

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

HANS BINNENDIJK

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 14, 2009
Copyright 2015 ADST*

BINNENDIJK: Stu, I believe we had the last set of interviews about a decade ago.

Q: Yeah, 1996.

BINNENDIJK: That's when I was still directing INSS (Institute for National Strategic Studies).

Q: You'd been in there three years.

BINNENDIJK: Perhaps one thing that is worth discussing about INSS was right at the end of my tenure, we restructured it to focus it more on the joint staff and the chairman of the joint chiefs, and the director of the joint staff. That required a restructuring of INSS and a whole set of new MOAs and procedures.

Q: Also, it represented a time when we were sort of coming out, not coming out of but learning of our experience in the Balkans too.

BINNENDIJK: Well, it also in the middle of this period that we called the *post cold-war era*. We were all trying to figure out what that meant. One of the things that we did to contribute to that understanding at INSS was a series of annual publications called "Strategic Assessments." We produced five of those in my tenure at INSS, one every year. We would look at a different problem each year: the emerging nature of the environment and the threats that it posed, instruments of power that the United States had to deal with as we looked at the structure of the military and was it prepared to deal with these new threats, how is it dealing with the notion of military transformation, etc. So we did five of those and of course when Dennis Blair became the director of the joint staff we worked very closely with him on specific projects to include, as you mentioned, our experience in the Balkans.

Q: Well I was wondering you know, for sometime the military particularly during the Reagan, first Bush administration, the Department of Defense had been putting out I'm not sure you call them assessments, but it was essentially that the Soviets represent a major threat and they were quite overblown I mean what I gather, maybe they weren't but anyway I mean, the idea at least I heard in the Washington context they were designed to show why we needed more ships and more airplanes, more –

BINNENDIJK: Yeah, it was a series called “Soviet Military Power”.

Q: Yeah.

BINNENDIJK: That came out annually as I recall. So our Strategic Assessment was not modeled on that at all, this was something that came out of the National Defense University itself and it was designed very much to explore the nature of the new international system that we entered after 1991. We also did a lot of work on NATO enlargement at INSS in those days. We did a lot of work on Kosovo to include red teaming options for various responses there. So we were pretty active. It was in the summer of 1999 when Sandy Berger asked me to join the National Security Council and to be his senior director for defense policy and arms control. And so I spent the rest of the Clinton administration over at the White House working on defense policy.

Q: Yeah, I think maybe to lead up, the two or three years you had from the time we left off the last time while you were here at National Defense University, what was your impression of the Clinton Administration and the military, because there had been a, back when it came in there'd been a sort of almost a certain anti-military cast to some of the people and let's talk about the National Defense perspective on the Clinton Administration and the military during this time before you went to the NSC.

BINNENDIJK: I actually think that the relationships improved pretty dramatically. You remember the silly comment early on by an intern.

Q: Yeah, the intern made a comment that he wouldn't talk to somebody in uniform, you know.

BINNENDIJK: Yeah, well that was -

Q: It was silly.

BINNENDIJK: Silly, but it didn't represent the views of the Administration. So, you asked about my last two years at NDU from 1997 to 1999. That was a period when you started to see the Defense budget slowly starting to turn around. We had some serious debates underway about the nature of military transformation, ways in which you could use information technologies in fighting a war. You had General Shalikashvili who was very close to the White House as the chairman of joint chiefs. Shali, together with Wes Clark and Bill Owens -- who was the vice-chair -- put out a document called “Joint Vision 2010.” It came out in the mid-1990s and it was a document in which the military explored new ways to fight. And this was really a precursor for what happened in 2001 in Bush 43 Administration which was a focus on military transformation. This was what Rumsfeld focused very much on. You already saw precursor of this, and we worked on this when I was at INSS, you saw the precursor to this in the emerging thinking in the military in the mid-1990s.

So you saw a number of things happening there, you saw a shift in the Defense budget

back in an upward direction, you saw a lot of new and constructive thinking on how you would fight differently and more effectively, and you had an administration which was in fact more sensitive to the fact they'd had a bad start with the military and wanted badly to have a good relationship with the military. So you had a president at that point who was leaning over backwards to engage with the military whenever he could.

Q: You'd had your time with the State Department, did you find the State Department was beginning to come into maybe the 20th Century. I mean you'd mentioned in the previous interviews that the State Department was not comfortable with sort of the information revolution that was coming about.

BINNENDIJK: Well that was certainly true in terms of the internal workings of the State Department and the Wang computers that were used there when served there in the early 1990s. This really contrasted with the military. Information technology and how to use it was on the minds of every serious military officer in the 1990s. And you had a few people who already then were at the forefront of this including Bill Owens and Art Cebrowski, both Navy admirals.

Q: Were we looking at what do they call it, unbalanced warfare, that's not the term, but the fact that kids with rocks can turn things around –

BINNENDIJK: It's called asymmetrical warfare.

Q: Asymmetrical.

BINNENDIJK: Yeah. Not really. In those days the focus was really very much on how you fight traditional war more effectively. And in that sense there was really not a break in some of the thinking that was emerging in the military in the mid-1990s and what Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld later embraced -- which was this notion of military transformation. And it turns out that this theory was half right; I mean it was right in terms of being able to effectively fight a conflict the high intensity part. But it totally ignored what you do next with regard to stabilization operations and of course is where the great mistakes were made in this century.

Q: Okay we'll go back to going into the NSC, but when you left the Defense University, did you feel that the administration and the military were more in sync than they, I mean had they come together into sync would you say?

BINNENDIJK: Yes I think so. I think part of that healing process took place under General Shalikashvili. He was very close to the administration, he was also close to the military, he was a strategic thinker, he'd come out of the European experience. So I think there was a significant improvement there in the mid to late 1990s. And the military saw efforts to bring the defense budget back up again so I think some of those wounds that were created in the first year or so were healed.

Q: Was the battle over NATO enlargement, was that in a way settled or what was sort of

the military establishment thinking about that?

BINNENDIJK: Well that debate really started at the State Department in 1993 when I was at policy planning. I had written about the need for NATO enlargement as early as 1991. It was contentious at first and then a consensus began to develop when Holbrook became the assistant secretary. I think there was some concern in the military that extending Article 5 means you're extending commitments to a number of states and the longer that the process went on the more concern there was about taking on new commitments.

Q: Well then let's go to the NSC.

BINNENDIJK: Okay.

Q: You were at the NSC from when to when?

BINNENDIJK: I started in August 1999 and went through the change of administration January 2001.

Q: What were your main concerns?

