth keeping NATO alive just as an insurance policy to stop the big five countries of Western Europe--Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and Britain-- from ever again fighting with one another. Consider prior history and one can see how genuinely remarkable that happy state is. I am less sanguine about giving NATO new responsibilities out of area.

Q: I agree with you 100% on that. Important things get lost sometimes in the rhetoric of serious but still peripheral issues.

MERRILL: Saying integrated command structure and harmonized industrial base does not capture the flavor of it. The words do not convey the depth.

Prior to the Civil War I understand people said the United States "are" doing something. After the Civil War people said the United States "is" doing something. We had become unitary. NATO has United Europe, at least militarily, in a similar fashion.

Whether Europeans wish to be integrated economically as well, or prefer separation, is another issue that is in the process of being decided. Under NATO's security umbrella whatever system they eventually devise will not threaten them militarily.

Q: After NATO you more or less went back to civilian life.

MERRILL: I came back to my company. I did serve on the Gulf War Air Power Survey, a Presidential Commission which had literally 600 colonels devoting a year and a half to analyzing the impact of air power in the Gulf War. What worked, what didn't, and what was needed for the future.

The short form there is that 2% of the sorties scored 50% of the hits. Those of course were the precision guided weapons at roughly a million dollars a pop as opposed to \$50,000 for an iron bomb.

There was also a great dependence upon secure communications, and upon integrated combat intelligence from space, from air, and from other electronics. These overwhelmed our systems at the time and a lot of money is thus being devoted toward the new information technologies in order to improve what the military calls situational awareness.

There were a great many other useful lessons learned. Paul Nitze, who had actually served on a similar commission after WWII, was still able to serve with me as did Mike Dugan, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and other senior officials. Elliott Cohen, who supervises my eight Merrill fellows in Strategic Studies at SAIS (the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies) was the staff director.

I also became Chairman of the Center for Strategic and Budget Analysis, a Pentagon think tank whose intellectual roots stem from Andrew Marshall's Office of Net assessment, and which analyzes the revolution in military affairs.

And I joined a number of other Boards as well. But once again I returned to private life having had my mind opened. Each period of public service has been extraordinarily rewarding. It has opened my mind and also served to fatten my wallet. Public service has helped me be a larger person and also had direct economic benefit in the sense that it enabled me to view more clearly and accurately the world's economic and financial opportunities.

Let me be specific. Upon returning to the United States in 1992, I found a country awash in doubt about its own economy, which was undervalued. Many on Wall Street were far more interested in investing in Europe, Japan, and third world countries than in the U.S.

Having just returned from Europe I didn't believe any of that for a minute. I certainly did not believe the Europeans were about to get their economic act together quickly. Nor did I believe that Japanese bureaucrats were any better than U.S. bureaucrats, neither being particularly bad, but neither being capable of running an advanced economy either. Can the Department of Commerce develop Microsoft?

So we took all of our investments and again bet on the United States, simply by investing 100% in blue chip U.S. equities, just as we had done in 1979 and again in 1987 when similar downturns challenged investor faith in our economy.

Since the stock market, using the Dow as an indicator, has gone from 2,000 to 11,000 in this period I am very grateful to the U.S. government for providing me the insights and experience that gave me the confidence to channel our investments in the right direction at the right time.

Although it is not even part of the reason for doing it, the fact is that public service provided the basis of excellent investment advice. This in addition to carrying out my purpose which is to advance the cause of freedom. To be involved, publishing, investing, and playing in a period like this is fortunate beyond words. I can not think of a more exciting time to be alive.

Q: Any concluding thoughts.

MERRILL: One of the great lessons I learned at NATO was that there is no prospect whatever of any country in Western Europe providing any leadership there or anywhere. The French ought to be able to do it; they can't. The British might be able to do it; they won't. The Germans can't do it because they are scared of themselves. So the only country that is capable of providing any leadership is the United States. There is no alternative and there is no substitute.

Although my generation has done its job of advancing the cause of freedom very well, it is a continuous process for which the United States is still the principal proponent. We may stumble now and then, and of course it remains to be seen how wisely and well we can execute. But I have immense faith in the common sense and human decency of the American people. It really is the one thing I believe in most deeply.

When Scipio Africanus the Younger finally destroyed Carthage in 146 B.C. by leveling it to the ground and sowing the fields with salt he mused about when a similar fate would befall Rome. Depending on one's choice of dates, it took either 600 or 1600 years. United States idealism and exceptionalism will last in its present form for the 21st century. We are Rome in the year 1 A.D. The idea of America is perhaps the most important thing that ever happened. One can only muse about 600 to 1600 future years.

