

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

LOUIS B. WARREN

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Warren.]

Q: Today is October 12, 2010. This is an interview with Louis B. Warren done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. So to begin, is it Louie or Louis or?

WARREN: Lou.

Q: Lou, OK. And we'll start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

WARREN: I was born in New York City on July 9th 1941.

Q: Can you tell me a bit about your family? Let's take your father's side first.

WARREN: Yes. My father was a lawyer in New York City. And his parents and grandparents also lived in New York or right around in New Jersey.

Q: Grandparents and great-grandparents, what were their professions? Were they lawyers too?

WARREN: My grandfather on my father's side was a stockbroker. And then before that, it was lawyers also.

Q: Where did they go to college?

WARREN: My father went to Oxford University in England for undergraduate and then Columbia for Law School.

Q: How did the Oxford come about? When did he go there?

WARREN: Went there in the early 1920s. There was an English connection; his older sister married a person in the British Foreign Service.

Q: But you grew up in New York City?

WARREN: My father and mother moved out to New Jersey in the 1940s, really during World War II. And so we commuted to New York.

Q: Let me ask you about your mother's side, what do you know about her family?

WARREN: She was born in Garden City, Long Island. But she also was living in the New York area too. Of note, my grandfather on my mother's side, who actually I know a lot better than on my father's side, also was a stockbroker.

Q: Well then, how did the stock market crash of 1929 affect your family?

WARREN: Wiped out my grandfather on my father's side. Yeah, he really got hammered. His family was hurt badly by it. Less so on my mother's side. But still, they all were hit by it.

Q: Well, how did they come through the Depression of the 1930s? Were they able to keep into the profession or?

WARREN: My grandfather on my father's side died in 1932 and so his widow and their children lived in New York City but had to live in a lot smaller accommodations. On my mother side they had a house out in Long Island, and then later they moved to Summit, New Jersey. And my father and mother lived with them for a while until they were able to rent and then buy in the 1940s. So as usual, it was almost like an extended family relationship.

Q: After Summit, New Jersey, where did you live?

WARREN: After Summit we moved out to Morristown, New Jersey.

Q: How old were you when you moved out to Morristown?

WARREN: As I remember I was six-years-old.

Q: Were you an only child or did you --

WARREN: No, I had two older sisters.

Q: So what was Summit like in those days?

WARREN: Summit was quite nice, bedroom community. I don't remember as well as Morristown because -- and then Burnsville, because that's where we lived later. But yeah, it was a nice, bedroom community. It was sort of like, you know, parts of Fairfax County. I remember we used to take the train into New York when I was in Morristown, when I was in Burnsville, when I was in Summit. You really relied a lot on the train. It was the Lackawanna Railroad.

Q: As a small kid, were you much of a reader?

WARREN: I guess reasonably so, to a certain extent, yeah.

Q: Can you think of any books that were important to you or?

WARREN: That -- it's interesting, my grandfather had these books by H. Rider Haggard, such as She and King Solomon's Mines. There was a whole string of --

Q: Allan Quatermain --

WARREN: It was Allan Quatermain was this English or -- adventurer in Africa or sort of a white hunter.

Q: The Great White Hunter.

WARREN: The Great White Hunter, yes indeed. And yes, I definitely do remember those things. And we kept the books. Matter of fact, I handed them on to my second son.

Q: Your family, I would assume were they as far as politics go pretty Republican?

WARREN: My father was probably more Republican than my mother. I would say that the -- but definitely, yeah, they were -- they were sort of definitely Moderate Republicans. They weren't heavily political, sort of along the lines of Rockefeller Republicans. My father liked Clifford Case who was a governor of New Jersey for a while. Or a senator, he was a senator for New Jersey. And yeah, sort of the Thomas Dewey type of Republicans, yeah. And they're definitely Anglophile.

Q: How about religion?

WARREN: Catholic.

Q: How important was the Church for your family?

WARREN: It was quite important for my father. Less so for my mother. But yeah, he was -- you know, well, she took it seriously too. But yeah, he definitely took it seriously.

Q: Did you go through an altar boy stage and all that sort of stuff?

WARREN: I didn't do the altar boy routine, no.

Q: What was the school like in Morristown?

WARREN: It was a good school. It was a -- and I kept in touch with some of the -- some of my classmates and friends. One of them lives in New York City and they also have a

summer home up in Maine. So yeah, you know, we corresponded, come down visit us in Virginia, we went up to see them.

Q: Were you a good student would you say, or not, or?

WARREN: I was a good student. I'd say B+ student, yeah.

Q: As a young kid what courses particularly interested you and what ones didn't?

WARREN: I say I liked English, I liked history courses. Yeah, definitely liked the history courses. Math, I was OK, I wasn't bad at math, but less good at math than English.

Q: At home was your family sort of tuned into current events? Discussing things around the dining room table --

WARREN: Yeah. Definitely, yes, they definitely were.

Q: Did the outside world intrude then?

WARREN: Well, yeah. Don't forget also that the 1950s we had the Cold War going on big time. As you remember.

Q: Oh yeah. So did you have sort of the duck and cover drills in school or not?

WARREN: I remember that. They had a few of those things. Nobody took them too seriously because you figured you'd be screwed if anything like that and if the nuclear weapons were actually dropped that was sort of useless. But yeah, people, yeah, people took it strongly then, yeah.

Q: When did you go to -- you went to high school where?

WARREN: I went to a Catholic boarding school up in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. It was then called Portsmouth Priority. It is now called Portsmouth Abbey and it was run by Benedictine monks. This was from 1955 to 1959.

Q: How did you find it?

WARREN: It was -- a lot of ways it was chafing, you know, some of the discipline; they were trying to run it like an English boarding school. It's funny, at the time I was chafing at it and I was glad to get out in 1959, although I did go back for the 50th anniversary and actually had a very good reunion with these guys who were there with me, which is interesting.

Q: What did you find was chafing, I mean, was it the discipline or having to get up a certain hour or all that sort of stuff?

WARREN: Yeah. And it was the feeling of people sort of watching what you were doing, you know, monitoring you reasonably closely, probably more than I would like. It was annoying.

Q: How heavy was the hand of the Church there?

WARREN: Not as bad as you would think. I mean it was very definite Catholic school. But they also had lay teachers. And you know, it wasn't all that bad. One thing that was absolutely true, and I will say this on the record, you didn't have the kind of messing around, the pedophilia, child abuse, stuff like that. They did not mess with that at all. I mean literally. I mean I may be incredibly naive, but nobody I've talked to said boo about that. They definitely didn't get into that.

Q: When you were at prep school did you start looking at sort of the outside world?

WARREN: Yes.

Q: What was interesting to you?

WARREN: I did not want to be a lawyer because I saw how hard my father had to work and, you know, extensive hours and, you know, certain amount of business trips, and it was rough.

Q: What kind of law was your father in?

WARREN: Corporate law. It was -- it was tough. And you know, you had -- it's essentially because you're not, it's not just sort of analysis. You really got to be a salesman. And I understand that now, probably a lot better than I did 40 years ago. But you -- if you're a lawyer or, you know, to a certain extent an accountant or, you know, financial services or anything like that, any kind of profession. Architects the same way, you got to be a salesman.

Q: Yeah. Well, this -- I notice your card says you're a financial consultant. Which means you have a better appreciation of what your father had to go through.

WARREN: Yeah. And my grandfather, fathers. Yes.

Q: Where were you pointed towards when you got out of the abbey school?

WARREN: Probably as much -- I was really well seriously interested in the Foreign Service, even then.

Q: How did you find out about the Foreign Service?

WARREN: People were talking about it. Certainly people were talking about diplomacy, Foreign Service. And the attitude towards government service then I think may have been

changed a little bit from now, but it was considered, you know, really big deal, you know, service to the state. Literally, people thought it was a big deal to work for the government.

Q: Did you get a chance to go abroad at all while you were in high school or before that?

WARREN: No, not while I was in high school. I did go abroad afterwards. I spent one summer, or part of a summer abroad in Switzerland.

Q: Upon finishing your prep school, what were you considering for college?

WARREN: I did look mainly at things like Harvard or Princeton or Pennsylvania.

Q: So where did you go?

WARREN: I went to Harvard, Harvard College, starting the Freshman year in 1959.

Q: If you graduated in 1963 you would have experienced the Kennedy/Nixon election, did that engage you at all?

WARREN: Kennedy looked attractive, although I didn't have really anything much -- I didn't really have that negative feeling about Richard Nixon either. Kennedy -- Kennedy was really pushing the idealism. You know, working for the government and yeah, it was attractive.

Q: What was your major at Harvard?

WARREN: History.

Q: Within history did you settle on any particular geographical area or chronology?

WARREN: Yeah, Modern European history.

Q: Were you still sort of keeping the Foreign Service in mind?

WARREN: Yes, definitely, I was.

Q: Any professors that particularly --

WARREN: Franklin Ford, talking about German history was very good. I did take a course under Henry Kissinger. It was a government course.

Q: Was Kissinger's course particularly memorable for you, or not?

WARREN: I was -- it was interesting. He was probably more conservative than he was a little bit later on. But I remember people were talking about Indochina, because the U.S. is starting to send Special Forces and people like that to Vietnam. And then talking about getting the Vietnamese to fight for us and then I remember Kissinger saying, you know, wait a minute, you can't just carry out policies and then expect other countries, other people to die for you.

You have to show commitment yourself, I mean getting skin on the game yourself. He also was -- I think he was quite understanding and friendly toward Charles de Gaulle. And saying yes, the French Army is one of the best in Europe and you just don't mock them, and don't mock the French. They're serious folks.

Q: Well, did you have any feel for the communist world? In other words, were you able to study the communist world?

WARREN: Yeah, I mean through Harvard courses. There was a professor called Merle Fainsod who published a famous book called How Russia Is Ruled [Ed: published 1953]. I did take that course. And I took a course on Eastern Europe also.

Q: Did you have any contact with people who were in the Foreign Service while you were at Harvard?

WARREN: I met one or two people. I can't remember their names now. I met them. You know, they seemed fine. I met people in other branches of the U.S. Government who seemed sharp and knew what they were talking about.

Q: Was there a draft at that time?

WARREN: Yes. Oh yes. You better believe it.

Q: So did you feel it was breathing down your neck or?

WARREN: Yeah, as a matter of fact I, you know, I had my draft card and right after I graduated from Harvard in 1963 I did go and applied and got into Navy OCS (Officer Candidate School), but if I hadn't gone to Navy OCS the Army was hot for me. The Army would send me stuff saying guess what, if you don't choose another branch of service we're going to see you in three months (*laughs*).

Q: So you --

WARREN: Probably would have been drafted and would have been in Army Intelligence, going in Germany.

Q: So your language was German.

WARREN: Some German. More French than German. I had better French than German, yeah.

Q: Your trip to Switzerland was when?

WARREN: Summer of 1959.

Q: How did that strike you?

WARREN: I mean Switzerland was fine, certainly attractive. It was great, you know, Europe seemed a little bit looser. And Europe definitely was recovering at that time.

Q: What was social life like in Harvard in those days?

WARREN: It was reasonable. There were these Radcliffe girls. People used to make jokes because they weren't, you know, taking as good care of themselves than I guess they do now. But it was more so the somewhat -- a lot of them were kind of very intellectual and weren't paying as much attention to boys or how they looked.

Q: Did you -- had you thought about a grad school at all?

WARREN: No, I figured I got to get the Military over with first.

Q: So you took Navy OCS. Where did you go? And how'd you find that?

WARREN: Went to Newport. Rhode Island. That was -- first it was a shock getting out of college to go into Navy OCS, because that -- all of a sudden you're also thrown in with people from -- definitely from different background a lot of whom weren't particularly thrilled by the Ivy League. But -- and then the whole thing was very practical, sort of no intellectual, no analysis. It is -- the whole thing was, you know, making sure your uniform was in good shape, that your, you know, your shoes were polished, that you could march, that you could work with other people and you could keep awake, which was -- we used to get up at 5:00 in the morning. And it's cold when you get up at 5:00 in the morning. And you'd muster outside.