BINNENDIJK: I was responsible for defense policy and arms control so my job was basically to deal with any problem that warranted White House attention that related to defense policy or arms control. I ran a number of inter-agency groups on an array of issues. One was nuclear arms control. We were gearing up to negotiate with the Russians on START II. We were working in parallel on whether President Clinton should support the deployment of ballistic missile defenses. We had to connect the two issues, so we prepared a draft protocol to the ABM treaty that would allow us to make the deployment in the context of ABM. So that took a lot of time. But surprising much of what I did related to you might call them social issues, things like TRICARE, health for the military, gays in the military was a big issue, there were issues relating to South Korea and the apology for this case in which we during the Korean War American troops had killed some refugees. Those were the kinds of things you tended to get into from the White House perspective.

Q: Well then, -

BINNENDIJK: Another one that surprised me was GPS. You know we made some big decisions on –

Q: These global positioning systems –

BINNENDIJK: Yeah, right.

Q: which you could drive the car around and get great missile directions for any well –

BINNENDIJK: This was one of the things that happened on my watch that really made a difference. At that point we had two parallel systems: there was a military system that was highly accurate down to the size of a tennis court; and we had a system to be used by the public which intentionally had a dither put into it called selective availability and it was accurate down to the size of a football field. The concern was that our enemies would be able to use the civilian system and attach it to precision weapons and we'd lose the precision strike advantage we have. And yet we had this huge domestic industry that wanted to use GPS for cars and air navigation, sea navigation and everything you now see. The plan was to retain the designed inaccuracy or at least another five years or so. We were able to change that and provide civilian GPS five years earlier than had been planned.

Q: You say dither is - ?

BINNENDIJK: That you build into the signal a mistake so that it is not as precise as it could be, again to protect your defense interests. American industry was quite eager to use this capability. So, one of the issues that landed on my desk when I was at the NSC was should we indeed continue with the existing time frame with this intentional inaccuracy built into the civilian system for at least another five years? Jim Schlesinger stopped by my office for a long conversation about all of this and after that conversation it became clear to me what the potential was in terms of transportation and everything else. So the issue was: can you protect your defense interest in another way? And so we asked the Defense Department to do a major review on that question: how else could we protect our defense interests? And the answer was you can regionally jam that system with a fairly small and simple device. So the military agreed to accelerate the accuracy of civilian GPS by about five years from the planned timeline. As a result of that, President Clinton signed a decision memorandum and we removed that intentional dither from the civilian system and the industry was able to step in very quickly and take full advantage of it. The other reason incidentally was that this move would provide better competition against the European Galileo system.

Q: The Galileo System being - ?

BINNENDIJK: It is a European Union system.

Q: Developed separately from us?

BINNENDIJK: Yes, it was developed in the 1990s in large part because Europeans were asking "why do we have to rely on American technology for everything, and there's money in it for European industry." So they were basically going to develop a parallel system and they were going to charge people for it. The only reason it made any sense to do that was if somehow the American system was inadequate or had problems. We didn't think it made any sense for the Europeans to do this because we'd rather have them spend their precious defense euros elsewhere. The commercial reason was by far the biggest, but a secondary reason was that if we could present the world with a very accurate system for, it really significantly reduced the logic behind the Galileo system. So out of that mix

came a presidential decision to proceed with what we now know as a very accurate GPS system.

Q: Well, you talked on the Korean one, I mean you know have this reach NSC, I mean what do you do just say I'm sorry.

BINNENDIJK: It's a question of what words you use you. Presidents of the United States don't apologize easily and it was also something that happened 50 years ago. New information had come out and so it became clear that there really had been an incident there where American forces were involved. We worked very closely with the Defense Department. We worked out at a Presidential press conference.

Q: Planted probably.

BINNENDIJK: Yes. The president had a very specific answer and he actually elaborated on the answer himself, he was very well briefed on the issue. The South Koreans got what they wanted without a full apology.

Q: What about the other one that drew a lot of attention and that was when President Clinton went to Rwanda and apologized for us not doing more?

BINNENDIJK: I was not involved in that event.

Q: Yeah. Well it, were there other issues that – I'd imagine that disarmament, this is sort of the golden period of disarmament wasn't it? Things were really happening.

BINNENDIJK: We were dealing in the context of a post cold war period. We were trying to lower the number of warheads in START II so we were working on that and that required coordination with State. Strobe Talbott played a leading role when he was deputy secretary in this initiative. But in many ways the more interesting issue was what we were doing with regard to the ABM Treaty –

Q: Antiballistic –

BINNENDIJK: Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty. You will recall there were strict limits under the treaty on ABM deployments. Since the ABM Treaty had been signed, the Soviet Union had disappeared, North Korea had developed a threatening missile posture, and significant improvements were made in hit to kill anti-missile technology. But as we were gearing up for the ABM decision we wanted to have not just a deployment decision but we wanted it to be tied to the arms control process. We wanted to see if we could retain the ABM Treaty and therefore make the deployment in the context of arms control. So we negotiated a protocol to the ABM Treaty which would allow us to deploy a modest but useful mid-course interceptor system. We developed an entire text for what we thought the protocol for the ABM Treaty should look like as well as a START II Treaty to accompany. We were going to do the offense and defense together. Well we basically ran out of time.

Q: Well, while you were working on this was the feeling that we're really not talking about the Russians launching missiles, but we're talking about North Korea, Iran maybe somebody else at that time.

BINNENDIJK: That's exactly right. We had this ballistic missile defense review that the Rumsfeld commission ran in 1999 and then we had the North Korean test of the Taepodong which was a launch deep into the Pacific. That seemed to punctuate the conclusions of the Rumsfeld report which said this North Korean threat was bigger than we thought it was.

Q: Well, how would you describe during the time you were on the NSC the Russian attitude during the anti-missile program?

BINNENDIJK: They'd never favored missile defense, they were suspicious about any changes to the ABM Treaty. The basic notion behind the ABM Treaty developed in the late 1960s and 1970s: the notion of second strike capability. This was initially very much an American idea. We sold it to the Soviets. They internalized it. And so their concern was that we had in fact much better ballistic missile defense technology than they did and that if we could develop it we might somehow affect their second strike capability and they would lose some of their deterrent and with that some of the political power. So the answer is they were suspicious. What we tried to do with the AMB protocol was to create a proposal that would have limited the deployments in such a way it would not affect their second strike capability.

Q: On the assumption a limitation wouldn't particularly harm worrying about a few missiles coming out of what we began to call world states as opposed to the Russians who could launch a hell of a lot.

