

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

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JOSEPH A. WINDER Desk Officer, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Affairs Washington, DC (1983-1985)

Joseph A. Winder was born in New York in 1939. He received a BA from the University of Michigan in 1964 and his MBA in 1965. Mr. Winder served in the US Army from 1959 to 1962. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1966, he was posted in Santiago, Bonn, Jakarta, Bangkok and Tokyo. In 1999 Mr. Winder was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Today is October 8, 1999. We are in 1983 and where did you go?

WINDER: In 1983 I came back from Jakarta and took over the responsibility of the desk for Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei affairs. I did that until November, 1985. During my time on the desk it was a very active period. We had a state visit by President Suharto that must have been just after I arrived so I wasn't heavily involved in it. But, then we had big visits involving each of the other countries. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir came for a working visit in early 1984 in which we were actively involved. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore came more than once and we were involved arranging his programs. I remember one time we had a session with Secretary Shultz calling on him at his hotel. Those two were very close confidants and Shultz asked him about our policies and Lee Kuan Yew asked him and there really was an exchange of views between two statesmen on how are we doing. In addition, Brunei celebrated regaining their sovereignty for all aspects of their affairs. I guess they already had control over internal affairs but not external. So, there was a big to do in Brunei and Ken

Dam led a delegation of basically private citizens to go out and represent the U.S. at that event, and I went along and did the staff work.

We had a lot of different activities there. A lot of policy problems with Indonesia. Questions about whether we should sell them F-16s. Human rights problems with mysterious killings. The East Timor question wasn't as hot then. It was sort of a low simmering problem but it hadn't really surfaced.

Q: Brunei?

WINDER: Brunei was just entering the international arena. I guess they had been independent to a degree, but certainly the Brits had handled their foreign and defense relations. So, when Brunei gained full independence we established an embassy there and dealt with the embassy in Washington. It was basically a start up operation. I suppose most of our concerns related to starting an embassy. The logistics, physical structure, etc. We dealt with Brunei in the context of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) as well. They were a member. In fact, I think they may have chaired the bilateral relationship with the U.S. ASEAN divided the work up as to who was going to handle U.S. relations and who was going to handle Japanese relations. We didn't have any major friction with Brunei.

Q: A little later on, I guess, Brunei became a place you went to to get some money for various things.

WINDER: I don't remember tapping Brunei for one of our major projects. You are absolutely right, we tended to go to them and ask them to put some money in this pot or that pot and sometimes they would and sometimes they wouldn't.

Q: How about Brunei?

WINDER: The ambassador they sent was a very sophisticated ambassador with experience at other embassies. He knew how to operate and was effective. It was a small country and he didn't have a big budget so it took him awhile to get going. But, they were fine.

Q: I would have thought they could have made quite a splash because of their money.

WINDER: Well, they didn't really throw their money around a lot. They had a small embassy here and had nice receptions. They just didn't have quite the same political strategic interests. They really hadn't had an opportunity to develop those interests and ways to effectively move them forward.

FRANCIS J. TATU
Temporary Duty
Brunei (1984)

Francis J. Tatu was born in New York in 1929. He served in the US Navy from 1946-1952. Afterwards, he received his bachelor's degree from University of California in 1955. His career includes positions in Hong Kong, Laos, Taiwan, Philippines, Thailand, Washington D.C., Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and Australia. Mr. Tatu was interviewed by Susan Klingaman in October 2000.

Q: You went to Brunei...

TATU: I went there for their independence...

Q: This was in '84?

TATU: Yes.

Q: As sort of the U.S. representative?

TATU: Not really, no - to prepare the way. The representative was Deputy Secretary Kenneth Dam. They also "entitled five Americans" to be "special ambassadors" for the events. It was in fact independence. So that was interesting.

Q: What was it like, the independence of Brunei? Was it a big celebration with lots of foreign dignitaries?

TATU: Oh, yes, absolutely. They had a tremendous turnout of people and representatives. They had built a stadium there that was large enough to take the entire population of the country. Princess Diana and Prince Charles came.

Q: Charles?

TATU: Yes, Charles. They had a state dinner for 4,000. They were just finishing up construction of the royal palace. It was supposed to be the largest personal residence in the world.

Q: Well, they have a lot of money there, right?

TATU: Oh, yes. At one time the Sultan was supposed to be the richest man in the world. He may still be, the sultan.