Q: Yeah, that's -- keeping awake, I recall, is -- I was an enlisted man. And I was -- during my basic training I had to guard a warehouse sometimes, and that was hell on wheels because I kept falling asleep.

WARREN: Yeah. I -- when I was -- when our ship was in Beirut in 1966 and we did have a guy, an enlisted guy, fall asleep on watch. And he got special court marshal. They didn't fool around. He got six months in the slammer for that one.

Q: Yeah. Well, so let's talk about your Navy career. Where did you go after OCS?

WARREN: OK, I got out as an ensign in I think it was 1964. I then went to the Fleet Sonar School in Key West, Florida. Then I was a year -- a little bit over a year -- now this may be classified, may be not. Basically I was assigned to the Sound Surveillance Station in Antigua, West Indies, where we really did track submarines, you know, picking up sounds on the deep sound channel access.

We definitely tracked some Soviet submarines at very great lengths. And we also started -- and this spooked the guys up in Norfolk, which was our command center -- because we, we were able to detect transiting U.S. nuclear submarines, which we weren't supposed to be able to do. And that shocked the hell out of -- because they said how did you guys detect these things?

Q: Well, how long did you do this?

WARREN: For about a year -- about a year and yeah, a year and a few months. Then I was again, sent to Fleet Solar School and I was transferred as an anti-submarine warfare officer and boarded an old World War II Destroyer, USS CONY, DD-508.

Q: Was it from a Fletcher class vessel?

WARREN: Yes, certainly was Fletcher class. With Weapon Alpha, which is totally worthless. Everything was -- the homing torpedo was the big thing we had. We had Mark 37, Mark 34 homing torpedoes. And they had hedge hogs, which at that time weren't that helpful either. Really homing torpedoes was the only way you can go after a submarine.

Q: Did the CONY have a role in the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis?

WARREN: Yeah. The CONY was involved.

Q: The crisis must have really energized the anti-submarine people.

WARREN: Yeah, it did. Because they had been able to detect a couple of Soviet conventional submarines. This is interesting. There was a very big exercise in 1964 where they had six U.S. conventional submarines playing the role of Soviet subs carrying nukes. They were going to come close to the Eastern Seaboard and launch missiles, thermo nuclear missiles on American cities. They had way over 100 American destroyers hunting for them, but they found out -- obviously the technology was far better than the primitive equipment in 1944 so the people in 1944 had to be good and had to be up to the mark and really did know how to do it. Well, these guys in 1964 with much better technology were worthless. There were very few -- I think only one or two of the subs were detected. They found out that aircraft and even these using working with sound surveillance systems could pick up the subs. But Destroyers, American Destroyers just were awful.

Q: Yeah, well it's a -- there's nothing like a wartime situation hone your skills.

WARREN: *(laughs)* Yeah, you better believe it.

Q: You mentioned you were in the Mediterranean for a while.

WARREN: Yeah. We took a deployment in 1966. We went over to the, the Mediterranean and into the Indian Ocean, way down to Madagascar. And we, we stopped off on the way back in Saudi Arabia in Jeddah. Went through the Suez Canal.

Q: Did this whet your appetite even more for the Foreign Service? Did you have any chance to visit embassies or consulates at all?

WARREN: We did. We were met by a Foreign Service officer in the Suez Canal because they wanted to get our impressions of the, you know, of the Egyptian Navy and just in general just transiting the Suez. So yeah, we did. And Madagascar, a member of the embassy did show up.

Q: So did that, sort of that cruise finish off your Navy time?

WARREN: Yes, because afterwards we did various exercises in the Caribbean and we had a readiness inspection and then I got out in April 1967. By then I was accepted in the Foreign Service, so on April 27, 1967 I started the FSI (Foreign Service Institute) A-100 course.

Q: Do you recall the oral exam any of the questions or not?

WARREN: Goodness. Most questions were on European history and stuff like that. They also -- I do remember though that there were -- obviously it's totally different now, but they were trying to make sure that not too many gays were in the Foreign Service.

Q: How did you think that?

WARREN: Well, I said I'd seen the movie Lawrence of Arabia [Ed: released in 1962] and they wanted to know what I thought of T.E. Lawrence, you know. And you know, sort of, sort of skirting around sexual proclivities and stuff like. I've forgotten how I answered, but I was just *(laughs)* careful in what I was saying. Yeah, they definitely were worried about getting homosexuals in the Foreign Service at that time.

Q: Were you married at the time?

WARREN: No, I was not.

Q: The A-100 course? Do you remember what class number you were and how would you characterize what kind of people were in your group?

WARREN: We were the 78th A-100 class. Mainly male, probably definitely I would say predominantly upper middle class. Some from Ivy League colleges, yes.

[Ed: Among Mr. Warren's eighteen A-100 classmates were Stevenson McIlvaine and Mort Dworken who have been interviewed in the ADST oral history program.]

Q: How did you find the training offered in the A-100 course?

WARREN: It was OK. It wasn't very good. The thing was that nobody could or would say is: OK, this is how diplomacy is supposed to work. Here's what you really have to do to advance your career. I mean nobody's going to -- I don't know if they ever say that now either. But it's very much of a different ballgame and it's, you know, sort of the bureaucratic skills, ability to work with other government agencies, the ability really to advance your own career is very important. And working with other Americans is probably as important, or more important, as your ability to work with foreigners. Even then it was true. I know some guys in our class were quite annoyed because we were supposedly getting a briefing about foreign intelligence, you know, efforts in targeting Foreign Service officers. And we got some guy over from DOD (Department of Defense) who was talking in generalities and he wasn't really getting down to the nitty gritty of what was going on.

Q: By this time the war in Vietnam was beginning to pick up.

WARREN: Yeah, sure. In 1967, yes, it certainly was.

Q: How did you feel about it?

WARREN: I thought -- yeah, the war in Vietnam looked like even in 1967 like it was not going to work out terribly well. Even in 1967 that thing was getting stalemated. You could tell that they were -- plus, I mean having the kind of domestic blowups that took place, like in Detroit, Newark, and places like that, which is something again, nowadays I mean you can't, you know, it's really hard to let other people know what it's like. But back then in 1967 they were talking about, you know, African American black population rising up, burning their own cities. I mean people seriously talking about urban guerilla warfare in the United States. Really creepy stuff, which fortunately we don't have.

Q: Did you have a regional area you were interested in?

WARREN: I was interested in Asia and I was also interested in Europe. Vietnam seemed like it was going to be a not terribly good outcome, although all of us were being sent to Vietnam back in 1967. And so of course when I got over there in 1968, you know, again you could see what was going on.

Q: So your first assignment was Vietnam. You were there from when to when?

WARREN: Summer 1968 to early 1970.

Q: First place, had you taken Vietnamese?

WARREN: Yes, I did take Vietnamese.

Q: How'd you find it?

WARREN: The FSI course for Vietnamese was too artificial. And it was of course all South Vietnamese dialect.

Q: When you went to Vietnam did you know where you were going and what your duties were?

WARREN: I was told when I got there that I was stationed right outside of Saigon in Châu Đốc district. I was a deputy advisor on this Military advisory team in CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support).

Q: What was the situation in Châu Đốc?

WARREN: Châu Đốc, they had a North Vietnam main force and these troops had come through in Tet [Ed: January 1968] and to a certain offense in May. There had been some heavy fighting there. The pacification effort had been hurt a certain amount, a good amount. Then by the summer of 1968, the United States and South Vietnamese Government were coming back and did largely pacify most of the district, although there were some still residual Viet Cong.

Q: What sort of a province was it? Was it agricultural or --

WARREN: Agriculture, but they also had textile mills. And they did have some light industry too. The reason I say about residual VC (Viet Cong) efforts was that in 1969 they killed a VC member, and they found this documents on him which showed clearly what kind of revenues they're getting from the textile mills as payoffs. And it turned out that the communists were actually getting more taxes or, you know, protection money, whatever you want to call it, from the textile mill owners than was the South Vietnamese Government.

Q: Well, how did you find working there?

WARREN: It was -- basically what happened, what you could see was you did have a South Vietnamese elite that was trying to feather its nest quite a bit. This certainly wasn't true of all -- there are also plenty of idealists also and people that didn't like the communists. But they were -- for instance, when the North Vietnamese had been driven out, and these areas, which had been completely fallow agricultural land, not used at all, were being reoccupied for farming than some well-connected people in Saigon bought them up, rather than distributing them to the peasants, which they absolutely should have done if they wanted to get some support. I mean things like that. I mean there were pretty gross cases of corruption. On the other hand, the people weren't as desperate as I think they were made out to be. I mean generally it was reasonably successful agricultural area.

Q: How'd you find the military team you were with?

WARREN: Military team I was with, the military advisors U.S. Army were pretty sharp, realistic about what was going on. We had also a battalion of the 1st Infantry Division, which is guarding the waterworks and helping to guard Châu Đốc. They were capable people. They had some guys who were, you know, kind of vainglorious and a couple of the officers wanted to make sure that we played up all the great pacification so they could cover their ass. But so you had some of that. There was not as frank reporting as there should have been. I mean, they wanted to make themselves look better than the situation was. But it wasn't -- it wasn't that bad. I mean you don't have the impression that they were incompetent in any way.

Q: Well, how'd you find the CORDS structure?

WARREN: CORDS structure, until it was taken over by the Military, was actually quite effective. And it was -- I think it was -- there was a lot of CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) influence in it. Some of the things they were doing, I mean let's face it, you know, the Phoenix Program was successful. It wasn't something you want to talk about -

Q: Phoenix Program?

WARREN: Liquidating the VC infrastructure. And you get -- they got hold of VC and they interrogated them harshly and they used a certain amount of torture and some of them they killed or got rid of them, and some of them kind of disappeared. And it wasn't a very nice program. It was a reasonably effective program.

Q: Did you have much contact with CORDS headquarters?

WARREN: Yes in Da Nang province, at the province level. I didn't have -- I had hardly any contact at all with the Embassy. It was almost zero. And the Embassy was sort of floating around in sort of an unreal world that to us the Military, CIA, and the Province Headquarters were the guys we looked up to for guidance.

Q: How about Vietnamese Province Chiefs and the like?

WARREN: They had a couple of district chiefs that were quite good. The province chief, they changed the province chief so the first one wasn't so good and he got kicked out and they put in a Military guy who was more effective. And they had some -- again, a couple of the Vietnamese high-ranking generals actually were able also. And they had no illusions about what was going on and they just said definitely, you have to protect this area and you have to do this or you're going to lose. So they were realistic. I mean a lot of them were realistic.

Q: Were you in Châu Đốc the whole time?

WARREN: Yes, I was. I mean I had a chance to visit Tây Ninh for orientation. We went up to a couple of other provinces for orientation. But basically I was in Châu Đốc and going into Da Nang for, you know, the province headquarters and in Saigon.

Q: Did you get off on any leave?

WARREN: Oh yeah. Twice to Japan and twice to Thailand.

Q: So did you sort of feel you had checked off your Vietnam box and that would take care of that? Or did you want to get back?

WARREN: I never wanted to get back. I will tell you, I married a Vietnamese wife, with whom I'm still married, in 1970. We got the hell out and she was glad to get out and her whole family got out, you know, mother, father, and all the kiddies. All her siblings got out in April of 1975. Now living in San Diego.

Q: Well, how did they get out? April of 1975 was the fall of Saigon under chaotic conditions.

WARREN: Well, they got out with through the help of people in the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok who -- because I was stationed in New Delhi at that time. And I did go to Bangkok. Obviously it was going to be impossible to get into Saigon itself, but thanks to some people at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok we were able to -- or I was able to call up, talk to people in -- Americans in the political section who were instrumental in contacting the families of Foreign Service officers. And they, a Vietnamese guy got them on to the right plane so they were able to get out just in time, practically one of the few planes left. I mean they were almost on the last plane. They were the last few planes to get out of Tan Son Nhat Airport.

Q: What was the background of your wife?