BINNENDIJK: That's exactly right. That's why we were talking about deployment numbers of interceptors somewhere between 100 and 200. These things are not highly accurate so if you have one incoming warhead you may have to fire several interceptors at it to have some degree of confidence that you are going to hit it. So the numbers were designed to take care of maybe 20 or so incoming warheads. Now if, God forbid, we every got into a situation where we were facing an exchange with the Russians, the Russian warhead numbers are well in excess of 20. So this was not in any way designed to deal with a Russian problem. It was designed very much to deal with North Korea.

Q: Well was there any residue when you were working on this and this movement in Europe, particularly Western Europe as with the SS20s, you shouldn't do this because this leaves us in jeopardy but not you, or that sort of thing?

BINNENDIJK: There was a little bit of that; the notion of decoupling was always there. But I think by and large the European attitude was that if you can cut a deal with the Russians on this, that's ok. And so what happened subsequently under the Bush Administration was that the US just abrogated the ABM Treaty and European reaction to

that was a part of the broader reaction to the whole Bush 43 administration. The Clinton Administration was trying to do this in the context of arms control. We just ran out of time.

I might mention that there were several other issues under consideration in the arms control world. One was a conventional forces in Europe negotiations. We made progress on flank limits. A second issue involved shared early warning and prelaunch notification for intercontinental ballistic missile tests. The concern here was that the Russian satellite system, their early warning system, was slowly going blind. That's very dangerous because they might react to a false positive. If they don't know what's going on they might make a mistake. So we worked out a combination of prelaunch notification and a shared warning system. We would actually have Americans with American radar scopes in Russia sitting right next to Russians with their radar scopes and we would share information on any missile launches around the world. Unfortunately that effort got bogged down in Russian domestic tax laws. I went to visit the location for the proposed joint early warning site; it was in old secondary school in Moscow. I negotiated the agreement in Moscow along with State Department and Defense Department. But again the Administration ran out of time.

Q: Well, why was the Russian system going blind? Was this a matter of they were on economic hard times?

BINNENDIJK: Yes. After the fall of the Soviet Union they just didn't put money into defense. Their whole military system was in collapse. And it just was in everybody's interest that a mistake not be made.

A third thing we did in arms control was the attempt to ratify the comprehensive test ban treaty. Senator Biden pushed for a vote on the comprehensive test ban treaty in the Senate. Unfortunately we didn't have a good vote count and we tried to call off the vote once we realized that the votes weren't there. The majority leader recognized he could defeat this and embarrass the administration. We had a time agreement that had been reached on the floor of the senate and that required unanimous consent to undo. So we were locked into a vote on a very important treaty and we knew we were going to lose. That was a very nasty situation that was not good for the United States.

Q: Well, what was the motivation for bringing this up?

BINNENDIJK: It was borne of frustration. A series of efforts had been made to hold some serious hearings on the topic. Those hearings had been blocked and so this ratification effort was borne of real frustration. This was is an important treaty that related very much to nonproliferation which was of growing concern in the 1990s; so it was seen as an important instrument of nonproliferation. But Republicans on the Hill were trying to kill it. Now the problem was there was a lot of concern in our energy labs that if there were to be a complete ban on nuclear tests that this would be a step in the direction of putting them out of business. We had other procedures in place to test the security and reliability of nuclear weapons without an actual nuclear test. But that was

based on computer modeling and there was a concern that computer modeling was inadequate. So the real issue was: does the United States need to test nuclear weapons again in the future? The Republicans were basically arguing yes, we might have to test again but if we ratify this treaty we can't. Democrats thought computer simulations would be adequate. So you know it was a case of frustration, pushing hard to relieve the frustration, and then getting caught in a legislative trap.

Q: Well, was there a sense when you were on the NSC of a republican you might say revolution in defense posture and all that waiting if they came in it was really going to be different because so often you know one administration to another it doesn't make a hell of a lot of difference.

BINNENDIJK: There was a sense that this notion of a revolution in military affairs, or military transformation as it became known, that this was a good political issue. So you had a speech given by then candidate Bush on this topic, borrowing very much incidentally from thinking in the 1990s among Democratic and Republican defense thinkers. Bush kind of stole the issue and championed it and then Rumsfeld came in and implemented it. And so you know, I think this was seen by the Republicans as both necessary but also a political opportunity and in fact you know it was used in the campaign.

Q: Were there any other issues you were – while you are on the NCS, what about China? How did we view China at that time?

BINNENDIJK: I was involved only tangentially in China at that time. I think there was a sense there was still suspicion of where China might go but also I think an understanding that this was an emerging potential superpower. I think we tried to have a very balanced policy. Of course there was Taiwan and arms sales issues that kept coming up and you tried to balance those arms sales issues so you don't abandon Taiwan but at the same time don't alienate the Chinese completely.

Q: But by the time you left there in 2001 there wasn't an emergency crisis was there?

BINNENDIJK: No, we just finished Kosovo. The Balkans at that point had been turned around. Things were moving back in the right direction. The Clinton administration left office with peace and with a budget surplus,—

One other issue I might mention is arms export controls. The State Department was primarily responsible for arms control regulations and the Defense Department wanted to lift some of those regulations in dealing with our closest allies.

Q: Canadians –

BINNENDIJK: We already had a special arrangement for the Canadians. The issue here is ITAR regulations and for which country should they be lifted -- are there very close allies where you can pursue defense trade without having to go through all these time

consuming regulatory steps? We had that special relationship with Canada, the question was can we do the same thing with the Brits and Australians? So we developed at the NSC together with the Pentagon a thing called the Defense Trade Security Initiatives (DTSI) which was designed to create new and easier procedures to regulate arms sales for the Brits and Australians. Think of it as a common fence, so that you would build that sort of common fence of arms trade regulations around that area then you would be able to trade much more freely within that fenced off area. And so we took a lot of time to get the State Department to agree to this and then the State Department was charged with going out to negotiate it. It turned out to be difficult negotiation. The State Department did its best. Again the Administration ran out of time.

Q: Well I mean you had particularly the French and Germans, how did you deal with them?

BINNENDIJK: Well, the Germans are not much of a problem because they don't export arms much, the French do and so that was a serious problem. We basically dealt with that by starting off with the Brits and the Australians to see if we could get a deal with them first.

Q: What about one thing, we didn't talk about Kosovo. Kosovo happened during your watch didn't it?

BINNENDIJK: Not at the NSC, that happened when I was at INSS. I did get involved a bit from there.

Q: This ended up a very peculiar war, I mean we were sort of - no American casualties on this thing but a rather major air offensive with all sorts of threats but we had to deal with putting helicopter gunships in which didn't make much sense because it looked like they'd get shot at.