ROBERT M. BEECROFT
Political Officer, US Mission to NATO
Brussels (1991-1994)

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

of Pennsylvania and the Sorbonne in Paris before joining the Foreign Service in 1967. Mr. Beecroft was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

BEECROFT: I went to Brussels to be the number three at the U.S. Mission to NATO.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up then.

BEECROFT: Okay.

Q: Great.

Today is the 29th of October, 2004. Bob, could you talk a little bit about the U.S. Mission to NATO, how it was composed and how it fit into that whole Brussels diplomatic mess.

BEECROFT: Well, it didn't fit in with any great enthusiasm. NATO, especially at that time, considered itself the first among equals among the three U.S. missions in Brussels, because you have the Ambassador to NATO, the Ambassador to the European Union -- or as it was then, the European Community -- and the bilateral Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Belgians. From the point of view of protocol, the bilateral Ambassador has the lead. He or she is the one who holds the annual 4th of July reception. The reality is that there has been for some time now a tug of war for primacy between the Ambassador to the European Union and the Ambassador to NATO. I gather that over the past 10 years the center of gravity has moved more and more toward the EU.

Q: One would imagine this.

BEECROFT: Yes. But at this time, in 1991, in the aftermath of the fall of the Wall and with the Soviet Union teetering, all eyes were on NATO, not on downtown Brussels. It was a fascinating time to arrive there, especially coming from Ouagadougou and having missed the Wall coming down. It was somewhat frustrating to be in West Africa while those events took place, although I'm glad I did it. I got to Brussels in the late summer of '91, and first Gulf War was on everybody's mind. Ironically, the first Gulf War and our quick triumph there had an impact on a lot of things I've done since then, because the U.S. felt that we had done a service for the Alliance and for everybody else by defeating Saddam Hussein and restoring Kuwait. We looked to the Europeans to do things they weren't ready to do in the Balkans. But that's further down the line.

Anyway, this was the fall of '91, and there were amazing things happening. We were in the very first stages of developing of opening the Alliance to a dialogue with the Warsaw Pact, which was quickly becoming the former Warsaw Pact. You had these amazing experiences in the halls of NATO headquarters -- seeing a Polish general walk by and doing a double-take and saying to yourself, what is that person doing here? This outreach initiative toward the former adversary was one that the U.S. was pushing very hard, against, I should add, serious French resistance, because the French saw the end of the Cold War as an opportunity to distance Europe from the United States. That was another thing about that period. There were three U.S. Ambassadors to NATO in three years.

Q: Who were they?

BEECROFT: The first was William Howard Taft, IV, who more recently has been the Legal Advisor in L in the Department, a very nice man, soft-spoken but smart and very subtle. His successor was Reggie Bartholomew, and the third was Robert Hunter. Three very different people. Taft was a high-powered lawyer and a Bush '41 political appointee. He worked very hard to try to establish a constructive personal relationship with his French counterpart, a man named Gabriel Robin, whose politics were hard right, way beyond Gaullism. Actually I gathered he'd been involved in quasi-fascist organizations like Action Française. Robin was no lover of the United States. It was interesting. He had written a book in the early '80s, criticizing Mitterrand for buckling under to the U.S. on Middle East policy. Mitterrand read the book, and responded by calling Robin and offering him the post of French Ambassador to NATO. Robin took the job, and his performance gave new meaning to the word sabotage. Taft worked hard to sort of build a personal relationship with Robin, who repeatedly rebuffed him. It was not pretty. There were many times in the North Atlantic Council when Robin was openly anti-American to a degree that embarrassed the rest of the Council.

Q: Could you explain on NATO. I mean you have this thing with NATO where France is in NATO, but not in NATO at that time. Could you explain?

BEECROFT: It's important to remember that France is a founding member of NATO and remains one of the leading financial contributors to the Alliance. There is nothing in the North Atlantic Treaty that says a word about an integrated military structure. France has been a strict instructionist on this point over the years. When de Gaulle pulled France out of the integrated military structure in 1966, he did no damage to its NATO membership in terms of the strict legal reality. You may recall that during the early '50s there was an initiative to build a European Defense Community which failed in the French national assembly -- one of the few times the French National Assembly has ever stood up and growled. This was less than 10 years after the end of World War II, and the French weren't interested in seeing Germany rearmed. But the U.S. was. So we gave Germany the alternative it was looking for by creating or redefining the military side of NATO. SHAPE -- Supreme Allied Powers Europe -- SHAPE existed from the war, when it has been SHEAF -- Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. SHAPE constituted the beginnings of the integrated military structure, always under an American commander. After the European Defense Community failed in 1954, the U.S. just kept on reinforcing the military wing of NATO. This allowed us to bring a rearmed Germany into an integrated military structure that would prevent any temptation on Germany's part to go it alone. So now we're talking about 30 years after that. The Cold War is clearly ending and the French are still looking for a way to loosen the U.S. domination of continental European affairs.