WARREN: That she was, you know, they were -- really I guess you could -- you kind of say they were merchants in Châu Đốc district. They had come down from North Vietnam in 1954 staying in Châu Đốc. She did work for the district headquarters and then later on she worked for Pacific Architects and Engineers.

Q: Was her family Catholic?

WARREN: Yes. Just as an editorial aside, we now have extended cable and we watch Vietnamese television, you know. There's a regular stream of program. It's channel 478. It's from Communist Vietnam. And again, they never reported that in the media, which sort of amazes me. But you take a look at that television programming and the U.S. had just a huge affect on Communist Vietnam. I think because of the exposure to South Vietnam it's drastically changed the attitude of the communist authorities and the whole culture. So it still is probably a separation between North and South Vietnam, really. I

haven't been back there, but it seems like there was a much more kind of -- this is to a certain extent pro-West or more pro-capitalist.

Q: Yeah, well it's -- it really is remarkable what has --

WARREN: Happened with Vietnam. And you know, instead of totally abject failure, which would be an utter horror show after the loss of the Vietnam War, actually Vietnam has come out -- recently it has come out pretty well really.

Q: Yeah. Well, so you got out in early 1970. With your wife?

WARREN: Yes.

Q: Then what?

WARREN: Then I was assigned to Washington and was a year or so in the administrative section of the State Department.

Q: Doing what?

WARREN: Information management. You know, what's when I came up with the TAGS [Ed: an acronym for Traffic Analyses by Geography and Subject, which is a series of codes to assist in the distribution of State Department cables] for telegrams and things like that, which is good. But I think there was a certain amount of jealousy by FSOs (Foreign Service Officer) who'd served in other parts of the world because the people who served in Vietnam were getting accelerated promotions, which may be the same thing you're going to see from FSOs coming out of Afghanistan and Iraq today. But there definitely was jealousy. And so when people arrived back in Washington it was thanks you guys, now we're going to make sure that your career gets compensated, but you might end up in one of these administrative jobs, which weren't all that cool.

Q: Well, how long were you doing that?

WARREN: I did that for about a year and a half and then I went up for a part -- then I went up for a few months as a staff assistant in the Political Military Bureau, which was interesting. The Department was willing to pay for part of my training at Harvard Business School, to which I was accepted. But I also took leave without pay. So you know, they paid for part of it and I took leave without pay to get the MBA (Master's of Business Administration) degree.

Q: How did you find the atmosphere on the Harvard campus in terms of anti-war protests? I mean we were beginning to withdraw by that time.

WARREN: Oh yeah, definitely. By 1973 that had largely dried up. Once Nixon said no more draft and no more, you know, I'll shift to a volunteer army, you know, pull the troops out, that did dry up a lot of the fervor.

Q: Yes, one might say that as soon as the college graduates were taken out of the mix as far as the draft was concerned, that the idealism died out rather quickly.

WARREN: To a certain extent, yeah, I think that was true.

Q: Well, how did you find the Harvard Business School? Had you declared a conal specialty? Were you an admin cone by that time?

WARREN: I was considering admin cone and also shifting to either that or economic cone. Yeah, I definitely did not want to do political work at that time. I was more interested in the economic stuff. The program was good, very useful, and we got into accounting and finance and more practical side of economics.

Q: How'd you find the Harvard Business School?

WARREN: I found it pretty good. It was -- again, there was -- it was a question of how you present yourself, how you interview. It was sort of this -- a lot of people saying how do you really work your career. One thing which did slip up, and I think they should have emphasized more, a lot more, was personal finance. Because I -- really until -- practically until I got out of the Foreign Service I really didn't have that much of a clue about investing and, you know, going down the usual stocks and bonds and stuff like that to how you really do financial planning. And I think they, they should have -- it's too bad they hadn't emphasized that, even back then. It's a business school.

They should have given that subject a lot more emphasis, you know, like guys, you can get great jobs, but you really have to know about your personal finances, whatever you do.

Q: Well, then so you got out of Harvard in the summer of 1973. So then what?

WARREN: Then I was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi as a junior economic officer and was there from 1973 to 1975.

Q: Well, first off, how would you describe the situation politically and economically in India when you got there in 1973?

WARREN: Mrs. Gandhi had authorized the invasion of Bangladesh, you know, freeing Bangladesh from the Pakistani Government. So Bangladesh became a new country. India was starting to really flex its muscles.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan was the ambassador [Ed: serving from February 1973 to January 1975] who was pretty sharp and understood what was going on. You had Dave Schneider as DCM (deputy chief of mission) who was sharp and understood what was going on. We had Paul Kreisberg as the political counselor who was a very able guy,

who's dead now unfortunately. And Peter Lambe was the economic counselor. He was sharp.

But then you had a lot of guys underneath him -- I won't mention names -- but took the idea of oh well, India's going down the drain, except it's too big so it won't fit, you know. All these clever little remarks saying that -- because obviously you could see all the poverty and the bureaucracy and the incompetence and everything else that was going on with India. But underneath you had a feeling of -- I had a feeling of hey, this is going to be a very strong -- this is obviously going to be a very strong country and it's probably going to be a lot stronger than the Arab countries in the Middle East, which everybody's paying, you know, great deal of attention to in NEA (Bureau of Near East and South Asia)).

I mean India was really was going to get there, it was going to be very powerful. And I think the Europeans understood that more than a lot of Americans and the embassy were kind of making jokes about India.

Q: What was the view from the embassy of Pakistan?

WARREN: It was split that some -- the people felt yeah, Pakistan's a real ally. Others say, you know, Pakistan's really weakened. And it's not going to be, you know, any way comparable to India and we shouldn't bend over backwards to focus too much American attention on Pakistan without -- of course, don't forget at that time India was pro-Soviet, Indira Gandhi was pro-Soviet, was buying billions of dollars of weapons from Russia, then the USSR. It was extensive trade carried on between Russia and India using rupees. And these nonconvertible accounts that I think the Russians got the better of that one. India was third world and Soviet-oriented a lot more than it was U.S.-oriented, but a lot of individual Indians were, were obviously western oriented and pro-U.S.

Q: Well, what piece of the pie did you have in the economics section?

WARREN: Narcotics and reporting on industrial development.

Q: Well, India was going through still -- what do you call it -- an enclosed economy, wasn't it?

WARREN: Yeah, definitely. The licensing was amazing. And then restrictions on foreign trade, the restrictions even on how much industrial production you could do if you were a company. You had to have licenses to produce. You had to have licenses to import. You had to have other restrictions on exporting. There were foreign exchange restrictions like crazy.

Q: I'm told even today they've been having the commonwealth games in India and there's a lot of talk about the license laws were, you know, all the Indians were trying to shake off this. The licenses were a form of what, employment, of --

WARREN: Well, it was a form of enrichment for the bureaucracy (*laughs*).

Q: Basically the licenses you had to pay to --

WARREN: You bribed people to get a license to import -- to import this or that or to produce whatever.

Q: Were there many American firms that --

WARREN: Some, but not very many. I think Union Carbide was there at that time and there were -- there were some banks like Citibank. And there was some, but nothing like there is now.

Q: Well, it just wasn't a very friendly environment, was it?

WARREN: It was not a very friendly environment, except narcotics was friendly because the Indians did have a big legal production of opium for medicinal purposes, and they did have reasonably good control of their narcotics. So it wasn't a huge outflow of heroin or illegal narcotics to everywhere else. I mean it was pretty well controlled and they did want to work closely with the Americans. That was one of the few areas where we really had good relations.

Q: Well, I would imagine that the India-Burmese border would be a particularly sensitive area.

WARREN: Yeah, there was -- yeah, there -- yeah, there was to some extent there. But the main poppy growing area was in Rajasthan, which is more toward Pakistan.

Q: What were we doing with the drug business?

WARREN: Well, I think Nixon had formed the Drug Enforcement Administration at that time and they were of course worried about Turkey. And Turkey was a big concern producing a lot of narcotics and the French -- it was the French connection before I guess the French really cracked down on it.

I think this was before Colombia really became a big deal, or Mexico. It was -- but yeah, I mean the Americans even at that time did have a big appetite for illegal drugs, you know. I mean, and they were talking about heroin. They didn't talk about cocaine in India. It was -- it was -- or it was opium and then they were worried that that would be made into heroin.

Q: Well, then do we have a DEA, Drug Enforcement Agency, representative?

WARREN: Yes, we did.

Q: And they seem to get along fairly well in the --

WARREN: And they did have good contacts with the Indians, yeah. Oh yeah.

Q: Did you pick up any views where political officers or others about Indira Gandhi and her administration?

WARREN: Yeah. She was very forceful and really had a real will to power, you know. She was a very strong woman. She did *not* like the United States. She inherited a lot of her father's views toward capitalism and toward the USSR, is in certain ways a natural ally of India. And she was certainly a pro-Soviet. Although India wasn't going all the way. They certainly weren't totally in bed with the Russians, but it was -- they were not -- certainly not friendly toward us. And so people had -- and the Indian bureaucracy did take its cues from Indira Gandhi in the higher levels. And so getting information from Indian officials was a lot tougher than it would prove to be later on. I mean you'd go from meeting in the Finance Ministry. They would have something like an iron ore conference because Indian wanted to form a world iron ore cartel, because they had a lot of iron ore. And so, you know, I'd go to the Australian, the Canadian, the Swedish Embassy, which is all, you know, they're also iron ore producers and you'd get plenty of information about what happened at the meeting, then you'd go and talk to the Indian official and you'd get almost nothing. It'd be just completely anodyne conversation. It wouldn't mean anything.

Q: How'd you and your wife find living in India at the time?

WARREN: It was OK. I mean the embassy housing was always a problem because they kept shifting it around and they had some areas which were considered to be quite chic for the political section, for instance, kind of close to the embassy in the more favored diplomatic areas. And then we're out in areas which were less favorite. I mean, they weren't -- certainly weren't slummy or anything, but they weren't considered to be as posh or -- of course now India was and I guess is now, I mean, in New Delhi I mean the temperature hits 110 plus, as you know in the summer. And the summer starts in April. And then they have the monsoon, which would be terrible if they didn't have the monsoon. And then but winter is very nice. And you could travel around.

Q: So did India attract you? Did you see it as an area to specialize in or not?

WARREN: As a place, one place that I did want to know more about, yeah.

Q: So what was your next assignment?

WARREN: To Muscat in the sultanate of Oman. I was there from 1975 to 1977.

Q: Oh yeah. Well, that goes back to -- was it 1848 or something like that, or our initial treaty was -- under Jackson I think, wasn't it?

WARREN: I don't know, but it was -- yeah, it was certainly way back, 19th century. And Muscat was interesting because they were -- of course the whole gulf was really taking off like a rocket in 1975 with the hike in the oil prices. And these places were all becoming developed. And Oman was coming out of a very kind of an isolated backward era. The sultan, Sultan Qaboos, was a lot more forward looking guy.

Q: Well, it used to be called Muscat in Oman?

WARREN: Yeah, it used to be called Muscat in Oman, but Muscat of course is the capital. But then when we were there it was, it was Oman. It was the sultanate of Oman.

Q: What was the situation there?

WARREN: Situation was the British had a lot of power. India had a lot of influence. The U.S. was also very favored. The British and the Iranians were helping the Omanis fight a guerilla war in the southern part of Oman in Dhofar especially on the _____, on the mountain. So they -- and the British really have been -- were fighting this war for several years and by 1975 or 1976 they were successful. They cleared it out.

Q: So what was the problem in Dhofar? Was this a local tribal dispute or what?

WARREN: It was local tribes who were connected with people in South Yemen, in Aden -- in South Yemen. But they were ethnically a lot different than the Arabs in the north. And they -- they, you know, it was a radical insurgency going on there that was being helped by South Yemen, which was at that time pro-Soviet.

Q: So were we involved in that or were we letting the British do it?

WARREN: We let the British really do it. We gave some assistance, but basically, yeah, the British really did it.

Q: So what were your duties?

WARREN: I was a commercial officer, commercial and economic officer in Oman. Yeah, we were watching the oil sector and looking for opportunities for American firms and just watching kind of for non-oil things we could get into also.