BINNENDIJK: At INSS we were looking at an array of different military options for the joint staff. Think about how hard it is to get ground forces into Kosovo. Do you come in from the Black Sea? Do you come in through Albania, through Macedonia? But something had to be done because some 800,000 people were being pushed out of Kosovo. This was ethnic cleansing. The air campaign was the result; that air campaign started in Kosovo. It was clear it was not particularly effective being limited to Kosovo. So the air campaign shifted to Belgrade which proved more effective. Still we were looking at potential ground options should the air campaign fail to yield results. As you point out, we won a war without suffering any US casualties. You can still see the destroyed buildings in Belgrade today.

Q: And the police headquarters - ?

BINNENDIJK: Yeah, they're, I just walked by them.

Q: - I lived in Belgrade for five years until - .

BINNENDIJK: Yeah, they are just the way they were the day they were hit and I'm told it has to do with who controls the rehabilitation of those buildings. There are just a lot of Serbs who want this to be remembered and this is sort of a monument to remind them of what the Americans did. Back to the war, in addition to the strategic bombing campaign; a second factor in the victory was the threat of going in on the ground. And the third factor was the Russians who finally told Milosevic to stop the war and give up Kosovo. A combination of those three things ended that war.

Q: How did you, did you get a feel for how Clinton used the NSC?

BINNENDIJK: First of all Sandy Burger was a powerful NSC advisor: he was very close to President Clinton, he had an extremely keen sense of decision making, he knew exactly how to make a decision that would go the way he wanted it to go, he knew who'd you'd have to consult with, who you didn't have to consult with, who would be in the room when a decision was made, how you present it. He was extremely good at shaping decisions. And under his watch things went very well. So you had a powerful NSC in those days. You had Secretary Albright at the State Department who had close ties to Sandy. She was focused very heavily in the Balkans in both wars. You had Cohen at Defense who was a Republican and didn't feel that he had as much power. So under those circumstances the NSC advisor, especially a good one like Sandy, was able to use that bureaucratic situation. He really had a lot of power. Essentially the opposite of what happened in Bush 43 when you had a weak NSC and a very strong Secretary of Defense and another at State who should have been stronger than he was, and a vice president incidentally who played a pivotal role.

Q: Yeah, I'm interviewing right now, I've done a series and haven't finished yet, with Beth Jones who was assistant secretary for European Affairs, very much involved in the Bush 2 his first administration. I'm talking about Condoleezza Rice, how she sort of announced she would be sort of like the executive secretary and essentially you know, preside over the meetings but not assign authority and really let the vice president and defense sort of run away with the ball.

BINNENDIJK: I think that's accurate. Within the first couple of weeks of the new administration, Colin Powell got his knees cut out from under him on Korea. Colin Powell is a team player but there are a few places where in my view he should have thrown himself on his sword, for example the invasion of Iraq. But you had this alliance between Cheney and Rumsfeld -- they dominated the power structure. The President bought into that point of view and power structure, and after 9/11 that was dominant.

Q: Yeah, yeah. The Colin Powell situation has been debated, I've gone back and forth, but I think if he did try to resign knowing how the White House operated in those days, they could have done a tremendous almost disinformation campaign destroying his credibility and all, they were very good at that sort of basic nastiness.

BINNENDIJK: Histories will be written about whether he should have resigned or not,

but he was in a very difficult situation.

Q: Well, what happened, you felt that the disarmament clause and various steps were kind of, and anti-ballistic missile defense things were, hadn't really been completed and did you leave right afterwards or what?

BINNENDIJK: I left on January 20th.

Q: Where did you go?

BINNENDIJK: I came back to NDU and started up a new center. I was disappointed that the new administration basically just decided to abandon arms control negotiations. If we had been able to continue negotiations with the Russians we might have been able to modify the subsequent rise in Russian nationalism. Bush basically abandoned arms control. The Russians had gotten used to talking to the United States through this channel and they were simply cut off. They felt that there were dangers here for Russian national security. And so I look back at that period where we were trying to still deal with more traditional arms control to set the stage for a new international system as a missed opportunity.

Q: I mean, did you, was this sort of the neocon outlook palpable when you were on the NSC or was it sort of - ?

BINNENDIJK: No it became palpable after I left. The ideological component really didn't develop in a serious way until after 9/11.

Q: Yeah, I must say that my reaction of having a leaner, more maneuverable military made great sense. I mean obviously we weren't, you know the Kursk tank battles weren't going to be fought or the fall of the GATT.

BINNENDIJK: That's exactly right. I mean it was maneuver warfare informed by information technology -- smaller battle platforms linked together. The theory was great and in fact it worked in the initial days of Afghanistan and it worked in the initial days of Iraq, a very effective way to fight. I've produced a book about this. It worked great when it came to high intensity warfare but it failed in dealing with the post-conflict environment. The assumption was that the State Department would come in or AID would come in or someone else would come in and do the post-conflict piece and that was the fallacious assumption.

Q: We are really picking up the Clinton administration is out, you are out of the NSC at that point, so what? What are you up to?

BINNENDIJK: I left White House on January 20, 2001 and came back to the National Defense University. Vice Admiral Paul Gaffney was here as the president. He is a very creative, entrepreneurial individual. He had come out of the science and technology community in the Navy. He came to the university here and looked around and realized

that nothing was going on at the university in the world of science and technology. And so I came back from this NSC experience and of course INSS, the institution I had run in the 1990s was now being run by my friend and colleague Steve Flannigan. So it was decided I ought to try and build something else here at NDU. Paul Gaffney said why 'don't you create a center for science and technology, a little think tank.' Of course my immediate reaction was I don't know a darn thing about science and technology, that's not my field, I'm not a scientist. And so I had this talk with Gaffney and he said well why don't we try it and see where it goes and I said let's make it a center for technology and national security policy and that way this is the nexus for technology and defense policy. So that's what we agreed on and that's the origin of the Center for Technology and National Security Policy (CTNSP), which is the name of the center that I created. As I said, Gaffney was very entrepreneurial and so he found a couple of pockets that he was able to pick –

Q: You're talking within the government - ?

BINNENDIJK: It's within the government but we ended up with a direct appropriation for \$1 Million. He also got some Navy money. We negotiated a Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) with all the services where they would provide about \$350,000 each. We also did some work with Defense Research & Engineering (DDR&E), so there were a number of these different programs. Gaffney was well connected in the science/technology area and I was well connected in the policy area so it was a very good match and together we pieced together an initial budget of \$2-3 Million to start with. Now it's a \$7 or \$8 Million budget and growing.