Q: Talking about when you first got there, how did you see any, I mean did you have a French counterpart and your British and German and other counterparts, how did you all work together?

BEECROFT: There was, and still was, a second-level forum under the North Atlantic Council (the NAC) -- the DCMs, who meet as the SPC, the Senior Political Committee. The only exception the U.S. Mission, as usual. Instead of the DCM being on the SPC, it's the number three, which meant me. My job title was Polad or Political-Economic Advisor. So my

counterpart on the French side was their DCM, Richard Duqué, whose family was originally Spanish. He was an interesting guy who had actually trained to be an actor. And he was some actor! He could bluff with the best of them in the SPC. The purpose of the SPC is to clear away the underbrush for the NAC and focus decisions that the NAC would then address. We were good friends. He knew I knew the French culture and the language. And he knew the U.S. – had even married a Cuban-American refugee. We got along fine on a personal basis, but we had some real tussles in the SPC. His successor was Gilles Andréani, the son of a very distinguished senior French diplomat. Gilles was, if anything, harder-line than Richard, but they were both reasonable enough if you kept in mind where they were coming from.

Q: What were the issues, I mean what sort of issues would come up on this French, American and how did the other members of the alliance play into this?

BEECROFT: The big issue at that time was the future of NATO in the post-Cold-War world. There were lots of think-pieces being written on whether NATO even had a future. If there's no Soviet threat, no Warsaw Pact, does NATO really have a reason to go on? There were a lot of people at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris who would have said no. In fact the French even tabled a proposal that the French at about this time proposing that the locus for European security be shifted from NATO to the CSCE, later OSCE. Now, I respect the OSCE. but for anybody who knows the OSCE this is funny, because the OSCE consists of 55 countries that operate on consensus, including Russia. Even the French delegation was embarrassed to put that idea forward, but they did. After it was laughed out of the room, we eventually settled back to focus on two things. The first was the U.S. proposal that eventually became the Partnership for Peace. This idea originated with SACEUR, General Shalikashvili. He was looking for a way to bring the military organizations of the former Warsaw Pact in from out of the cold, and make them part of the NATO integrated structure, or at least associate members.

I remember an informal meeting out at Truman Hall, the residence of the U.S. Ambassador or Permanent Representative to NATO, Will Taft, to brainstorm this idea. A few of us, including Taft and Shali, sat down and batted this idea around. How do we make it happen? It still seemed rather visionary, but coming from a four-star general, not a politician, it got our attention and it seemed very appealing. So, there was a lot of strategizing about how you go about it. Now, this was the fall of '91. A couple of things were happening at that point, although we didn't realize it at the time, that were going to have a real impact on NATO's future. The first was the gradual collapse of Yugoslavia. There was still a lot of euphoria in the air in the fall of '91, a feeling that the millennium had arrived early. Frances Fukuyama had published an article declaring that history was at an end, and there were those who were prepared to believe it. Even in the fall of '91, before the shooting started in earnest the following year in Yugoslavia, there were debates and discussions on whether NATO should be responding in some way, and if so how. It was at that point that Germany broke with the rest of the European Union and recognized Croatia, and this turned out to be a fatal decision.

Q: What was the analysis. I mean I've talked to other people about this. Some say it was Genscher who was the former minister as part of the FDP or something. What was your feeling and why?

BEECROFT: Certainly Genscher did not object, but I think it's a lot deeper than just Genscher. First of all Germany has always had equities in the Balkans. They keep a watchful eye on what's going on there. After all it was events in the Balkans in 1914 that sucked them into World War I. Also, a significant element of Germany is Catholic, so the CSU is especially attentive. The Croats have always made a lot of hay about the fact that they are Catholic and they are more western than the Serbs or Bosniaks – which I do not believe. But it's a hardy politician indeed in Germany who is going to go against the Croats. So when the Croats began pressing for recognition by the states of the European Union, and the European Union said no, it's not time yet, the Germans just went ahead and did it anyway.

Q: I think also the Pope did, too.