Q: What was the commercial atmosphere? Were they pretty receptive to American goods and services?

WARREN: Yeah, they were receptive to foreign goods a great deal. They were very much into pretty much a free import. There was a lot of freedom with foreign exchange. I mean you go down to a local bank and write a check, a U.S. dollar check and get your money Omani rials. I mean it was very different from India. It was a lot more wide open. And they had a surprising amount of interchange with Africa. In Dhofar I remember watching a ship with all these Somali goats, which were going to be killed for Eid. They

have close relations with Kenya. Zanzibar of course had been tied in with the Sultan of Oman in the 19th century so they were Zanzibari -- there were a lot of Zanzibar people up there. They definitely were oriented toward Africa, they were oriented toward India, and they had -- the British had a big influence there so it was quite a combination.

Q: Well, what about sort of the bureaucracy of Muscat? I mean have -- was it done mainly by expatriates or?

WARREN: They had local people there too. I mean there wasn't -- they did have key advisors who were expatriates, but yeah, they had local Omani bureaucrats and some of those -- some of those people were pretty able. I mean they'd been some of them foreign trained, they were intelligent.

Q: At one point we were very interested in building up military assets? Was that going on then or not?

WARREN: Yeah, well Masirah was an RAF (Royal Air Force) base, which was quite important. And I -- so we were working with the British and, you know, bringing in American planes to Masirah Island as well. And we were also thinking of getting Military presence at Seeb, which was the main airport for Muscat.

WARREN: I mean, sorry, there's another base called Thumrait in the south, which was -- I guess it's -- I guess it's really expanded. Because that -- obviously it was undergoing a lot of expansion because that was in Dhofar but it was set back into the desert and so you could fly anything there. I mean it, you know, nobody would see it.

Q: Mm-hmm. Did -- was this causing problems within the population of Muscat?

WARREN: No, it wasn't causing a problem. The Omanis were happy that -- they didn't like communism and they were suspicious of all these other influences in the Gulf and they were happy to get western support.

Q: Did the situation in Iran draw any notice?

WARREN: Not when I was there. That happened -- you started feeling it in 1978 I guess but I wasn't there then.

Q: How were the Muscat Oman relations with what was once known as the Trucial States or now the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?

WARREN: United Arab Emirates. Oman just wanted to make sure that the border was delineated. They were, I think, a little bit suspicious of whether the UAE would start impinging on them because they didn't have a clear border, which I don't even know if they have a clear border now. By that point Abu Dhabi and Dubai -- Dubai was of course a very traditional Arab state and the UAE -- Abu Dhabi was coming up as being quite important, but they didn't have -- just unbelievable money that had gotten out.

Q: What about Muscat Oman? Was there significant oil?

WARREN: Yeah. It was significant but not huge. It wasn't like Kuwait or Qatar as far as just incredible amounts of hydrocarbons and hydrocarbon revenues. But they realized they weren't going to run it forever.

Q: Did you have much contact with the people of Muscat?

WARREN: Yes, we did with Omanis, we had social contacts. And not only people in the government, who were friendly. While the Arab world has probably changed a great deal, but I remember one incident when we took our little Mazda and drove into the desert. We were going camping and this Omani who had a house, you know, right next to these big sand dunes called the Wahiba Sand Dunes, which are very famous. This guy actually invited us to sleep in his house rather than sleeping in a tent. You know, it was -- serving us dates. And my Arabic was like that, I mean it was practically nothing, faking it all the way. But it was amazing. This guy just popped out and invited us in there.

Q: Well, I imagine there's a substantial British influence there.

WARREN: Yes, there was a strong British influence there. They had British advisors to the sultan and Sultan Qaboos had been educated in Sandhurst.

Q: Did you feel that the Brits were trying to, you know, keep us from getting too big in the area?

WARREN: Not so much, no. Actually, I have a lot of respect for the British because I think they were very suave in the way they handled it. They were a lot more skilled in handling a situation like Oman than we would have been. And I was impressed by the British Military. They handled that insurgency very well.

Q: Well, were the officials at all -- the Omani officials, were they kind of throwing our relations with Israel in our face all the time or not?

WARREN: No, they didn't care that much. Really, there was almost nothing along those lines. They didn't give a damn about Israel. Really, they probably respected Israel. It wasn't sort of like "We're all going to go out and die for Palestine." It certainly wasn't that.

Q: Was there much of a Kuwaiti influence there?

WARREN: Not much. There was -- yeah, there were Kuwaitis there. There were -- Omanis were suspicious of Saudis for good reasons. I think everybody's suspicious of Saudis. Iraq at that time of course -- I guess Saddam had gotten into power -- but the Iraqis actually were secular, sophisticated. We knew Omanis who were married to Iraqi women. We entertained them socially. Iraq looked good.

Q: I forgot to ask. When you were in Oman, who was our ambassador then?

WARREN: William Wolle.

Q: Bill Wolle's a real Arab hand – [Ed: Wolle served in Oman from July 1974 to April 1978]

WARREN: He really was. The DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) David Zweifel was also an Arab hand. So the top leadership of the Embassy were Arabists.

Q: Well, then you left there when?

WARREN: December of 1977 and went back to FSI and studied French and then on to Algeria in the summer of 1978.

Q: You're becoming a Middle Eastern specialist?

WARREN: I was sort of starting to move toward that direction, although I knew unless I made the commitment to do Arabic that that would not be -- not the way to go.

Q: Well, you went to Algeria in 1978. What was the situation there?

WARREN: Boumediène was running it. Tight hand, very ideologically socialist. Not at all friendly toward the West. Underneath Algeria was starting to ferment the little bit because they were -- I think a lot of Algerians were getting tired of this very rigid socialist regime, grandiose projects. They wanted better ties to the West. They certainly wanted to have better relations with the French. And they were also getting tired of the corruption that was really creeping in to Algeria under the socialist regime. Revolutionary fervor was beginning to die down and people said, you know, fun's fun, but we really need to restore better relations with France.

Q: Well, was there any problem with the fundamentalist Islamic --

WARREN: Started to creep in in 1979. There was a guy named Yahiaoui who was an Arabist, an arabisant. He just wanted to get rid of the Western influences. He was pro-Libyan, as I remember. He really wanted to make things, you know, using Arabic rather than French language, to really orient Algeria really toward the Arab world and to minimize Western influence. And he lost the contest with Chadli Bendjedid. Bendjedid was more along the lines, we-have-to-balance-the-Arab-and-the-Western. We, you know, we can't be totally Arabist, you know. We can't -- it's not going to work and we do need more contact with the West, more Western education, more contact with foreign firms. This is not going to work.

Q: Then who was your ambassador in Algeria?

WARREN: Ulric (St. Clair) Haynes (Jr.). He was a black American married to a Haitian woman, spoke fluent French, didn't know Arabic. Political appointee of the Carter Administration, and former executive of Cummins Engine.

Q: How'd he fit?

WARREN: I think he was an effective ambassador. I think -- because he was genuinely interested in his job and interested in the Arab world and wanted to make sure the U.S. could work with the Algerians.

Q: What was your job?

WARREN: I was commercial officer then.

Q: Had the commercial operation moved over to the Department of Commerce at this point?

WARREN: It didn't until my last two months there. Basically I think that the Foreign Service and the State Department blew it. I think that they had screwed up the way they were handling commercial officers. I think FCS (Foreign Commercial Service) now is a lot more workable than the old system and I think it's given the proper amount of weight. And I think there's no way that's ever going to go back to State Department. They had their chance and they screwed it up.

Q: At the time under Boumediène how was American commercial situation there?

WARREN: Not very much. It was El Paso Natural Gas was in big, but other than that, it there weren't that many things except for hydrocarbon sector. And you know, there were a few -- some aviation. But really it was -- there just wasn't that much American commercial influence there.

Q: Well, in a way under a socialist economy it really puts a damper on trade with firms abroad, doesn't it?

WARREN: Yes, it does. Or it's all very rigidly controlled and a direct trade when you can. And the Europeans -- I will give the Europeans credit. They knew how to play the game and they weren't as restrained by the Foreign Practices Act as we were.

Q: Well, the Foreign Relations Corruption Act really, really, particularly in its early days, was a real problem, wasn't it?

WARREN: Yeah, it was. I mean -- I'll tell you, for instance, you talk to -- thinking about my experience in New Delhi. This is where Airbus got one of its really big early starts, was Airbus came in, had big demonstrations to the Indians, and the U.S. -- I think it was Indian Airlines was going to buy some Airbuses or thinking of buying some Boeings. And the Indians were obviously looking around. They want to make sure they're going to

personally benefit from whatever they choose. And the Airbus, they had a excellent package, they had good interest rate and support and I'm sure as hell they also bribed very freely to get that. They bribed their way into India and that was a big success for them and Airbus went on from there. If Airbus had lost I think they would have had a lot more trouble challenging Boeing over the long run.

Q: Yeah. Well, did you find that American business people would come in and cry on your shoulder?

WARREN: Oh yeah, to some extent. Or they would stay as far away as possible from American Embassy and figure out ways of getting things done using agents and stuff like that.

Q: You know, all just very problematic. If you have an agent and you pay him a fee you know, and what does that fee mean?

WARREN: Right, yeah. Oh sure. And there were obvious ways of doing it or you help out -- you send the kiddies -- you pay for the college education of leading members of the foreign corporation so they can get their children to American education. You can do things like that. Scholarships.

Q: Well, Algerians don't -- they have a reputation of being rather dour, not --

WARREN: They're rough. They're rough. But yeah, they -- partly, but except we got to know several of them pretty well and I was sponsored by Someren, which was a national minerals company. I went down for several days down to the Sahara, you know, way below, you know, even below Tamanrasset. It was right literally in the heart of the Sahara Desert. It was the most bleak place I've ever seen in my life. But these guys, we were driving around for days in Range Rovers and stuff like that. But they were friendly. I mean they were -- so it wasn't that they were all that hostile.

Q: And it wasn't dangerous, I take it, in those days?

WARREN: No, it wasn't. They didn't have the insurgency until right around 1990 or so. And I -- I'm sure that the French must have given military assistance to the Algerians to help them defeat that when I had the -- because that civil war killed what, about 200,000 people.

Q: How about while you were there, the role of the French?

WARREN: Officially it was all the revolution, you know, the French are evil, the French did all these terrible things. But underneath, yes, they looked a lot to the French. They prided themselves on speaking good French. I think they admired France in a certain amount of ways. And don't forget, World War II and even other places too, World War I, World War II, and even into China. That Algeria troops had done a lot of bleeding for

France. And so they weren't -- those sort of memories weren't going to be thrown away. I think there was still a lot of respect for the French.

Q: Were the Soviets involved down there?

WARREN: Soviets were -- I don't think they liked the Soviets that much.

Q: Well, the Soviets basically were not really very warm and fuzzy in foreign affairs.

WARREN: No, they weren't. No because -- yeah, the Soviets had a lot of influence with the military, the Algerian military. We were starting to get more with it. And then the, the Soviets had various commercial enterprises, you know, state corporations, which were working with the Algerians in various areas. I think the Algerians felt that the Western companies could provide better service, whether it's German or American or French or what have you.

Q: Did Libya intrude at all? Was it messing around there?

WARREN: Not really. The Algerians were very suspicious of the Libyans. Gaddafi and his -- and he had a bodyguard -- went through for Boumediène's funeral, which was I think just a couple months after we got there. Boumediène died [Ed: December 27, 1978] and they had to bury him, you know, within 24 hours, which is the Muslim tradition. So they had all these people flying in for Boumediène's funeral. Gaddafi and his Libyan guys were sort of muscling around and pushing other people out of the way. That was not very, you know, as they went to attend the funeral, and that was not respected by the Algerians. They did not like them.

Q: How about Morocco?

WARREN: They had somewhat hostile reactions -- they did have partly hostile relations with Morocco because the Algerians were supporting the Polisario in the Western Sahara and the -- of course the Moroccans wanted the Western Sahara.