He gave me a building to operate in which is the site of the Lincoln conspiracy trial which we have renamed Grant Hall. We were located there until recently. There had been threats to tear down this historic building so we felt it would be more difficult to tear down Grant Hall than to tear down something that had previously been called Building 20. It was part of a broader and ultimately successful effort to save that building.

Q: We are speaking of at the National Defense University in –

BINNENDIJK: CTNSP is currently located in Lincoln Hall, a new building. The old building was renamed Grant Hall at my recommendation. It used to be Building 20 but this is where the Lincoln conspirators were tried and executed right outside. There's another story on that which I will tell in a minute.

So I was given this fairly run down building, we put a little money into it, got it fixed up, it was an apartment building, five apartments and we turned it into office space. So with the office space and with the money, I set about to create this new center for technology and national security policy and one of the first people I brought in was a guy named Tim Coffey who had been the director of Nuclear Research Lab (NRL). He gave us a lot of credibility on the science and technology side and I had my background in defense policy so it was a good combination to get started with. And we have grown that into a center with about 40 people. About a year ago a decision was made to add to CTNSP another

center which is the Center for Complex Operations; they came over here in February. That new center has now grown to 15 people with a \$2.5 Million budget. The focus of CCO is on complex operation. In complex operations we have military and civilian people working together with a common goal, think stability operations, counter-insurgency operations -.

Q: I think we probably need a little definition here. When you are talking about science and policy, at the time you started in 2001 I guess, what was envisioned then and it may have changed, but what at that point - ?

BINNENDIJK: One of our first major studies was on defense labs, whether defense labs are doing their job and how should they be changed. This was a congressionally mandated study and the defense needed somebody to do it and they turned to Gaffney, Gaffney turned to us and we did the study. We visited 10 different defense labs, hired consultants like Zinni and others –

Q: General Zinni.

BINNENDIJK: We had a really good group of people who were involved in this, Hans Mark was another. So we would travel around to the defense labs, we had a particular perspective to see if they were moving in the direction of transformation, using information technologies and the like and we did a fairly detailed report on 10 different defense labs.

Q: Talk about defense labs, what are we talking about?

BINNENDIJK: These are part of the Defense Department and they, the Army, Navy, Air Force, each have their own defense labs and in some cases they specialize in certain things, in other cases they are just general defense labs. Probably the most prominent of these is the Naval Research Lab. They do a lot of work on satellites, naval warfare, robotics, information technology, commanding control, etc. And so each of the services has these labs and the question was you know, are they doing their job; and the answer was yeah by and large they were, they were adapting but that led us to a whole other line of work that we did which focused on the fact that these defense labs are losing their expertise. They moved from a place where bench scientist could do their work and they were, you really got good people because they wanted to be scientists, and we began an outsourcing process that in my view was overdone and so in fact a lot of the bench science was outsourced to private companies and what you ended up was defense labs populated by folks that are primarily contract managers, the same thing is happening in AID and in other places in government, but this is an interesting sort of example. So what happens next? People who are scientists want to do science they don't want to be contract managers, so they leave, so some of your very best scientists leave government. So this is the phenomenon we've been working on there.

Now interestingly this center started about the time Secretary Rumsfeld came in and he was of course the champion of military transformation and people like Art Cebrowski, a

retired vice admiral, became a proponent of military transformation and Cebrowski became the head of the office of force transformation. We did a lot of work with him. Now if you think of the niche we were trying to create, it was the Center for Technology and National Security Policy, and you take technology and defense policy together and you put it in an operational setting and what do you get? You get: using technology to transform the military to fight in newer and better ways. And so we did a lot of work in this area of military transformation. We have a chair here now, my colleague Lin Wells, who is the force transformation chair at the Defense University and there is a string now of transformation chairs all around the defense universities, the Army War College, etc, and they are basically run, Lin is head of this group.

We began very quickly here at CTNSP, again using the nexus of technology and defense policy to think about transformation differently. Our first book was Transforming America's Military. We followed this in January 2004 with Transforming for Stability and Reconstruction Operations, which was really the first book after the invasion of Iraq to look at this new phenomenon. We subsequently got involved in the writing of defense directive 3000.05 which basically said stability operations, reconstruction operations, are core mission of the Pentagon, equivalent to high intensity war fighting. Our two books covered this span of warfare.

Q: Well now, I mean when you, let's take it back so when you came in and the new Secretary of Defense is Donald Rumsfeld and in many ways he must have struck you as being, you both were really on the same side I mean, he was trying to change things, it wasn't the same old, same old thing, it was going to be a more flexible military. But did you have any problems or opportunities when he first came on, this was before 9/11.

BINNENDIJK: We began working on military transformation probably about the time of 9/11. We were working both on US and on NATO military transformation. And so we started writing about NATO in November of 2001 and we actually created what we thought was an optimal force, it was originally called a spearhead force and I briefed that to a group of NATO parliamentarians in December 2001 and then in February wrote an article in the International Herald Tribune calling for creation of a NATO spearhead force. We took this idea to Kurt Volker at the National Security Council and he said good idea, sell it to Rumsfeld. So we worked with Ian Brzezinski at Defense and together we created what became the NATO Response Force. Rumsfeld introduced the idea to his NATO colleagues and it was approved by NATO. The NRF is still a major element in both NATO military transformation and readiness.

Q: Well, I mean rather rampantly sort of, the initial invasion of Iraq went quite well I mean it proved itself but then it turned into this asymmetrical warfare or something, a bunch of people looked like civilians setting off bombs on the roadside. Were we prepared for this, or would this be sort of back to the drawing board?

BINNENDIJK: We were not prepared. The war plans that Tommy Franks put together assumed a relatively quick victory on the battlefield and assumed further that civilians would come in afterwards and take care of the postwar period and a group was assembled

under retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner. I was involved with Garner in that process and spent several days with him at NDU when they were rehearsing for the operation. It was very clear that this had been a group put together at the last minute with some very talented people but no resources and really no authority. When they got to Iraq they were shunted aside and –

Q: I interviewed some of the people who went out there with Robin Raphel, I'm doing Barbara Bodine right now and others and it's you know, it didn't work.

BINNENDIJK: It didn't work for an array of reasons: bad assumptions going in, lack of real preparation in this area, bad policies. We knew how to do this stuff in Vietnam, with the CORDS (Civil Operations and Rural Development Support) program, with a large AID, and the military in the aftermath of Vietnam decided it was a hollow force and they needed to focus on first things first, rightly so, you had Colin Powell and his doctrine of decisive force, the military focused on winning high end war very effectively and decisively and the culture that grew up around that was never again are we going to get sucked into a war where we are going to do nation building. And so they very consciously decided to neglect this part of their skill set. That was a mistake.