BEECROFT: Yes, the Pope did, too.

Q: This was a one two punch and having been an old sort of hand, I mean to put the Pope who the Catholic Church was not a benevolent force.

BEECROFT: It never is. The Vatican follows its interests as it perceives them, like any other state.

Q: Well, and the Balkans, it was responsible for lots of massacres and all that against Orthodox and then the Germans for what they did. This was a one two punch for the Serbs.

BEECROFT: Absolutely. All of these things came into play. Genscher being an East German originally, he may also have thought recognizing Croatia would be an interesting way to thumb his nose at the Russians, who are pro-Serb. Who knows? Anyway they did it. There was a summit in Rome in November of 1991. Two subjects dominated the agenda. The establishment of the so-called NACC, North Atlantic Cooperation Council, which later became the EAPC, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, was approved. The French made a lot of noise, but at the end of the day they acquiesced. The second thing was concern about what was going on in the Balkans. In the background of all this was concern about Russia and how we would deal with the Warsaw Pact or the remnants of the Warsaw Pact. A month later, on December 21, the first meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, the NACC took place as part of the semi-annual Ministerial in Brussels. Every June and every December, the ministerial meetings of both the NATO foreign ministers and defense ministers – except France, which doesn't send its defense minister. That was a ministerial session I will never forget. It included the first meeting of the 44 NACC countries, including Russia. Almost all the heads of delegation were foreign ministers. It was a big gathering with lots of press coverage, in the large conference room in NATO. Interestingly, the Russian Foreign Minister wasn't there. Instead the Russians, the Soviets, sent their Ambassador to Brussels and NATO, Ambassador Afanashevsky, a very smart and nervous man -- a chain smoker, he later became the Russian Ambassador to France. So it's around 6:00 in the evening and two sets of negotiations had going on all day -- there were two communiqués for the first time. There was the customary communiqué of the NAC, for the NATO allies only, and then the first-ever communiqué of the NACC, which was the NATO allies plus all these former Warsaw Pact countries. Nobody knew how the communiqué for the NACC it was going to go, but it went very smoothly. The Warsaw Pact ministers were very

happy to be there. The Soviets had only sent their ambassador, so they weren't getting much pushback from Moscow. So it's around 6:00 or 6:30 pm, very early, and James Baker was there for the United States and Will Taft, and the usual staff support fluttering around, including me. The NATO Secretary General, Manfred Wörner, was very much in charge. At that point he was still in good health, this was before cancer took him, and he's in the chair and very much in charge. He looks around and says, "Well, is everyone agreed?" There was a long silence in the room and everyone is quietly praying that we're not in for an all-nighter. So the Soviet Ambassador raises his hand, and everybody says, oh no. So Wörner says, "Well, Mr. Ambassador?" And Afanashevsky says, "Mr. Secretary General, I regret this, but I have a request to make." "What's that?" "Well, I have to request, on instructions from Moscow that all references to the Soviet Union be removed from the communiqué." There is, as you can imagine, a long silence. "What do you mean?" "Well, Mr. Secretary General, I have been informed by Moscow that the Soviet Union has ceased to exist." The room goes totally silent.

Q: Oh, yes.

BEECROFT: If I remember correctly, and I think I do, that Wörner, who was never at a loss for creative ideas, suggested that a footnote to that effect be inserted in the communiqué. Imagine: the Soviet Union reduced to a footnote! They eventually worked it out and people did get their dinners that night, but there we were, hearing from the mouth of the Soviet Ambassador that he was no longer the Soviet Ambassador, just the Russian ambassador. It reminds me of Norman Mailer's comment after, losing the mayoralty race in New York, that for 15 minutes he felt he had his hand on the rump of victory. Just amazing. It was one of those moments that you don't forget, but also, in hindsight, it sent a signal that history was not over. We were entering a new era, but weren't sure what it was going to look like and or even know what to call it. If you call it the post-Cold-War era, that's a negative – what it isn't, not what it is. The issues we were dealing with began to change. The Balkans, for example. The relationship between NATO and the United Nations. How you develop the Partnership for Peace program. There were even discussions in the late '80s and early '90s about whether the bureau of Political-Military Affairs at the State Department should go away -- how economic affairs were going to supplant defense issues. We began to see that that was not going to happen. I can talk, well, I don't know where you want to go with this, but the whole Balkan issue became central to the future of NATO.

Q: I'd like before we move to the Balkans, but we will go there, I'd like to continue sort of the French side and then we'll talk about the partnership for peace, partnership for peace isn't it?