Q: So you know, it all struck me that Polisario Movement was --

WARREN: Mostly ginned up by the Algerians. I think it was largely as fake as a \$3 bill,

Q: And we'll pick this up the next time when you left Algeria and where did you go in 1980?

WARREN: The Bureau of Political Military Affairs in Washington, until 1983.

Q: Who was the director of the Bureau at the time?

WARREN: Reggie Bartholomew until the administration changed and Richard Burt came in as the Bureau Director. [Ed: Bartholomew served from July 1979 to January

1981. Arriving with the Reagan Administration, Burt served from January 1981 to February 1982.]

Q: That bureau waxes and wanes, but it's quite a high-powered bureau, wasn't it?

WARREN: It waxed then. Absolutely. Yeah, I mean it was strong under Bartholomew and it was really strong under Richard Burt. And then they had, you know, they had (Robert) Blackwill as the Deputy Director and -- under Burt. And then they had -- and Arnie Raphael came in later.

Q: Well, what's the background of Richard Burt?

WARREN: He was with the New York Times and I think he'd been also over at this Institute for Strategic Studies in Britain. He was a friend of Judith Miller as well. But yeah, he was very knowledgeable -- oh, thank you very much -- about political military affairs and you know, aggressive and really wanted to put across the administration viewpoint.

Q: Well, what piece of the action did you have?

WARREN: I was the deputy -- first the deputy and later the Head of the Office of Nuclear Nonproliferation Policy and Operations (PM/NPO).

Q: Well, in a way how did this interface with AECA (Arms Export Control Act), you know, the arms control? Because in a way isn't that part --

WARREN: It was quite a different approach, because AECA of course really was under - - was for arms control and disarmament. And nonproliferation policy was -- involved trying to control proliferation, but also doing it in such a way that it bolsters our overall political aims, I think more so than the AECA people had. I mean the PM Bureau thought that arms control made sense if it was part of a policy framework for the United States and helped really get our political goals accomplished. And AECA was more kind of purist and seeing it as, you know, arms control for the sake of arms control.

Q: Well, when we talk about nonproliferation in the 1980-83 timeframe, what were you looking?

WARREN: There were about 10 countries in 1980 that were interested in developing nuclear weapons actively. And they were of course Iraq, some -- Brazil and Argentina were interested. Definitely South Korea and Taiwan. And that was probably largely because Jimmy Carter talked about unilaterally pulling American troops out of South Korea and they just said we're going to start exploring the nuclear option, for a very good reason of course, because of North Korea. Then you had India and Pakistan, both India and Pakistan had been developing nuclear weapons and it was just -- started down that road. That was a big one. And then you had freaky countries like Libya, which was -- Gaddafi was starting to explore nuclear weapons too.

Q: Well, now one country you didn't mention, but Israel was -- was Israel an absolute no-no, or how did that work?

WARREN: Well, the two -- there were two absolute no-nos. One was Israel and the other was South Africa. And by 1980 Israel had accumulated, you know -- this is no secret -- they had about 100 nuclear weapons. And they were working on missiles, I think the Jericho missile. And they certainly had them rigged so they could use them for American -- American supplied Jets. So they -- Israel had really a full nuclear force. And you know, that was -- everybody knew they had them. But for obvious reasons they didn't want to talk about them. The other thing though, which was more interesting, was South Africa. Because South Africa did develop at that time about five or six nuclear weapons. And that was absolutely taboo. I remember in 1982 that I went to talk to the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory people out in California. And they were talking about Taiwan missiles that were, you know, really could be used for nuclear weapons delivery. And then they started talking about some of the advances that South Africa was doing. And you know, so we wrote that up when we got back to the Department. We wrote a little memo to Bob Blackwill and he just said, "Guys, no way will you have a paper on this, discuss it, anything, because this is just too sensitive, politically sensitive."

Q: Well, could you describe, at the time were you told why was it politically sensitive? In other words, I mean here's somebody shouldn't have it in our view, but you don't talk about it. How come?

WARREN: Well, don't forget in 19 -- I think it was early 1980 or late '79, I can't remember which, there'd been this very low yield test off of the South African coast which flashed. The famous Vela satellite picked up the flash, which obviously was a low yield nuclear test and it very likely had been designed by Israel and South Africa together. And the CIA -- CIA personnel I talked to in 1981 said, you know, absolutely, yeah, they're damn sure that was South Africa and Israel testing this thing. Probably mainly Israel had the technology, but South Africa contributed. But again, because of the sensitivity, the Carter Administration didn't want to get up and say yeah, Israel and South Africa together tested a low yield nuclear weapon given, you know, everything else that was going on at that time and the pressures that would be levied against the U.S. for supporting Israel and the pressure on South Africa.

Q: Everybody knew this flash. I mean was this something that was thrown in your face all the time or how did we treat it?

WARREN: We treated it -- the U.S. said officially it was some -- I can't remember what they said, it was an atmosphere disturbance or some other damn thing. I've -- the excuse was ridiculous. And everybody knew it was a lot of nonsense. But they, you know, it was sort of an agreed nonsense story.

Q: Well, were we trying to take measures to keep South Africa from getting any further or...?

WARREN: Yeah, actually this is -- again, this is very interesting. This cuts to the whole thing about Political Military Bureau versus other bureaus in the department, and really throughout the United States Government. This gets very interesting because when I came to the bureau in September of 1980, the Carter Administration approach on nonproliferation was to use export controls and international law and legal measures to start proliferation. Which were good, but not sufficient, because what was really driving these countries to get -- to look for the nuclear weapon option or to actually develop nuclear weapons was primarily political and a fear of their -- that their underlying national security would be really jeopardized if they did not get nuclear weapons. This is certainly true for South Korea. It was true to a good extent for Taiwan. And then of course you had Iraq was doing it for various reasons, partly out of a fear of Iran, partly because they wanted to dominate the Middle East. And Libya was doing it because Qadhafi was having these fantasies about dominating Africa and, you know, for the aggressive nations of Africa rising up against the West. And of course he was doing terrorism at the same time, but -- so Qadhafi was kind of sniffing around. But with South Africa and Ambassador McHenry, who was the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, said, "There must be some sort of a political hook we can use to get the South Africans to back off nuclear weapons development so it just doesn't create an absolutely impossible situation in Southern Africa. There must be some kind of political insurances and some way or another we can give that government." But because the apartheid government of South Africa was such a pariah and nobody wanted, you know, the political problems of helping it in any way. That initiative that McHenry wanted never went anywhere.

Remember, and Chet Crocker was doing a whole lot of stuff in the 1980s.

Q: Yes, he was working on Namibia, wasn't it?

WARREN: Namibia, right.

Q: Well, as the bureau went on, I mean was this sort of you doing this, I mean figuring out what to do?

WARREN: It was first of all a guy named Jerry Kahan who was a Deputy Director in the Political Military Bureau under the Democrats. And he said, and he was kind of a lonely voice, but he said, "You've got to factor in all these political things and you can't just treat it as a matter of export controls and international law, that that's -- that will not work." And there were a lot of these very wonderful ideas, like the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace and all these other things, that were, you know, kind of ridiculous. Because the Indian Ocean, you know, India and Pakistan among others, certainly weren't terribly peaceful. And it was just all the stuff -- a lot of stuff is going on. And Pakistan was driving and really starting to work toward enrichment and developing nuclear weapons and everything else because they were afraid of India and of course they're worried about the invasion of Afghanistan. Scared them to death.

Q: This is the Soviet.

WARREN: Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

Q: Well, we had quite a few -- I won't say scares -- but the whole nuclear thing has gotten terribly sophisticated about who's getting yellow cake and who's getting centrifuges and all.

WARREN: Iran, yeah.

Q: I take it though in your time the intelligence side wasn't giving you the knowledge that you --

WARREN: Oh no, they were. I'm sorry. That -- if I said that or implied that that was not true. Yes, I did get the codeword labeled intel, you know, we had special clearances. Everybody who was in this field did. We had an interagency meeting where they would go country by country and, you know, including right up to codeword and INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research) would share it. And this is like a monthly meeting where they would actually go through and they would screen out the most important topics and they would actually -- actually publish a little thing. You know, it was obviously -- there were no wiki leaks for this stuff, but they'd go right through and they'd say yeah, here's some "Q" clearance stuff and they'd, you know, here's codeword info on what these countries are doing.

Q: Were the efforts of what's his name, Professor Khan or so in Pakistan known at that point?

WARREN: No. They knew that he was trying to develop nuclear weapons. They did not know that he was going to be exporting them all over the place, which I think happened later possibly because of his Islamist sympathies.

Q: How about China? Was China considered a bad boy or?

WARREN: It was interesting. In 1980s, China was considered, you know, an unlovable but, you know, improving country. Don't forget Deng Xiaoping had taken over. It wasn't Chairman Mao anymore. China, the U.S. After all, ever since Nixon/Kissinger visited China the U.S. give them that guarantee to a certain extent and, you know, warning Russia not to do a nuclear attack on China. You know, I think Nixon did that well back in what, the 1970s or something like that. So we really, we figured yeah, the Chinese are unlovable. But we were -- we were helping them out. I'll tell you something. I even think I heard that the U.S. even gave China some information about nuclear test safety. I mean it was a -- it was some really, really high-level stuff. I mean really high level. We considered China as not exactly an ally, but an entity that was helpful against the USSR.

Q: Well, in a way wasn't nonproliferation one of the few places where the Soviet Union and the United States were on the same track going --

WARREN: Yes, it was. Definitely. And specifically in 1983 because I remember I -- I actually drafted a cable in 1982 where we -- our chargé in Moscow approached the Soviet Government and said, you know, regardless we really do have a mutual consideration not to allow the proliferation of long range nuclear capable missile systems. And the Russians said yeah, we agree with you on that.

Q: Well, did that lead to anything?

WARREN: Well, led to plenty of discussion for the Russians and the Russians didn't export nuclear capable missile technology. Just like actually India didn't either. India was pretty good. And we did have some very high-level discussions in 1981 even with the Indians. There was consideration about helping them with their nuclear power, but that didn't go anywhere for a while. We did have that Tarapur reactor near Bombay.

Q: Well, were we, say with the Koreans, taking the approach, "OK, you don't develop nuclear weapons, but we will put ours behind you or --"

WARREN: Yeah, Secretary Hague specifically told the South Koreans, I think it was in 1981, he said, "Yeah, don't go developing nuclear weapons, but we will keep our tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea," which we had -- we did have tactical nukes there. "We will back you up with naval and air forces. We'll make sure that North Korea would be flattened if it ever tried anything against you," and so we definitely gave them insurances at the highest level.

I mean you could look some of this stuff, although I don't know how much -- some of it might not be totally unclassified.

Q: Well, during this time were you in such a specialized area that you were kind of by yourself or maybe one or two above you or?

WARREN: I was a deputy and I had another -- an FSO above me. But we had guys who -- I had a military lieutenant colonel I was working with in PM. But there was a whole big -- I mean DOD, we were working with various areas of Department of Defense, of AECA of CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). And that was interesting bureaucratically that under the Carter Administration OES (Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs) had been responsible, you know, the Scientific Bureau had been responsible for nonproliferation in the State Department working with AECA. And then when Richard Burt came in he got aggressive and said hey, these guys are just omitting the political stuff and we want to play a much bigger role in nonproliferation. So we did.

I remember even in 1980 when I first got in there -- this is under the Democrats -- Jerry -- there was a nonproliferation review conference and I think it was September 1980, which was run really by OES and AECA and the United States did not come out very well in that, and a lot of these third world countries were bitching at the United States because they said we're not supplying or not allowing the supply of peaceful nuclear energy for

their nuclear power to these countries. And then there was also the stuff about well, the U.S. has nuclear weapons and Russia has nuclear weapons and, you know, but this is a discriminatory treaty and, you know, you guys do it but we can't.