Q: But that was just a temporary...?

TATU: That was just a TDY, but there were still a lot of experiences there. Then, when I got back to Washington, it just happened that the political counselor in Canberra unexpectedly resigned, so I went down there to take over for a period of about three months, I guess.

CHRISTOPHER H. PHILLIPS
Ambassador
Brunei Darussalam (1989-1991)

Mr. Phillips was born in the Hague, Netherlands, and was educated at Harvard University and Montana State University at Bozeman. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. He served as ambassador to Brunei between 1989 and 1991.

Q: I believe it was in 1986 that you left the China Trade Council. Was it soon thereafter that you were appointed Ambassador to Brunei.

PHILLIPS: No, in fact I didn't go to Brunei until three years later. For the first year or so, I did some consulting and lecturing on China, including a lecture tour on a Royal Viking cruise ship from Japan to Hong Kong. I also renewed my activities with the United Nations Association of the U.S., and served as the U.S. representative on the Executive Committee of the World Federation of United Nations in Geneva. In that capacity, I attended meetings in such places as East Berlin, Warsaw and Budapest. These and other activities kept me quite fully occupied. When it became clear that Bush was going to run for President in 1988, I offered to help him in any way that I could. I had continued to keep in touch with him while he was Vice President because of our mutual interest in China. Shortly after his candidacy was announced, I was asked to become a member of his National Campaign Committee, and later I served on one of the Issues committees which dealt with Asia and the United Nations. A few months after the election, I received a call from Chase Untermeyer, the President's Special Assistant for Personnel. He asked what I might be interested in doing in the new Administration. I mentioned two possibilities; an appointment as Under Secretary General at the UN - a position traditionally held by an American, or an overseas posting. In the latter case my strong preference would be for an embassy somewhere in Asia or the Pacific. I was realistic enough to know that I would not be offered a large post because I fell between two categories of appointees to such positions - big contributors to the campaign and career Foreign Service officers. I was neither, although I already had considerable experience in the foreign affairs area. A few days later, Untermeyer called back to say that unfortunately there was only one post in the area remaining to be filled. It was the small but wealthy Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam in Southeast Asia. Would I possibly be interested? I replied, if the President feels that I could usefully serve there, I would be happy to do so. Shortly thereafter, the President called me and said that Untermeyer had reported to him my preferences for a position in his Administration. As I remember the conversation, the President said he was interested that I had mentioned the UN slot because I was one of the first people he had thought about for that position. However, Secretary of State Jim Baker had pressed him to hold that appointment for a senior Foreign Service Officer he had in mind. As for Brunei, the President said, "it's a very small post for which you're much over-qualified, but I

hope you will be willing to accept it.” I said I would be happy to do so because in any case, my real preference was to serve as part of his Administration.

Q: So your next step was to begin preparations for your confirmation hearings. You had been through this process before, so you were essentially an old hand. Did you have any problems?

PHILLIPS: No, it turned out to be a breeze. I appeared before a Senate sub-committee with one other nominee, Paul Cleveland, a career FSO, who was headed for Malaysia. We each made brief statements and answered a few questions. As a political appointee, I had expected more detailed questioning. I think the fact that I had been confirmed for two previous Presidential appointments, may have led the committee to believe I was a career officer.

Q: Tell me a bit about Brunei's history and its significance from the standpoint of U.S. interests. Didn't the Iran-Contra business have some impact on our relations with Brunei?

PHILLIPS: Yes, indeed. A few years before my arrival, an Assistant Secretary of State, during the Reagan Administration, visited Brunei for a meeting with the Sultan. The purpose of this visit was to request the Sultan to make a contribution to Iran-Contra activities. Since at that time the Sultan was widely considered to be the richest man in the world, and was known for his generosity, he appeared to be a good prospect. Perhaps a bit naively, the Sultan, agreed, apparently persuaded that it was an anti-communist cause. By prior arrangement, his \$10 million check was deposited in a Swiss bank numbered account. As it turned out, the check was deposited to the wrong account, and for some time was lost. By the time it had been recovered, word of the incident had leaked out and was reported in the press. The check was returned to the Sultan who was understandably furious. He never liked publicity about his contributions, and in this case he was made to look slightly ridiculous. The incident was not lightly forgotten, as I later learned. I had received instructions to approach the Brunei government about making a contribution to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to assist the Philippine Government in dealing with the victims of a massive earthquake which had left thousands of people homeless. The Foreign Minister pointedly suggested that it would be more appropriate to have such a request come from the UN.