BEECROFT: Right.

Q: Let's talk about the French though. What were they doing in this thing? I think the French NATO relationship has always been a very interesting one and also what were the Brits and particularly the Brits and the Germans and Benelux saying?

BEECROFT: In the North Atlantic Council, any ally can cast a veto. The NAC works on consensus. The French are marvelous bluffers. They will push something as long as they can, but at the end of the day, you know, some kind of arrangement to be found if you're creative enough to find it. They're not going to help you find it. You have to keep poking for it, probing. As a

rule, the French stand alone in the North Atlantic Council with one exception, the Belgians. The Belgians virtually always go along with the French. They don't appear to me to have a foreign policy of their own, at least on defense issues. The Germans played a more nuanced role. The Germans would always quietly seek a compromise behind the scenes with the French, and try to find a way to accommodate. They liked acting as the middleman between Paris and Washington. The British, on the other hand, were seen as the American agents by the French. They tended to a large extent to take positions that were sympathetic to and supportive of the U.S. Then you had other Allies who were less predictable, the Italians, the Spanish, the Scandinavians.

Q: Greeks.

BEECROFT: The Greeks would sometimes lean in the direction of the French. The Turks would stay with the Americans. To the extent that there was a counterweight to Washington inside NATO, it came from Paris, even though as I mentioned before, the French don't play in the integrated military structure. The French have always been careful to keep enough money and enough equity in the structure so that they have to be taken seriously. Their problem was that their gambit was so transparent. And no other ally saw the French as a serious alternative to the Americans. I don't think the French could face that simple fact.

Q: Did you feel other than sticking it to the Americans in a way, did you feel that the French wanted NATO to do anything?

BEECROFT: No, not a whole lot, no.

Q: Did you have this Balkan thing looming up?

BEECROFT: Yes. That's exactly when it arose and it's a good illustration. In the spring of 1992, when the shelling of Sarajevo began and Serbia and Croatia were fighting a hot war over Eastern Slovenia, there was a lot of pressure from Washington for NATO to intervene. A lot of serious thought was being given to at least doing some planning. And this was, remember, the beginning of an election campaign in the U.S., and there was a need from Washington's point of view to get this out of the way quickly. Washington was also working the UN angle. There was a lot of debate in the North Atlantic Council about what NATO could do, and the French were deliberately digging in their heels and obstructing the effort. They argued that NATO was a defensive alliance and therefore had no business working outside the NATO area, although the Mediterranean is usually considered to be a NATO area, and that this was a European issue that should be left to the Europeans. When the U.S. proposed that there be active consultations between the UN, which was already diplomatically involved, and NATO, France vetoed that proposal because they argued that NATO had no business talking to the United Nations! They contended that NATO was a mere defense arrangement, whereas the United Nations was well, the United Nations. What the French finally agreed to was that the NATO could use some of its existing resources. They knew full well that only NATO had the ability to act. What that meant specifically was that a prepackaged NATO headquarters was dispatched to Zagreb to act as the core of a UN operation, not a NATO operation in the Balkans. So the two organizations landed between two stools. We had the worst of both worlds. France finally agreed that there could be not a dialogue, but communication between Brussels and New York, but only on specific

operational matters, not policy. There could be no question of a policy dialogue as far as Paris was concerned. They argued that NATO was not an organization that had any role in policymaking. This attitude, by the way, surfaced again recently in the French resistance to any major NATO role in Iraq. It reflects France's constant care to minimize NATO's overall involvement in any action, because they're always looking for counterbalances to what they see as the excessive U.S. dominance not only of NATO, but of affairs on the European continent, and of those affairs through NATO. This debate went on for several months. As I say, we finally did manage to get a headquarters down there because the UN couldn't provide one, whereas NATO had the personnel and materiel ready on the shelf. Then we had the inglorious spectacle of two parallel chains of command that never touched. You had the political guidance going out of New York, the military guidance going out of Brussels in SHAPE, but they met in Zagreb in the glorious personage of Mr. Akashi -- Yasushi Akashi, who never encountered a problem he wouldn't try to finesse.

Q: You might explain who he was.