One thing that people have forgotten now, but there was a presidential directive called PD-59 in mid 1980 when the Cold War -- you know, it was still kind of hot -- that the U.S. was looking for, you know, was using, or at least looking around for nuclear weapons to be used against the nuclear and other military targets of the USSR. So it was for fighting nukes, so to speak. It wasn't kind of mutual assured destruction, everybody's going to destroy each other's cities and nobody's going to do anything. That sort of created a stalemate. But the U.S. was worried that the Russian nuclear weapons were getting much too sophisticated and targeted toward us so that we had to develop something to directly threaten Russian nuclear sites and we did -- remember we had an MX missile, which had multiple warheads and independently targeted warheads. So that of course was inherently destabilizing. So at this conference there were a lot of questions about the PD-59, what the United States was actually doing, and so I -- well, people in the Department of Defense and National Security Council did work out language that we could use saying, you know, this wasn't going to be destabilizing the nuclear balance.

Q: Did you have any feel for how we kept Congress or portions of Congress informed?

WARREN: I'm sure we did. I did not have much of a feel for how that was done, no. I really -- that I really don't know how the congressional angle worked. I know a lot of it -- frankly we did not tell Congress all that much. Or if it was, I mean, it was handled differently. That I didn't get into.

One more thing I'll say about when I was in PM, I did have, you know, an important role on this whole missile proliferation thing. That I really worked very hard on. Because obviously the same countries that wanted nuclear weapons also wanted long range missiles, obviously. Because if you develop missiles it's a lot easier to fire a ballistic missile and whack somebody with a nuclear weapon than it is to put it on an airplane, which could get shot down. So all of these -- a lot of countries who were interested were really getting involved in missiles. I mean there was some weird stuff when Iraq attempted to buy a Polaris type submarine missile design from Italy. And you know, there was some really strange stuff going on. So anyway, we, we worked up a national security directive, which was signed off in 1983 against missile proliferation. We had a supplier's group involving Europeans and Japan, which we all worked out how to control the nuclear missile technology so it wouldn't be spread all over the place, which was partly successful. And then we did talk to the Russians about it as well. And then, you know, that time we did work closely with a guy from NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Agency) because, you know, if you fire off a space satellite you can fire off a ballistic missile.

Q: Well, who were the top people in missile technology at that time?

WARREN: You mean who, what nations were tops? U.S. and the USSR, Chinese were starting to develop it, but not fully. They were starting -- they were getting there too. France definitely had missile technology. UK, you know, used a lot of U.S. missiles. Germans started getting interested in them and there was a -- they even sort of was a little entrepreneurial venture, they were helping the Libyans with a relatively primitive missile that they were testing. This was a private German company was doing it down in the Sahara desert. Not the, you know, we kind of put the clamp on that. But yeah, I mean a lot of European countries had the technology, and Japan did too. I mean Japan had a good space capability.

Q: I was thinking that the Germans only seem to be a little -- slightly the odd person out. I mean this is with Iran and Iraq -- with Iraq and with Iran on something.

WARREN: There's a lot of leakage of German technology and very sensitive stuff that -- sensitive stuff that definitely went to Iraq. French did it to some extent too. Germans? They were doing some funny stuff in the 1980s, yeah. They're doing some funny stuff now too.

Q: Yeah. It's odd. It seems to be mostly entrepreneurial. Rather than sort of -- with the French you never know, but I don't know. But were we keeping a fixed eye on Germany?

WARREN: We were liaising with the Germans, explaining what we were doing with missile technology and nuclear technology and really -- I mean certainly the German Government was pushing -- it was fully in accord with nonproliferation. It was kind of interesting because I remember we were having -- practically my last act in PM was when we were having a supplier's group meeting in Washington D.C. and this guy from the German Embassy came over and several of us met with him and we were describing, you know, what we were doing. And he almost got a little bit nationalistic and was saying, you know, you guys don't tell us very much what you're going on here, acting as if we're going to be seminating this technology all over the place. And you know, we have a right to know what's happening. And they were -- they weren't totally friendly. But again, of course at the conference, you know, everybody's supportive. But yeah, I think -- I think that for a lot of things that you're right, there has been a real leakage to the technology. And I think it was bad in the '80s. I don't know, the '90s probably was controlled a lot better. I don't think the Germans are trying -- I think Germans basically are trying to keep a good tight lid on things now, but.

Q: There was a peculiar manifestation of nuclear arms in Argentina, Brazil.

WARREN: Mm-hmm.

Q: Which apparently at a certain point both sides said let's forget about it, and we had a big hand in it. But did anybody figure out what the hell they were doing? I mean was it just here's a toy and we've got to have it?

WARREN: I think the Brazilian Military felt that it was important that they have, you know, because they have more ambitious ideas anyway. They figure they should, you know, nuclear weapons would be a way of enhancing Brazilian power. And of course the Argentines got pretty worried about that understandably.

Q: In the Pol-Mil thing, I know we had FSOs in the Pentagon and they had officers in the State Department --

WARREN: And we had some scientists too.

Q: How did these despaired groups fit at the time?

WARREN: I think pretty well, really. I did -- I don't think -- we had little or no trouble with the military at all. And the FSOs who were in the PM I think were more, sort of more hawkish than the run of the mill FSOs too. So it definitely was -- I didn't see that there's that much problem. I mean Blackwill I know felt pretty aggressive toward Libya, for instance. And really, yeah, they -- they got the Libyans fooling around trying to develop nuclear weapons, which fortunately they really didn't get too far into, but --

Q: Were you there when we bombed Libya?

WARREN: No, I'd left. I was in Indonesia at the time.

Q: OK, well then let's go on to Indonesia. You were there from when to when?

WARREN: 1984 to 1987.

Q: What was your job?

WARREN: I was the deputy in the economics section for two years and then I became economic counselor in 1986 for a year, 1986 to 1987.

Q: OK, 1984, what was the situation in Indonesia?

WARREN: Indonesia, they had, you know, a quasi-dictatorship under Suharto. He was a capable, effective person, he was -- he and his family were corrupt. At least they tolerated a good deal of corruption. But on the other hand, they also had provided security and they provided good economic growth and macro-economic management. They did. And they were -- it wasn't -- they were tough. I mean as you remember, they had the mysterious killings in 1984.

Q: No, I don't. What was that?

WARREN: Well, they had a crime wave. And so Suharto, as I understand from a good friend of mine who was very much involved in that time in 1980 -- in 1984 he was stationed in one of the consulates. And Suharto himself probably gave a wink or a nod to

the head of the Indonesian Armed Forces and just said, you know, start taking these criminals out. And so they were going around and they were killing people, the Army, the Security Forces would kill people that were known criminals and, you know, robbers or murderers, and just leave their bodies on the street. And then there would be -- in various places. And that did have certain deterrents (*laughs*) in crime and, you know, then the Indonesian media would talk about mysterious killings, and everybody knew damn well who were doing the mysterious killings. And that did create a little bit of a human rights problem for the embassy, which didn't want to go in and say the Suharto Government is killing people (*laughs*).

Q: Yeah. I mean one looks at Mexico and --

WARREN: That's not funny. Mexico is not funny at all though. Mexico is far worse. Mexico is things getting out of control. I mean this, you know, I mean this -- I don't know anything about Mexico except what I read on the Washington Post, but it seems like Mexico was a really serious problem because it's almost like some kind of an insurgency starting up with these cartels, which it wasn't anything like that in Indonesia.

Q: Well, then what were some of the major economic issues? First place, how were the Indonesian statistics?

WARREN: They were pretty good. They did have Berkley trained economists. Sukarno was a mess, you know, the year of living dangerously. And he lived a little too dangerously in 1965 and got overthrown. But I think most Indonesians that we knew, and I think the embassy attitude was, you know, good riddance. Thank God they got Sukarno pushed out of there. Because he was really driving Indonesia down into a hole. I mean he'd -- once Suharto came in, established stability, then you know, the country did a lot better.

Q: Well, was there much cooperation on the economics side between our embassy and --

WARREN: Yeah. In terms of oil and trade, intellectual property rights. Wolfowitz came in as ambassador [Ed: Ambassador Wolfowitz served from April 1986 to May 1989] and we did -- I remember I was working on an air rights thing about Garuda landing in the United States, the Indonesian airlines. And also, we did a tax treaty in 1986. So -- and we worked with the American Chamber of Commerce to improve investment. We did a lot of stuff.

Q: Well, how was life in Indonesia at the time?

WARREN: Fine. I mean it was a -- we would go -- I mean, you know, you could go outside of Jakarta. You -- we went a lot to the outer islands. I mean security was fine. I mean you got -- we went anywhere. I mean I never got over to East Timor. That was a little different. We never got there. But otherwise, we went all over the entire country.

Q: I would think, I mean Indonesia is so vast and all these islands and each one different. From an economic point of view it was a pretty much Java and --

WARREN: Java is a hub. Sumatra had raw materials. Kalimantan or Borneo had oil, they had LNG (liquefied natural gas). Sumatra had LNG. There was a lot of forest products. There's a lot of fishing. They certainly had a tourist potential too, which I guess is being developed now. I mean but we went up to Manado and they had this incredible --

Q: Where's Manado?

WARREN: Manado is in the northern part of Sulawesi, which used to be called Celebes. And it has a colossal -- I can show you on the map.

Q: Yeah. It's like a big crab or something.

WARREN: Yeah, right around here. I tell you, an absolutely wonderful --

Q: You're pointing to the longest tail of this peculiar --

WARREN: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Q: -- island and it's pointing up towards the Philippines.

WARREN: It's wonderful -- I mean there's a lot of great natural things and parks and wildlife and stuff like that. There was a nickel mine we went to right here in the central part of Celebes. I've been to Pontianak. And we saw, you know, there was a place where they had liquefied natural gas. They had rubber. Padang is a big sort of trading port, yeah. I mean we went all over here. And then we even got a little bit into Maluku, which were less developed and much drier. And then Maluku, Seram, you know, and Ambon, which are -- the old spice islands. That was interesting too. So yeah, I got all around Indonesia. I never got over to Papua, New Guinea, but otherwise I did pretty much see the main part of the country.

Q: I would ask, because people are interested, how did you find the embassy, the building as the building? How did it work?

WARREN: It was, you know, it was practical. It wasn't this super colossal huge thing like it was in Delhi. I mean it was a -- it was a much smaller building. But I mean, you know, you could meet other sections. I thought it was good for the time.

Q: Very worker friendly --

WARREN: Yeah, it was absolutely -- yeah, it worked much better. I mean jeez.

Q: You mentioned the economists, many had gone to Berkley. Was the training of so many Indonesians and technical fields, was that a significant element in the Indonesian economy and the in the United States?

WARREN: Yes, definitely. Because they were more adapted to the free market and deregulation than they had from free flows of capital, which is, you know, most third world countries that don't have that. They have it even then back in the 1980s. You know, they had various kinds of protectionism about imports and exports, but not too bad as I remember. They did have a lot of investment controls, which they gradually relaxed.

Q: Well, one of the things -- it wasn't quite a neighbor, but it was in the area -- that India at the time suffered from too large and too aggressive a bureaucracy and licensing and, you know, policy. But I mean part of it was no matter what the policy was it was just endemic in the system. And I take it Indonesia had either shucked that or never quite absorbed --

WARREN: India -- Indonesia had of course a lot of that, you know, under Sukarno, but Suharto gradually got rid of that. I mean there's a lot of corruption and directed projects and things like that and the payoffs, which are gross. But other than -- but as far as the macro policies were good, and there wasn't the same degree of licensing and regulations everywhere that stifled the economy the way that India had until 1991.

Q: One of the things that is always difficult in reporting, particularly in the economics side, is corruption. I mean we have relations with the government. Corruption is there and particularly the junior officers tend to focus on that. More senior officers say well, I got it, but the system is working -- or despite it. I mean this seems to be a dynamic -- but how about -- but the more you report on it the more you know this'll be leaked to unfriendly --

WARREN: Oh yeah.

Q: -- sources and also -- how did you treat that?

WARREN: Wolfowitz was pretty forthright about it and, you know, the Far East Economic Review, and others were reporting a lot on corruption. Wolfowitz really focused on a lot of the corruption and the funny business that was going on, reported back to Washington. And he was told -- finally they said, you know, you got to cool it a little bit; don't make it a crusade because -- to the point of blowing up our relations with Indonesia. But Wolfowitz did have some very frank -- I mean really frank discussions with very high-ranking Indonesian economic officials about corruption and said, you know, some of the stuff that Suharto and his family were doing really had -- needed to be tampered down a little bit.