Q: Well, did you have to take nation building out of your syllabus?

BINNENDIJK: No I wouldn't say that. It was clear by June of 2003 that this situation was going badly and that's when we started writing. So from June 2003 to January 2004 I assembled this team that wrote the book called Transforming for Stability and Reconstruction Operations. It looked at the mistakes we were making at the time in Iraq and how we might correct those mistakes and create a new system that allows us to have some specialty forces within the military, of course augmented by civilians. But the thesis of the book was not that we need a large constabulary force but we need some skills within the military that would allow us to do these kinds of missions. Because you know, you make these mistakes early on in these missions and it takes you a long time to overcome those mistakes. If you get it right the first time and you have the right people in there the first time, the chances are that you won't make so many mistakes. So that's what that book was about. So we were very busy those first couple of years, looking at traditional military transformation, looking at what I subsequently called transformation #2 -- transformation #1 was about high end warfare, transformation #2 was about stability ops.

Q: Well, I mean, one can write a book but when you come right down to it, I don't know what you call it, but it's the manual, you know war fighting manual of various things I mean, what was the connection - ?

BINNENDIJK: Well we'll take this transforming stability and reconstruction operation as an example. There was a briefing that went with that book; I probably gave the briefing 50 times all over town. Initially there was a lot of resistance. Many of those briefings were in the Pentagon. We contributed to the Defense Science Board Study on this topic. We were directly involved in the drafting of defense directive 3000.05; and we were

involved in the implementation of that directive. So we were taking what we learned in the world of research, we were writing it up and getting it some public visibility, and then we would take it back into government and through briefings and working on the inside we would try to turn that in to policy change. I'm not sure it had much to do with our minor contribution, but our ground forces got it, it took them a year or so but they really proved their ability to adapt.

Q: Well, were you feeling at all the hand of Rumsfeld, because basically he bet on a quick war and a civilian, Iraqi civilian, takeover and all and the Iraqi civilian takeover wasn't there. So what you were doing was talking about you know, when things fall apart what do you do. Well I mean in a way he's you know an extremely bright man, a very capable man, but one gathers that he is pretty strong opinions and essentially you were saying well if you screw up this is what you do.

BINNENDIJK: Rumsfeld didn't fully see the requirement for this follow on capability. He made assumptions that turned out not to be right in the case of Iraq. Many in the military saw those mistakes that were being made up close and were very quick to respond and try to do the right thing, but Rumsfeld resisted it. The military began to shift; we were involved in that debate pretty heavily, we were involved in it also through the Senate. We were asked in part based in part on the strength of the book, to participate in a small group of about 10 people that Senator Lugar put together called PAG (Policy Advisory Group) on this issue. We met half a dozen times and as a result of that Senator Lugar and Senator Biden drafted the Lugar-Biden Bill. This bill created a civilian capability to support the military's stability operations. That legislation languished for a while but it was ultimately passed. The process also created S/CRS, the State Department coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization. So I think if you look back on those years the Center was fairly productive in terms of working with our military to understand the nature of military transformation, the new way of war, the military's needs, and also with the NATO alliance and getting them to shift to this new way of operating.

But we did other things as well; I'll just take a little sidebar on this. Obviously terrorism was a great concern after 9/11 and so we prepared several studies focused on terrorists' threats. We did a major study on container security. This is another example of what the Center for Technology and National Security Policy did to address a threat of a weapon of mass destruction hidden in a seaborne container. So we prepared a major study. We visited a number of ports, brought working groups together and wrote this study which basically offered up a number of technical suggestions. But it also came up with the sort of "red lane-green lane" approach so that based on the information that you have about the origin of containers. You use computer programs to flag the potential risks and then you create green lanes for those ships who do not pose a major risk because you don't want to create a system that backs up these containers at the ports. So we wrote this report but again our working hypothesis is that you don't just write the report, you turn that into a briefing. Then you change policy. We took that briefing to the Homeland Security Council at the White House. It turns out a colleague of mine was heading that up this effort there so I went to him and I said here's what we've been doing. I briefed him

on it; they created an interagency group on container security. I briefed this study to that interagency group and that group came up with what became the container security initiative. It has been U.S. policy since the early part of the decade. So this is another example of how we were turning our research into policy changes. And that is really at the heart of what we've been trying to do here.

Q: Now with a, as you are writing about, well actually both you know, standard war as it seemed but also the aftermath how you reconstruct and all, did you have good input from I'd say the lieutenant colonel down to the captain level, because these are the people that have to do the damn thing.

BINNENDIJK: Yes we did. We had several people at the Center who had been engaged in these kinds of operations, who were military officers, but more importantly we had this amazing student body at the National Defense University. And so I would meet periodically with the students who'd just come back from Iraq. I was also involved in the Iraq Study Group that was set up under former Secretary Baker and former chairman of the House Armed Service Committee Hamilton. I was an advisor to that group. And again we were taking the lessons we learned from our research and from our students, coming back to your question. I would often consult with the students who were just back from Iraq and take the input I got from them and feed it to the Iraq Study Group.

Q: Now when you consider it, you got the best and the brightest end up here and they've been doing the war. Tell me something, I'm sitting here looking at all the books that have been written on various military things, one of the, a phenomenon I've observed after I've been almost 25 years interviewing American diplomats is that they don't read the literature that the academic world turns out on "Foreign Affairs." And I talked to one man just the other day and he said well he had been assigned to the Kennedy School at Harvard and he said it was wonderful except he had to read "Foreign Affairs." I mean, every once in a while when I am feeling malicious I ask well how often did you read "Foreign Affairs," supposed to be the premiere journal of thinking and the answer is usually a blank look. How do you find it here, is it a different breed of cat?

BINNENDIJK: I think people who are at the National Defense University, certainly the people who teach here and do research here, are much more interested in research material. I read "Foreign Affairs" fairly religiously. You try to stay on top of the literature; you are in the classroom so you have to. If you are going to run research programs you have to know what the existing products are and where the niches are that need to be filled. The students who are here come primarily because they have done a very good job operationally. Our job here at NDU in the teaching area is to take those operators and transform them into strategic thinkers, and we have 10 months to do that and they get a masters degree for it. But part of that is using a seminar process of very dense engagement, and they must read for that. They sometimes resist it. You know the military is different from the State Department and AID and the Foreign Service, in that it has a culture that really cares about education. Obviously Foreign Service officers individually do too. The difference is that time is made within the military structure for it. They have what is called a personnel float and that personnel float assumes a certain

portion of the force every year will be off at Command and General Staff College or at a war college or somewhere else, either doing training or doing education. And that's a different culture from the State Department. I worked at FSI for two years. The State Department just does not have a culture or a personnel system that allows for the same degree of education as does the Defense Department. I think FSI ought to be a school very much like the National Defense University, but it's not.