BEECROFT: He was the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in the Balkans, in former Yugoslavia. Oh, and by the way, because the political guidelines were agreed on the basis of guidance from the United Nations, the only way that the Security Council -- including the U.S. -- would agree to put troops on the ground was to define the Balkans operation as a Chapter Six operation. In the UN Charter, you have Chapter Six and Chapter Seven peace operations. Chapter Seven operations are relatively robust. You can take military action without waiting to be attacked. Chapter Six, which is a lot easier to get through the Security Council, assumes that you are operating in what is called, I swear to God, a benign environment. So for three years, from 1992 to '95, the UN told the world that a benign environment existed in the former Yugoslavia. That's why we ended up with the spectacle of United Nations troops being chained to link fences at weapon storage sites by the Serbs, taken hostage here and there. UNPROFOR's (United Nations Protection Force) tanks were painted white, and their drivers were given instructions that if an old lady sat down in the road, you were to do a U turn and drive your tank back the way it had come. So guess what? Soon there were lots of old ladies sitting down in the roads of the former Yugoslavia. A lot of us at NATO felt that we were involved in something that was undignified and unworthy of the greatest collective defense alliance in history.

Q: You had a Secretary of State to begin with after the election of '92, but that brings you up towards the end. You had a Secretary of State James Baker who had made the statement "We don't have a dog in this fight."

BEECROFT: That's right.

Q: So, and you had the Europeans saying the Europeans will do it, which of course for the Americans to have somebody else take on the problem was just joy unforeseen.

BEECROFT: It was music to the ears of Washington. We felt that we had done our duty by winning Operation Desert Storm. When the Europeans, as you say, told us "Okay, this is in our backyard we're happy to take it on," Washington was every bit as happy. We replied, in effect, "Let us hold your coats." Then when Jim Baker said "We have no dog in this fight," that sealed

the deal. It also sealed the deal with Milošević, because he understood that we weren't going to get involved -- and we didn't.

Q: A couple of things. One was just an attitude because of the situation, in Desert Storm; you got there after Desert Storm. Was there a concern in NATO about the military people talking about things like the French air force couldn't really go into battle unless they were accompanied by American planes that would tell them where to go. I mean in other words the equipment, the NATO equipment was falling seriously behind the American one, is this a concern?

BEECROFT: It was certainly common knowledge. If you went down to SHAPE and talked to people there, it was of concern, but again, this wasn't Iraq. This was Europe's backyard and there was a feeling, rightly or wrongly, that you wouldn't need the kind of massive maneuver space in the Balkans that you would need in Iraq. So I don't think the disparity would have been enough to discourage NATO from acting. NATO always acts in the knowledge that the U.S. is the 800-pound gorilla.

Q: I would imagine there must have been on the part of NATO military professionals gnashing of teeth about what was going on in the Balkans where they were having a drunken Serb guerrilla leader would tell them to get off the road and they'd have to, this sort of thing.

BEECROFT: Well, that's exactly right. It was about this time that the horrible term "ethnic cleansing" came along and that reports of terrible atrocities began to emerge -- concentration camps, emaciated people, mass murder. Lord Paddy Ashdown, who is now the High Representative in Sarajevo and was the head of the Liberal Democratic group in Parliament then, made a couple of trips into Republika Srpska and returned with harrowing descriptions of encountering people in these camps who looked like they'd just emerged from Auschwitz. Gaunt figures who would emerge from barbed-wired pens and say things like "We know we have a half an hour to live, please tell our families." I have to say that there was still a feeling that it couldn't possibly get as bad as it did. There were still the remnants of this end-of-the-Cold-War euphoria, so that there was a certain amount of denial. In the first half of the '90s, the defense budgets in the NATO alliance just tanked. You talked about the disparities that existed in 1991 between U.S. forces and everybody else's. Those disparities only got worse. The defense budgets in the U.S. didn't go up either, but we already had such a head start that it hardly mattered. In 1992, there was an election campaign going on in the U.S. It was also about the time that Helmut Kohl began running into political trouble in Germany, politically and economically. And NATO was beginning more and more to define itself through the Partnership for Peace rather than collective defense -- how do we assimilate these new countries that want very much to be members of the alliance? I think PfP really saved the alliance.

Q: What was the French view of bringing these other countries in?

BEECROFT: They knew from the very first that it was a winner. They did everything they could to make it tough. The French are very good at this. What they do is ask questions -- lots of questions: What is the logical reason for this? How would you see it happening? Why is in the alliance's interest? How is it related to security? So the French made everyone go through a lot of hoops to get there, but at the end of the day they didn't stand in the way. It just took much

longer than it could have. But you have to give them some credit. They did force us to clarify what we had in mind. The idea, for example, that whereas NATO membership could be the end result of joining the Partnership for Peace, it wasn't necessarily the end result. That was very helpful in getting the Russians to accept PfP, because no one wanted the Russians to be NATO members, but we did want them to be inside the tent. Frankly, Russia didn't want to be a NATO member anyway, except under circumstances that we would never agree to. We also came to agreement very early on that there would be no laundry lists created by NATO for PfP membership. You wouldn't, say, hand Warsaw a checklist of 15 specific actions it had to take to be admitted. Instead, NATO would negotiate an arrangement, an agreement with each candidate on the requirements for being a member of the Partnership. One size did not fit all. Everybody's approach to the Partnership would be different.