Q: Wasn't Mrs. Suharto known as Mrs. --

WARREN: Ten percent, yeah. Well, the sons were just as crooked as \$3 bills too, you know, they were getting -- the son, the daughters were getting, you know, favored projects and it was -- yeah, that was bad.

Q: Well, how given that atmosphere, how did we deal with -- or you all deal with Americans going looking for business opportunities?

WARREN: We just said you've got to go in with your eyes open and certain things, you know, you're probably not going to get the project. But in other ways, certainly the oil sector and various other sectors, they really do want Americans and they're -- it'll be straighter. There'll be less of a demand pushed for these payoffs because they realize they really want the American firms in there.

Q: What was your impression or your officer's impression of the Japanese, the Germans, the Brits, the French dealing in the commercial field?

WARREN: The French probably did certain amount of bribes too. I think the British were more straight. The Germans certainly there was a feeling that they would bribe if necessary and if -- it was a feeling in the mid 1980s that the Japanese were being very aggressive and practically trying to buy the country. And of course Japan, there was a certain amount of sympathy for Japan by a lot of Indonesians because Japan of course occupied the Dutch East Indies in 1941, 1942, and had really set up an independent government, you know. Officially, Indonesia really started under the Japanese and use of Indonesian language and everything else. There was an anti-colonial government. Then of course the Japanese lost the war, the Dutch tried to come back, there was a big guerilla thing. And then the Dutch were forced out of Indonesia.

Q: How was social life there?

WARREN: Fine, it was good. The embassy -- yeah, I mean you had no problem interacting with Indonesians. The embassy people I think were pretty close and liked, you know, got along very well. And got along well with other embassies and American businessmen. Yeah, I think I was pretty good really. I think it was a fine post.

Q: But Timor was not a --

WARREN: East Timor, yeah. It was an issue. It was a political thing that was being carefully run because the U.S. really wasn't enthusiastic about recognizing it as a regular part of Indonesia and they figured at some time that thing was going to split off, which eventually it did of course. And the Australians felt the same way. Australia in 1980s was nervous about Indonesia. To say they saw Indonesia as some huge populated place, it wasn't very friendly, and was sitting on top of the, sitting north of them.

Q: Yeah, you look at the map of Australia --

WARREN: You can understand why.

Q: -- which has the city of Darwin and then nothing else there for thousands of miles.

WARREN: Right. Now I think relations are a lot better, but there the Australians were a lot more nervous back in the 1980s.

Q: After Indonesia where?

WARREN: Then I went back to the department. I was -- 1987 to 1989 I was a deputy on the India-Nepal-Sri Lanka-Bhutan-Maldives desk in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (NEA/INS). One thing I did do in Indonesia, and this is an issue that I also I dealt with when I was also in India was their foreign exchange problems that -- then oil price went way, way, way down, six bucks a barrel. Indonesia was put under a lot of strain as far as their foreign reserves. So they had a sudden devaluation that, you know, that -- they saw what was coming and they just -- they devalued their currency by about 40% or so, which helped them pull out. I mean because they were getting to a period of -- their national income, their growth and natural income was, was just about zero, practically negative because of this oil price collapse. And then of course it went up again. But yeah, Indonesia did have that surprised devaluation.

Q: A Washington Desk job. First place, dealing with South Asia, did you feel you were sort of third-rate citizens in NEA or?

WARREN: Yeah, stupidly too. I mean Richard Murphy was a fine assistant secretary. But it was obvious that -- which I think they finally did do in the 1990s of having a whole separate South Asian bureau because they were just -- I mean it was ridiculous. Here was a country, which was obviously going to be a major power in the world, probably more important in the Arab countries, and all the attention was on the Arab world and the Arabists were doing their thing and all that. And here was India, you know, really becoming a powerful country, which is obviously going to become a very powerful country with colossal population, which was being treated as sort of a less important part of the bureau. And it was just absolutely stupid.

Q: Well, I assume that almost everything at that point was focused on the West Bank of the Jordan?

WARREN: Well, to some extent it was. It was-- it was a lot of the Palestine, Israel and, you know, the whole issue with Israel and -- versus Egypt and Jordan and the relations with the Palestinians and the Intifada and all that, but it was becoming -- I must say that Murphy was good about this. I mean he was focusing a lot more on Iran and Iraq and the Persian Gulf, where the action really was. Because it all -- because of the oil and the Saudi Arabia coming up and everything. Yeah, I think by mid to late 1980s they, they knew the Israel-Palestinian stuff was in some ways less important.

Q: Well, what about India? For a long time it wasn't Burma and it wasn't North Korea, but it was kind of trying to be a self-sufficient and unattached entity, as I gather.

WARREN: Yeah, it was import substitution to a good extent. Nehru -- when Nehru took over from Mahatma Gandhi the thing was building political and national unity that Nehru did have a good deal of sympathy toward the USSR, feeling that they were natural allies. And I think -- and of course after 1959 and 1962 and all that, they -- India felt very much threatened by China or was quite worried about it, and they disliked the U.S. for a variety of reasons, partly because of our relationship with Pakistan, partly because India was, you know, just felt that the United States was just a big imperialist power pushing its way around, and India wanted to be really important in third world circles, you know, in the -- whether it was United Nations or other things. India just felt that it was important and neutral and not particularly friendly toward the U.S.

Q: Were you seeing signs of change?

WARREN: Yeah. Definitely under Rajiv Gandhi was a lot different than Indira Gandhi. I mean Rajiv still had sympathies toward Russia, but I think he did recognize the importance of the United States and didn't want to -- and the Indian Embassy was a lot more forthcoming. There was obviously a big economic relationship that was building up, so big export control relationship. The Indians wanted American's technology, for space and for a lot of other things.

Q: Well, were the Indians at that point willing to give something for us to do business with them? Or was it pretty much a one-way street at the time?

WARREN: No, it was -- they were interested -- they wanted cooperation and space, but yeah, they were interested. Indian companies were starting to invest abroad. And there were areas where even in the 1987, 1989 period where India wanted to cooperate with the U.S. economically, and they certainly wanted American investment and help in agriculture and -- you definitely had a feeling there was some movement going on. In space cooperation, certainly.

Q: Was it a generational thing? I mean it's sort of the, you know --

WARREN: Yes.

Q: The London School of Economics was -- the people -- that institution was beginning to move off the scene or?

WARREN: Yeah. Yes. The older generation of Indians who weren't friendly toward the United States were being replaced with Indians who -- a lot of whom had been to the United States and who were not so enthusiastic about the socialist model for all kinds of reasons. So yeah, there was a younger generation that was a lot more receptive to working with the Americans.

Q: Well, did Sri Lanka, Nepal play any sort of role, or were they just sort of there?

WARREN: Nepal was there and Nepal is kind of pathetic. And Pakistan wasn't the absolute focus of everybody's attention then either. I mean it wasn't -- Pakistanis felt I think quite nervous and threatened by India. But Sri Lanka was -- there was a thrashing around with that, you know, that whole LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), the Tamil insurgency. And so the Tamils were -- were fighting the central government in Sri Lanka. I've never been -- I never got to Sri Lanka, but yeah, that was something that was always ongoing. And the government in Sri Lanka was gradually pushing the Tamils back.

Q: Well, how did we view India? Did we view it as a vast market that some day would be open to us? Or were we at that point even beginning the shift toward China? Or did you feel the competition between the two?

WARREN: People were more focused on China as something really important, India less so. That was certainly true with the George H. W. Bush Administration. They were really looking at China as a really important one. They did have these reviews in, you know, for these special 301, these trade complaints and, you know, was IPR, intellectual property rights. And there was a lot of congressional and other agency resentment of India, which got really carried away in the summer of 1989, which they tried to slam India for investment restrictions and trade restrictions, and they wanted to go after them for intellectual property rights. IPR was legitimate because India was doing a lot of bad stuff, but it was getting to the point where they were showing so much hostility toward India it was becoming ridiculous. And that's one of the things that we were focused on, saying you know, don't -- let's not do all these different kinds of trade complaints against India. I mean if you're going to do a couple, but don't try to make it across the board. All you're just going to do is piss them off and you're not going to -- you really won't get any good results out of it.

Q: Was there significant numbers of Indian students in the United States or going back in significant numbers?

WARREN: They were starting to. They were starting to. It wasn't a real -- I don't think it was a huge flood, the way it got in the 1990s and the 21st century, but yeah, they were starting to go back.

Q: Well, also Indians are slowly becoming a significant lobby in the United States.

WARREN: Oh yeah.

Q: As the, you know, Irish and the Jews and other, other groups have been.

WARREN: Yeah, I mean right now I mean look at somebody like Nikki Haley after all. He's a governor, he's just -- and people like that. And they got two Republican governors.

Q: One in Louisiana, one in South Carolina.

WARREN: Yeah. Right.

Q: Yeah, so. Who was the head of your bureau? Were you there when it became the South Asia Bureau?

WARREN: No, I was not. That didn't happen until the 1990s. So it was Richard Murphy, an Arabist, who was Assistant Secretary. [Ed: Amb. Murphy served as Assistant Secretary of NEA from October 1983 to May 1989.] But I think he was -- he was a smart guy. I mean he paid attention to India also.

Q: Well, he served as ambassador to Syria, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. So, you know, he had exposure to significant policy issues. Now then, what was your next assignment?

WARREN: I was assigned as economic counselor in New Delhi from 1989 to 1992. And the big thing there was the whole shift, dramatic shift in 1991 when Narasimha Rao became prime minister and Manmohan Singh became financial minister. That was just an enormous shift. I mean you could really say -- India was going in one of two directions. Either it was going to be economically stagnant, and this was going to have all kinds of political ramifications, because you could almost see if it had kept it up and not liberalized at all. But the South India was quite dynamic; North India wasn't. And Western India of course was Bombay, and I think they could have started even getting into separatism movements. Big time. And India could have had really big internal problems if they hadn't started to liberalize, which they did do in 1991. And that was really dramatic.

Q: From our perspective, were we able to, you know, keep close tabs on what was happening?

WARREN: Yeah, we were. We had Ambassador Bill Clark [Ed: who served from December 1989 to July 1992], and he was very good. I mean he really was very much focused on this. I remember we had this young woman from USIS (United States Information Service) came over as an intern in the economics section. She did this cable saying India was really reaching a fork in the road. This was in the summer of 1991. And that was very controversial point of view because a lot of the, you know, the guys in the political section and other people in the embassy just didn't want to say, India's either going to do well or be in horrible trouble. They just wanted to talk about the political relations and same old stuff.

I know I was doing a lot of cables in 1990, 1991, which reported India's getting into horrendous problems with its foreign exchange, which it did. It got down to a point where they had about a billion dollars worth of foreign exchange and they were all drained out and they were starting to sell gold. And the IMF (International Monetary Fund) was going to have to step in, and the World Bank. And India was either going to have to liberalize or they would just get into huge problems. Then Rajiv Gandhi got assassinated,

partly because of his involvement in helping the Sri Lankan Government against the Tamils and so this guy who was in the LTTE killed him with a suicide bomb. And then -- but Narasimha Rao became head of the Congress Party and Manmohan Singh was his finance minister and they just went ahead with significant liberal trade and investment, and really started the ball rolling.

Q: Did we have good contact with these two men?

WARREN: Yes, we did. We certainly did with Manmohan Singh, we had excellent contact. We had excellent contact with people who were working underneath him, like Montek Singh Ahluwalia and people like that who really were good and Western oriented, really wanted to develop the country and scrap a lot of these controls, which were, you know, I mean it's that whole question about the Asian tiger is finally starting to step out of its cage, which is true. I mean, you know, the economists were doing all these publications about the Indian tiger, which is right. The tiger's starting to move around. So it was a -- that was really dramatic. And then I -- when I was there I worked a lot on export controls for India too, which I'd done as well when I was back in the State Department.