But let me say a few words about the history of this tiny Islamic Sultanate, located on the northwest coast of Borneo, only four degrees above the equator. The earliest references to present-day Brunei, or Brunei Darussalam as it is properly called, were found in early Javanese and Chinese records. They mentioned a kingdom called Bunlai, in the area of present day Brunei Bay, which paid tribute to the Chinese Emperors from the sixth to the ninth centuries. Evidence of this early connection with China, can be seen in the small but excellent museum in Brunei's Capitol. There one can find a remarkable collection of old Chinese coins dating back to the ninth and tenth centuries.

Historic Brunei didn't really begin until the early 15th century when Islam was introduced by a then pagan ruler who converted to Islam and became the founder of the dynasty which rules Brunei to this day. The present Sultan, Hassanal Bolkia, is the 29th of the royal line. It's easy to forget that the small territory over which the Sultan rules today was at one time a vastly greater area. By the mid-17th century, it included most of Borneo and the Philippines as far north as

Luzon, as well as the present day Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah. But by the beginning of the 19th century, the Sultan began to suffer major territorial losses. These included the states of Sarawak and Sabah as well as a slice of land carved out of the middle of Brunei by the British adventurer Charles Brooke, the second of three generations of so-called White Rajahs who ruled Sarawak until the end of World War II. In an effort to prevent any further losses of territory, the Sultan agreed with a British proposal to establish a Residency System which gave the British jurisdiction over both domestic and external affairs, while the Sultan controlled only Islamic religious matters. The arrangement continued until 1959 when internal self-government was re-established. There's an interesting footnote to this story and it relates to the first official U.S. contact with the Sultan of Brunei. In 1845 the USS Constitution "Old Ironsides" arrived in Brunei during its only round-the-world trip. The Captain had been authorized to negotiate for a coaling station in Brunei in exchange for a treaty of protection and trade. Apparently, the Sultan gave serious consideration to the proposal, but finally turned it down in favor of a British protectorate. In 1850, however, the U.S. did sign a commercial treaty with Brunei. Full independence was not achieved until January 1, 1984, and the first U.S. ambassador to Brunei, Barrington King, presented his credentials to the Sultan on May 28 that year.

Q: I believe you were our third Ambassador to Brunei. When did you present your Credentials, and what was the ceremony like? I suppose it took place in that vast palace said to be the largest in the world.

PHILLIPS: Yes, I presented my Credentials to the Sultan on November 28 1989. You're quite right, the Istana Nural Iman, Palace of the Light of Faith, as it's called, has been described by the Guinness Book of World Records as larger than the Vatican Palace in Rome. Although I wasn't particularly impressed with the external architecture of the building, many of the interior chambers were quite impressive - as for example, the throne room with its 12 massive, 4500 pound crystal chandeliers and magnificent Moroccan carpeting. The palace is about a third of a mile long and contains some two million square feet of space with 1800 rooms. It serves not only as the residence for members of the royal family, but it also houses the offices of the Defense Ministry and the Prime Minister's office.

As for the presentation ceremony, it had much of the formality and pageantry of the 19th century British colonial era. I was escorted to the Palace by the Director of Protocol who picked me up at the embassy and drove me to the Istana. After passing through the large outer gates, we drove up a wide ramp to the main entrance. There, I got out of the car which had pulled up alongside a red-carpeted dais. A military Aide-de-Camp escorted me to the dais, where I faced a smartly uniformed "Prestige Guard of Honor" and an army band. The Guard presented arms and I received the salute of the commanding officer. The band struck up some martial music while the Guard stood "At Attention," and I stood with as much military bearing as I could muster. Accompanied by the Assistant Grand Chamberlain and the Chief of Protocol, we then entered the Palace, passing through a spacious open courtyard with a large blue circular pool and a water fountain at its center. After a few minutes wait in the Reception Room where the Grand Chamberlain met us, a palace official arrived to announce that His Majesty was ready to receive me. In preparation for the event, I had been carefully briefed by my staff about the protocol requirements for the presentation of credentials. Nevertheless, I approached the Ceremonial Room with some trepidation, hoping that I would remember where and when to bow, and