Q: Were you involved in drawing up the list, I mean not the list, but the requirements?

BEECROFT: Sure.

Q: How did you see, let's take Poland to begin with. What were our concerns about Poland?

BEECROFT: The Partnership for Peace was a military-to-military arrangement. We in the Political-Economic unite would keep a political eye on it. The geography of the NATO headquarters building is interesting. It has a long central corridor, and on one side of it are the delegation offices. On the other side of it are the milreps, military representatives. One of the peculiarities that goes right back to the founding of NATO in the late '40s was that the defense ministries have their own separate network. In other words, the military representative, who is a two-star in the U.S. system, does not report to the Ambassador. He has his own channel to the Pentagon. The milreps were actively involved in these conversations, I wouldn't call them negotiations, with the various candidate countries. The focus was on the size of the military, the military budget, the shape of the military, what the mission would be, what the doctrine would look like.

There were three fundamental requirements at the very beginning of Partnership for Peace. The first and most important was civilian control of the military. The second was transparency in military budgeting. None of the Warsaw Pact countries had a civilian defense minister, or if they did it was someone who had formerly worn a uniform. Transparency in military budgeting was important because we had no idea what the Warsaw Pact was spending on defense. We thought that this was key, and it would also involve parliament. So, it reinforced civilian control. The third requirement was the requirement that military doctrine be based on defense, not offense, because what always worried us about the Warsaw Pact was its offensive philosophy. The temptation would always be there to go nuclear in response. Those were the three fundamental requirements.

Q: When all is said and done, from your perspective in our mission in NATO, what was the idea of the partnership for peace? Was this against the Soviet Union to make sure we didn't have some rogue states floating around, keeping them under control?

BEECROFT: There were a lot of good reasons for it. One was because we didn't want the various former satellite states to go off in different directions. We wanted to bring them into the tent, and they wanted desperately to be in the tent. Ironically, PfP recalled the offer Truman made to Stalin in 1946 to provide Marshall Plan aid. Stalin vetoed the idea. As in 1946, we said to the Russians right up front, this isn't just something we would like, all of Europe's invited, we very much hope you will do this and we will work with you on a program that responds to and respects your specific concerns. Eventually they agreed. I don't know if they would agree now, but they agreed then. We were very careful never to be triumphalist about it. Not to say we won the Cold War, but to see this as an opportunity to get beyond the polarization and the confrontational relationship that existed for half a century. And that's the way we put it to them. We never talked about winners and losers. I think it was a terrific idea at the right time, and now, having just come back from the Balkans, the Balkan states are desperate to get in the Partnership for Peace. This is not a flash in the pan. It continues to be seen as in everybody's interest to be in the partnership.

Q: Were you looking at this with NATO in a way of putting everybody in the tent, I mean in many ways NATO is one to keep the Soviets out, but to keep the Germans down, but basically to keep the Germans and French from going at each other. Was there, did you see the signs just sort of keeping restive armies quiet? Was somebody looking ahead to seeing this as saying, okay, maybe we should have the Poles provide communications and the Hungarians apply mountain troopers, to some other purpose?

BEECROFT: No, not at that early stage. As I say there was a work plan, but the purpose of the work plan, which was very often left to SHAPE in its details, was to redefine, to reinvent if you will, the militaries of Eastern Europe consistent with those in the Western alliance in terms of their structure, their command and control, the way they were funded and how they related to each other. It was very much focused on the militaries as such. Obviously the question soon began to be asked, okay, PfP to do what? That's where the more political side of this came in. A number of these countries they are now full NATO members because they chose to use PfP as a stepping stone to full membership. There were others that are partners -- of course there's Russia, but there's also the Ukraine for example. There are the Baltic States, who at that point were not seen as serious candidates for NATO membership, but that has now changed. Look what's happened to Bulgaria and Romania. They were seen as very far from membership, they're now members. PfP morphed, it evolved into a more political activity as it went along. That was always certainly in the backs of people's minds, that it wouldn't stay just as a military-to-military arrangement, but it was a good place to start.