Q: Can you explain what you mean by export controls?

WARREN: Yeah, technology controls that the U.S. Government had placed on dual use technology, that is, both military and civilian usage. We quite tightly controlled dual use technology during the 1980s. Less so now, we loosened up for India so that we could assist their space and other types of programs.

Q: Well, now what sort of program did the Indians have in space?

WARREN: Oh, they were building a satellite. Yeah, in the 1990s they built and they launched a satellite, their satellites. They're using things for mapping and communications. They did fire off space shots, and they also -- then they did also -- they did launch ballistic missiles too.

Q: I was talking to Tom Pickering this morning and he was saying that one place where India seems to be falling behind China in that it was overly dependent on railroads and hasn't done much in the way of super highways and that --

WARREN: Yes. That's interesting. Let me tell you I left the Foreign Service in 1996 and I came back for a Surface Transport Conference in November of 1996. And that's the thing we focused on, ports and roads that -- I mean the Indian roads from Bombay up to Gudalur and all the way up to Delhi were a major part of the infrastructure. But the road was just the most ridiculous kind of two-way highway you'd ever seen in your life, was absolutely absurd for a major artery like that. What they're supposed to do is develop this kind of quadrilateral of major roads going along the coast and then roads cutting through the country. They have done some super highways like when they went from Bombay to Pune. But they did -- they really needed to, and must get the road network in shape. And

that's -- I fully agree with Tom Pickering on that. As he said, the Chinese have just gone full boar for infrastructure.

Q: Yeah. What about power?

WARREN: Electric power, India was making a really big push toward that. But then they were getting -- there was a lot of disruption because a lot of the state governments were creating bureaucratic hassles and, you know, the state electricity boards were creating obstacles for foreign investment. And so they weren't developing electric power as fast as they should. They did make a lot of changes to that, but still it was a big hassle for American and other firms to get it and do power projects. And I mean I know for instance there were some major American companies looking at India in 1996, 1997 for electric power and those projects just never got anywhere. And the embassy was really promoting electric power development. But I think now they really -- they had a lot of big plans for nuclear energy, really big plans for getting a lot of nuclear power plans.

Q: I'll ask you a question about the embassy building. This had been sort of the Taj Mahal of American embassies.

WARREN: Yeah.

Q: But as a working place how was it?

WARREN: I felt that the Americans were starting -- I mean partly dependent on the ambassador, but I think it was just the way there was too many people there, too many different agencies that weren't really meshing really well. And it was -- it started turning kind of a mobile court, you know. I just -- I did not -- the atmosphere in Indonesia was far better than it was in New Delhi. And when I was in Bombay I was frankly quite happy I was in Bombay, because we did have a good tight knit consulate there. But you go up to Delhi and it was like arriving at a court. I mean it was ridiculous. That, you know, be careful that I state that because I don't want to rub people the wrong way. But yeah, I did not like the atmosphere there in Delhi.

Q: Well, this happens when it gets too big and. Were you in Bombay or?

WARREN: 1994 to 1996 as consul general, yeah.

Q: Was it Bombay then or was it Mumbai?

WARREN: Became Mumbai in 1996 or 1997 just when I was leaving, yeah. Bombay before that.

Q: What happens when you're in a city and it changes its name?

WARREN: Didn't cause too much problem. I mean a lot of the locals were still referring to it as Bombay. It was, it was, you know, political that the Shiv Sena and the local -- the

BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) wanted to call it Mumbai using the Marathi name for it rather than the Hindi name. They were, you know, pushing the local language in their own kind of I guess regional interest.

Q: One can't help with your commercial background in well, Bombay, what about Bollywood? Did you get involved at all in that or?

WARREN: We knew some of the actresses and actors, yeah. We did meet some of them. Yeah, it was -- you know, and we went to a racetrack, you know, and they had these actually very attractive Indian actresses. One of them was named Karisma Kapoor (*laughs*). And blue eyes and, you know, I guess she was Kashmiri background, but she looked very Western and they -- but yeah, they have some very attractive ones. And we did get to know one of the -- a Muslim Indian actress too who was quite good. We actually met her social -- so we had some social contact with them. Amitabh Bachchan we met, yeah. Yeah, we did -- we meet some. We did meet some of them.

Q: Indian films are, you know, to an outsider have to get into that song and dance thing, which it's kind of fun to watch, but it doesn't quite fit into the world of dramatic story telling.

WARREN: Yeah, for most of it, it was sort of like singing, dancing around a tree and that kind of stuff. And so -- and it's really a lot of it's aimed at the Indian masses although some of -- some movies did get better. There were some good ones. But again, you're right. It's not same type of drama. However, they -- they did get -- later though, they had Indian -- Indian -- especially Indian women directors who were living outside of India or Western trained who did get some good dramatic stuff like "Bandit Queen," which was a good one. And they had one called, "Earth," I think it was. It was actually pretty good, about the partition -- about this Muslim boy who falls in love with a Hindu girl in -- and it's in Mahur. I believe it's set in Mahur just about the time of partition. It just shows just the ferocity of the kind of mutual hatreds between the Muslims and the Hindus.

Q: Yes, the 1948, 1949 periods, Partition, was horrendous.

WARREN: Yeah. And the Indians -- it's funny how things are portrayed now versus then, but a lot of Indians privately said that they thought, you know, the British had really screwed it up. They didn't have much respect for Mountbatten. They thought that he'd done a lot too quickly and sloppily and he just wanted to sort of get off his plate and big political thing and all that, and he just really messed it up.

Q: Your district included what?

WARREN: Bombay consular district covered Maharashtra, much of Pradesh, and Gujarat. And Goa of course.

Q: Well, Gujarat was a prime source of immigration to America, wasn't it?

WARREN: Right, it was.

Q: How'd that manifest itself from your perspective?

WARREN: They're flooding the consulate with people looking for visas, you know, stretching all around the consulate to get, to get visas. But no, I mean they had plans though for infrastructure development and factories and projects up there too. But yeah, it was very commercially oriented.

Q: Did Fundamentalist Hinduism or Islam impact in your districts?

WARREN: There was some Muslim blow offs, but not -- really not that much. Fundamentalist Hindu though, you saw it more in -- when I was up in Delhi the BJP was getting quite aggressive. I mean they were showing -- it was a lot of more attention on religion and they were really pushing this stuff about Ram and some of those other Hindu gods and, you know, making it up to be practically like war gods and putting a subtle kind of spin on the way that they were showing Indian myths and ancient Indian history. And -- but they were -- I remember some of the BJP people in Bombay too were really angry at Pakistan and say, you know, we really -- of course I don't know what -- now I think the atmosphere must be really pretty tight.

Q: Yeah, particularly of the attack. Was it 2008.

WARREN: Yes.

Q: How would you describe the view of Pakistan?

WARREN: I think that back in -- I'm just trying to think -- they didn't like the way that General Zia, who became -- I guess became President of Pakistan in the 1980s really started to push Islam. I mean in the 1960s, you know, in the 1970s they had -- it was more nationalistic kind of a thing. And it's the Pakistanis wanting to stand up to the Indians and, you know, which was unfortunate. But in the 1980s it just got too Islamist, you know. General Zia -- President Zia of Pakistan was trying to get a more Islamic feeling in Pakistan, and especially among the military so as to provide some sort of glue against India. But he -- he way overdid it. And I think we're starting to see the results of it. We're seeing the results of it now.

Q: The Tamil thing was pretty much in -- where, was that in --

WARREN: Sri Lanka.

Q: Sri Lanka. And that wasn't a particular --

WARREN: No. No, it didn't bother us that much in India.

Q: Did the British have much of a role in India?

WARREN: Some. I think there was some residual interest in Britain, but it was a lot less in the 1980s and certainly in the 1990s. In the 1990s it was much less than it had been before and they really didn't identify that much with the British. I mean there was the feeling yeah, we really benefit from the law and the language and all these other things, but it wasn't as -- anywhere as much as it had been previously. I think that really faded. I think the Indians had a lot of respect for Germany. I remember 1990, you know, they were doing all this stuff, the Indian television show was showing all this stuff about the Wall coming down and Germany becoming reunified and they were really -- made a really big deal about that.

Q: Well, did you sense almost a collapse of Soviet influence or had it been going?

WARREN: It had been sliding down. Soviets still had a big -- I mean the Russians still had a big presence in Bombay in 1994 to 1996. There definitely wasn't a -- I'd say collapse would be the wrong word. I'd say it would be a sharp decline. Although the Indians still respected it. They had defense ties with Russia.

Q: Were we trying -- were there friendly moves on the part of our military to get closer to the Indians?

WARREN: Yes. There certainly was during the 1980s and 1990s. And with the Indian Navy. In Bombay we were getting a lot of high level visits of people, you know, undersecretaries of defense coming out there and U.S. Admirals meeting with their Indian counterparts -- that'd be Commander of the Western Fleet, which was in Bombay. Oh yeah. No, there definitely was an increased military context, some cooperation.

Q: Was Diego Garcia a factor?

WARREN: We didn't -- we didn't see that, no.

Q: How about -- where were you when we got involved in the first Gulf War?

WARREN: The Gulf War, I was in New Delhi.

Q: How did that play?

WARREN: At first the Indians just, you know, were very -- OK, being sort of neutral, saying yes, we understand what's going on, sympathetic. Then I think some of the high-level Indian officials who were representing sort of the old thinking were practically siding with the -- hoping that the Iraqis would win, or at least bloody our nose and that it wouldn't be a walkover. They'd start to get less pleasant. Although a lot of Indian officials at the same time really were cooperating, like civil aviation guys. I remember, we went down and we gave them a demarche about what we were doing in terms of civil aviation, how we were going to handle it. And the air support we -- what we were planning to with actually going in -- obviously going into Iraq. And -- so yeah, working

level, yeah, I think the Indians were fully aware of what was happening and a lot of Indians were saying yeah, we support you, we just hope you win big and this thing doesn't drag on and is fast, which it certainly was in 1991, yeah. Just said, you know, get it over quickly, don't have it drag on.

Q: Was CNN in --

WARREN: Yes. And Indians would watch that. They watched that and BBC and -- because the Indian television was presenting a lot of kind of a slanted thing and wasn't really showing how badly Iraq was being beaten. But the Indians wanted to see the real news. They'd watch CNN and BBC and they appreciated that because they saw hey, this thing's -- Iraq's going to get actually smashed.

Q: What sort of industrial development was there in the Bombay district?

WARREN: They had a lot of ports, they had some oil. They had the Tarapur Nuclear Power Reactor. They also had Bhabha Atomic Center that was right near Bombay. And you know, the usuals, it was more sort of light industry. The heavy industry though was in much of Pradesh. You know, a lot of steel -- and Bihar where they had the, the Tara steel plants. But heavy industry was more elsewhere.

Q: You left India in 1996 and then what?

WARREN: Then I just retired from Foreign Service.

Q: Well, what have you done since?

WARREN: Well, I was consultant for a year or so, independent consultant. And then in 1998 and afterwards I just have been doing financial services and with financial service companies.

Q: Have you put your Foreign Service experience to use?

WARREN: Unfortunately, not much. What I'm doing is probably about 99% domestic business. It's entirely -- I mean it has been useful. I do have Indian clients certainly and, you know, with Lebanese, Korean, people like that. And so I have been able to use the Foreign Service experience in that way.

Q: Well, everywhere financial services, you know, when you call experts on the TVs who commentate, an awful lot seem to come from foreign countries.

WARREN: And they're becoming less -- I think less enthused about the American model too.

Q: Really?

WARREN: I mean there was a -- I mean there was -- they had this, an African woman who was from Zambia who was a well-regarded economist and did this long thing for a British financial service company about what was the, you know, where the Americans were making the wrong types of moves. And a lot of what she said was perfectly correct, good stuff. But I mean basically, yeah, the emerging markets now are driving world growth. I mean it's China and India, Indonesia, a lot of the third world countries, which are a lot less in debt than we are.

Q: OK. Well, this is probably a good place to stop. I want to thank you very much.

End of interview