Q: Yeah, absolutely, I know the one thing we had, and it was actually a very hard thing to get people to go to, was the senior seminar. I'm a graduate of the senior seminar.

BINNENDIJK: It is no more.

Q: Yeah it's no more and, but no it doesn't seem to be, there is a real difference between, which is surprising in that you would think the military would be less I'd say academically inclined and the Foreign Service coming out of the best and the brightest schools and all that, is once they finish with their basic education then that's it, from then on they are learning on their feel which is not all that, I mean there are things to be learned and there doesn't seem to be much opportunity to learn those things.

BINNENDIJK: That's right. It's institutionalized, it's endemic and it does take money.

Q: Did, while you were doing this work did you sense sort of a change in attitude or deflation or something, you know we can do anything with a small military to after particularly Iraq and now Afghanistan all of a sudden up against reality, that there was almost an earth change at your level in academic thinking?

BINNENDIJK: Earth change in what sense?

Q: Well in other words, a change from we've got the power we can do it to oh my God how are we going to do it?

BINNENDIJK: There was a significant change. And here you have a force that was very successful in regime change in both Afghanistan and Iraq, using actually the kinds of transformational warfare that Rumsfeld was championing. They were quite victorious in terms of the high intensity war fight and then they had this sort of moment of recognition that it wasn't over and they had to think about what to do next. You have all these studies people have written saying this takes a decade to end, to have an occupying force, to change the society and get them ready for an exit strategy and nobody wanted to hear that.

But to give the military the credit they deserve, they adapted. They had no choice. There was no one else to do it. The military didn't want to lose. Our civilian capacity was gone, just as the military after Vietnam decided it was going to focus on high intensity warfare and decisive force, the civilian side ramped down. So the civilian skills weren't there. AID went from well over 10,000 folks in Vietnam sometimes as high as 15,000 down to maybe 1,000 Foreign Service officers now, and many of them are doing contract work so

they are really not in the hands-on business. So you had this phenomenon where the military, especially the reserves, had lawyers in it, had plumbers, electricians and all these skills you need. The reserves stepped up and began to do this job, civilians weren't there. The military they had resources -- \$650 billion worth of budget every year. They had a very useful commander's emergency response fund. Commanders could write huge checks for things right away. AID takes years to get projects going. So the military had the money, manpower, skills, and resources to fill this stabilization and reconstruction gap.

If there was a single bumper sticker contained in the book that I talked about earlier, Transforming for Stability and Reconstruction Operations, if there's a single finding it was that there was in the United States a stabilization and reconstruction capability gap. And the military in 2005-6 filled that gap and the civilian side wasn't there. Rumsfeld was already in a strong position bureaucratically -- he had this Cheney-Rumsfeld connection that basically outmaneuvered the NSC and the State Department. That was enhanced by the fact that Rumsfeld really had money and capability and his military was stepping up and the State Department didn't have the money, didn't have the institutional capability and they were left out.

Q: And you had a very weak NSC.

BINNENDIJK: You know, they had good people at the NSC but this axis between Cheney and Rumsfeld was very strong.

Q: Yeah I have accounts of how Rice did not, she acted as more of an executive secretary than a leader of the NSC and that if Rumsfeld and Cheney wanted to do something no matter what the decision of the NSC was, they would go ahead and do it.

BINNENDIJK: They would. I have talked with colleagues of mine on the NSC who are very capable people, but you are right, they would call meetings and Rumsfeld would just decide not to send people. He would just go to Cheney; and Cheney would go to Bush and it would get done. So they ran around the process. And so when Steve Hadley became the NSC advisor at least he had a good connection with Condi Rice and so the second Bush term was bureaucratically stronger than the first. Then Bob Gates came in. In many ways he saved that administration. On this issue we were just talking about, he recognized the problem. He recognized it was his folks who were carrying the heavy load and to his full credit he came in and said 'we need to build civilian capability and I'm going to put Defense Department money into that effort.' He supported legislation which allowed for transfers of money from Defense to State to operate in this stabilization area. Gates really identified and acted on this need. So here at CTSP we were working on that as well. A couple of weeks before Gates gave his speech on this I wrote an Op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* about this gap, this civilian gap, and then we stated working on a book which came out initially in December of 2008 called Civilian Surge. That book is about what should be, what kinds of capabilities are needed on the civilian side.

Q: Did, I mean you are writing here in a military institution about how to change things

and when you start talking about developing sort of civilian capacity you are talking about the State Department people for the most part, but was there any connect?

BINNENDIJK: Oh sure. First of all we were connected with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee where I used to work on the Hill so we had connections there. But I worked closely with S/CRS, both of the directors were very talented people at S/CRS and so we worked with them in these efforts. No I don't think there was ever a question asked about why the National Defense University was focusing on civilian capacity. I think everybody understood there was a need for this and the question was how much do you need, how do you get it, how do you deploy it.

Q: Well one of the things though that I looking at it, I remember a retired Foreign Service officer and they say let's get more Foreign Service officers in there. But hell, as a Foreign Service officer you don't really have a, the normal foreign service officer doesn't have any particular skills, I mean in diplomacy yes you know, how to treat the local populous a little bit better but unless you happen to be a farm body from Iowa or something, they are not going to bring any particular skills to the table.

BINNENDIJK: I think that the skills that the Foreign Service needs to bring to the table are not just diplomacy, but crisis management and response. State needs to orchestrate and lead the other elements of government, bring them to bear on the problem. The best example of a person who has done this so successfully is Jim Dobbins.

Q: Yeah, he's at RADN now.

BINNENDIJK: He's with RAND now, and Jim has done this in at least five different cases. That is the ideal model of the Foreign Service officer who is put in charge of one of these operations and understands how the stabilization and reconstruction effort connects to the politics of the country and the politics of the region. If you just simply try to provide security and stabilization and you don't connect it to the politics of the region and to crisis management skills, you are going to fail. So this to me is a pivotal role in this whole business and that's where I see the skilled Foreign Service officer playing the key role.