Q: Well, now there you're sitting in Brussels and I would think that you've got another development going on with the European Union which was developing teeth and God knows regulations. I mean it seemed to be a real mill for churning out regulations and then you've got the OSCE. Were you seeing, was there a conflict? I mean were there problems with these various?

BEECROFT: I can deal with the OSCE matter quickly. At that point it was still the CSCE. It became the OSCE in '94. The CSCE at that point was widely seen as a second-order organization whose purpose had been largely fulfilled with the end of the Cold War and the Warsaw Pact. Remember the whole Helsinki process. So, the CSCE, like so many organizations

at the was searching for a mission. There wasn't even a dialogue to speak of between NATO and the OSCE. There is now by the way, but there wasn't then. You say the European Union was getting teeth. I'd say it had gums, but no teeth and frankly, where security is concerned its teeth are still pretty small, baby teeth. The first real test is coming now, with the European Union taking over from NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That's a 7,000-person presence. It's quite significant and we'll see how they do. There have been very careful negotiations between NATO and the European Union on how these various assets, which are largely NATO assets, are going to be used absent NATO command and control. The commander of the European Union force is a Brit. This is a so-called Berlin-plus arrangement, which defines practical work between EU and NATO in crisis management operations. Under Berlin-plus, an EU force can make use of NATO planning, assets and capabilities when it goes into the field. In other words, although this will a European Union operation, NATO will still have equities involved. There will also be a NATO office in Sarajevo, which will help develop the defense ministry in Bosnia. All of this supplants the old Western European Union, the WEU.

Q: Was that the coal and steel community?

BEECROFT: That's right. It came out of the discussions that took place in 1948 between the French, the Brits, and the Benelux countries.

Q: Is that Monnet and all that?

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: Yes.

BEECROFT: The WEU, Western European Union, was described 10 years ago as a sleeping beauty. It had a small office in downtown Brussels, but nobody paid it much attention. The French used the WEU quite successfully as the basis for an eventual EU defense component. The WEU's role was subsumed into the European Union itself in the late '90s, but it was the stalking horse that the French were using at that point. They were potting the WEU forward as a potential alternative to NATO.

Q: What were you getting from your German, British, Italian, Belgian colleagues and Dutch colleagues about this French maneuvering?

BEECROFT: A lot of rolling of eyes and shaking of heads, but at the end of the day they were content to stand back and watch the French and Americans fight. It was great entertainment. There was a basic assumption that at the end of the day the French were not willing or perhaps able to wreck the alliance, but that they were going to continue to probe to see whether the European Community could eventually be developed as a counterweight to NATO. Now, this was the Clinton era, at least for the second and third year I was there. Clinton was basically seen benevolently by Europeans. Nowadays, you will find people in places like Belgium or the Netherlands or Germany who, I think, would be more supportive of a strong European Union defense capability than they would have been 10 years ago. The problem is that defense costs money, and high defense budgets are a hard political sell in Europe.

Q: By the time you left there in?

BEECROFT: '94.

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

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

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

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

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

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

BEECROFT: Yes, no food, no water. Eventually you had these professional soldiers, many of whom were American, who didn't really know what their mission was. There's a lot of quoting of Clausewitz around the National War College. One of his aphorisms that I like the most says "No one starts a war--or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so--without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it." Put another

way, you have to know what kind of war you're fighting, and what you want to get out of it. And we didn't know. We went into Somalia without defining the mission, both political and military and that was an important lesson learned when we went into Bosnia a couple of years later.

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

BEECROFT: No.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q: Yes.

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

Q: What about Srebrenica? Had that happened?

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

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

BEECROFT: The summer of '94.

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

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

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

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

Q: This was after the collapse of the.

BEECROFT: It was after Operation Storm.

Q: This was where the Croatians took the.

BEECROFT: That's it.

Q: What was the name of the area?

BEECROFT: Krajina..

Q: Krajina, yes.

BEECROFT: The Croatian army pushed the Serbs out of Krajina in 1995, Operation Storm. Then they moved into Bosnia and Herzegovina, combined forces with the Bosniaks, the Muslims, and moved on Banja Luka, the de facto capital of the Republika Srpska. Actually the RS government was in Pale, outside Sarajevo, but Banja Luka was the key Serb-controlled city.

Both Washington and Brussels were concerned that if the Croats took Banja Luka, if there was a total Bosnian Serb defeat, the consequences could be really serious. The Serbian army would intervene, the war would get worse, and there would be a new and even bloodier phase.

End of reader