Now to answer the second part of your question which you implicitly asked, which is who should do the technical work? It's AID. AID has got to be the place; they are the folks who do come with skills in economics or law or in housing or agriculture, that's what they do for a living. The problem is that again AID has been decimated and needs to be built back up. In our book we think it has to at least double, probably triple or quadruple in size. And that you have another problem which is there is a culture at AID that has grown up over the years which is fairly purist. It is a long term development culture -- don't bother me with the political side of this. And in the kinds of situations we are having to deal with more and more, it is about politics and it's about restoring economies that have collapsed and restoring order as you are restoring the economy. This reconstruction business has many of the same basic skill sets needed that you find on your traditional AID side of the house but it's a different culture. So we need an AID that

can bridge these two cultures. Our suggestion is to have two deputy directors, one in charge of traditional development and the other in charge of reconstruction. In our book we even suggest that the name be changed to the Agency for Development and Reconstruction.

Q: Now, well this, I mean one of the things as we talk about this, okay you have a Jim Dobbins who can put things together, I won't say he's unique but he's got these skills but some of these skills at least at the working level can be taught that the State Department you know could sort of put young military men and women and young foreign service men and women together in a place, they could do it here or somewhere else I mean, it's a cultural problem as we know. But it would seem that this is a joint, should be a joint effort.

BINNENDIJK: Well that's true. You see in Iraq and Afghanistan, the creation of these so called provincial reconstruction teams where they do merge these people together. And in fact today we are working on this - I just came from a meeting on this very topic. We're doing a lessons learned project here at NDU on PRTs. But this is a little different -- PRTs are still in operation. What I was talking about in the Jim Dobbins model was to rise above that to work at the National Security Council level or the presidential envoy level and orchestrate all this. Now before you get to that level as you are working your way up your career, having experience in a PRT as a civilian would be very beneficial.

Q: I served in Vietnam for 18 months and watching my colleagues that came in with CORDS and all and they really had responsibilities that far exceeded what they would get as a normal Foreign Service officer and they did it very well.

BINNENDIJK: CORDS is a good model. Obviously the endgame in Vietnam is not what we hoped for but the pacification program to a large degree worked. We didn't lose Vietnam because pacification failed. We lost it because the army of North Vietnam was stronger and the army of South Vietnam collapsed. So these are skills we have had in our past. We've forgotten how to use them and we are just now remembering.

Q: Well do you see, looking at it today are there efforts coming down particularly on the side of the National Defense University and the sort of academic side of bringing up a new cadre of military and civilians who can deal, because this seems to be what we are going to be up against for a long, long time.

BINNENDIJK: Yes. A couple of years ago the Pentagon produced its latest Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). I was the co-chair of the part of the QDR process that was responsible for the chapter on building partnership capacity. One of the recommendations we made was that the name of the National Defense University be changed into a National Security University. Implicit in that name change is exactly what you are driving at, which is you need a place that is not just for the Defense Department but is more interagency. You need a place where you can have interagency education. Now, we still have not made that transition yet. We do civilian education here at NDU. About one-quarter of our student body every year is civilian but that's maybe 150 people or so, and

we need to do much more.

Q: And much of it I think is not particularly pointed towards you know doing what we need a cadre to do and that is call it nation building or coordination of –

BINNENDIJK: That's part of the reason this Center for Complex Operations was created and brought over to the National Defense University. It is precisely to figure out what kinds of educational and training programs are required to do this. And so our CCO has created a website portal that has on it all sorts of educational material on who is teaching what around the country, on what kind of training programs we need. It has material on it to enhance the work of the educators and the trainers. We have a major lessons learned operation that we are doing actually with you folks at the Academy. As you know your colleagues who have been doing these interviews, we have been working through the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Q: Yes and our association has been doing a whole service of interviews.

BINNENDIJK: That's right and that money is coming from us. It's incredibly valuable. USIP is also involved. You are doing interviews with 200 returnees from PRTs and we are mining that to identify lessons -- how do you do it better next time. And the notion is that we write up those lessons in issue form and make recommendations. We are also plugging into FSI where there's training going on to send people out for the next wave of PRTs. So we will feed into that training process all the lessons we have pulled out of the interviews you are doing for us. This is something we should have been doing as a national five years ago, we are just starting it.

Q: Well the whole idea of doing oral histories, I mean we now have about 1600 available to the public, but it should have been done in years past because people who come out have experiences that it's not only interesting historically but lessons to be learned from.

BINNENDIJK: Precisely. That's why this is exactly why we went to you folks to do these interviews.

Q: Well, have you noticed any change in sort of your direction? You still have the same Secretary of Defense but what you are doing now, or not?

BINNENDIJK: Well of course we now have a new administration that's come in and it's an administration we've been able to work with very well. I've personally gotten quite involved in the NATO work. The NATO alliance is a bit frayed because of Afghanistan. The changing Russian behavior in Georgia and elsewhere is creating the sense among many of our Eastern allies that maybe Article V -- which is the key to the alliance -- is not being thoroughly enough focused on. You add to that cyber attacks on Estonia and energy cutoffs to Ukraine and Belarus -- which affected countries like Bulgaria and Romania -- and you have this new angst in the East about Russia and its future direction. Russia is trying to regain power and is doing so in part by intimidating its neighbors. And so you have allies taking different positions on that, the Germans don't feel threatened by

this, countries in the East feel very threatened, the United States and the U.K. and France are focused very much on NATO as an instrument for overseas operations like Afghanistan. You have the Germans and maybe to a lesser extent the Italians and the Spanish who want to serve a more diplomatic function as a bridge to Russia. So this raises the question what does NATO do in this new era?

We have gone through three international systems in our life time: the Cold War, a ten year period which was called the post cold war period, and then the post 9/11 period which I think, has really created a whole new international system. No longer is it a uni-polar system, it's much more multi-polar, we have these asymmetrical threats and so now we are figuring out how to adjust to that international system.

Q: Well and we do have the problem of Europe because of frankly the influence of Islam into Europe and how to deal with that.

BINNENDIJK: Yeah that's right. So we have all of these NATO issues on the table. I've been working with the NSC and with Madeline Albright -- who has been named the chairperson of a NATO group called the Group of Experts -- to create a new strategic concept for the alliance. The problem is, you have a group of countries to the East who are worried about Article V and the future of the alliance in terms of Russia, and you got a group that is worried about fighting in Afghanistan and what will be the future contribution of the alliance there Then you have the German view, which focuses more on diplomacy of the alliance. Then you have the homeland security element too. So how do you pull this together? And that is what we are working on now with the goal of having a report by May of next year. Madeline Albright will deliver this report to NATO Secretary General Rasmussen who will write in his strategic concept which is going to be short, elegant, compelling, all that. So that's what I'm spending about one-third of my time now is that.

Q: Okay, well I think this is a good place to stop.

End of interview