precisely the number of steps to be taken between bows. Nor should I forget not to cross my legs when seated in the Sultan's presence. As it turned out, all went well. Following the ceremony, the Sultan invited me to be seated in a large overstuffed, silk damask chair, while he seated himself opposite me in one of equal splendor. We chatted briefly about my family and my prior activities. I then mentioned that, just before my departure for Brunei, I had visited the USS Constitution in Boston. There I learned that a painting of "Old Ironsides" had been presented to the Sultan some years ago. I had been asked if I could try to find out where the painting might be today. The Sultan assured me that it was still in the Palace, and he arranged to have me see it on my departure.

Q: Would you describe some of the more significant issues you dealt with during your two-year stint in Brunei.

PHILLIPS: From my earliest meetings with the Sultan, and in subsequent meetings with other senior officials, it became clear to me how much importance Brunei attached to a continued American presence in the Pacific. As a small but very wealthy Third World country with limited military capabilities, Brunei had to try to compensate for its vulnerabilities. It had only recently become a member of ASEAN, which provided a kind of political and economic regional umbrella but not much security. By the time I arrived on the scene, a modest military relationship with the U.S. was already underway. It was somewhat expanded during my two years there, but mindful of Brunei's reluctance to become too overtly involved with a great power, we didn't play it up. This began with occasional U.S. navy visits to Brunei's main port at Muara. By the time I arrived on the scene, Admiral Hardisty, then Commander-in-Chief of Pacific Forces, had already made his first visit to Brunei and several more were to follow. On one of these he invited the Sultan to board his aircraft carrier. The Sultan, who is an experienced pilot and the owner of an Airbus as well as several Gulf streams and helicopters, was clearly delighted. Each year one or two U.S. navy vessels made calls at Muara, and for two or three days, took part in naval training exercises with Brunei's flotilla of small gunboats. All of these activities created much good will between the two "navies." Some jungle warfare training for American troops and refueling rights for U.S. military aircraft, were additional areas of cooperation.

But during 1990, as our negotiations with the Philippines on the renewal of the Clark Airforce Base lease dragged on, there began to be press speculation that the U.S. was considering Brunei as a possible alternative to the Clark air base. Since this kind of speculation could arouse concern within the Brunei government, with which we had never discussed the matter, I denied any knowledge of such plans when questioned by the press. Brunei government officials refused to make any public comments. As it became increasingly likely that the Philippines were not going to renew the lease and that the U.S. might begin to withdraw its forces from the western Pacific, there were expressions of concern from Foreign Ministry officials. At a meeting I had with Lim Jock Seng, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, he referred to a recent announcement that the U.S. was planning to withdraw two Fighter Squadrons from the Clark Airforce Base. He said some would interpret this as the beginning of a U.S. withdrawal from the western Pacific. I assured him this would not be the case. My Japanese colleague related to me a conversation he had with Major General Ibnu the Deputy Minister of Defense, concerning the Philippine Base negotiations. The Ambassador said that Ibnu had expressed the hope that the negotiations would succeed, and that Brunei would be concerned by any substantial reduction of the U.S. presence in

the region. Ibnu then added, that if the negotiations failed, Brunei would be prepared to provide military facilities to the U.S. similar to arrangements Singapore had with the U.S. He made clear, however, that he was not talking about U.S. bases in Brunei.

It was largely a consequence of our withdrawal from the Philippines that Brunei became more interested in enhancing military cooperation with the U.S. It became clear to me that they wanted us as a benign protector - to be near but not too near. And so we soon began discussions to broaden our areas of cooperation. By the time I left Brunei, we had begun to negotiate a mini-“Status of Forces Agreement” along the lines of a similar agreement we had with Singapore. We also increased refueling activities and began theatre intelligence briefings for senior Brunei officials. From the standpoint of U.S. interests, we saw Brunei as a potential training site for U.S. forces, given the large areas of vacant space throughout the country. And, in the event of any future military threat in the area, Brunei’s excellent airport with its long runways could become a useful alternative landing site for military aircraft.

Q: Did the outbreak of the Gulf War have any adverse effect on this program of military cooperation? How did Brunei react to the war and the leading role played by the U.S.?

PHILLIPS: I think the answer is, none as to the first question and somewhat ambiguously, as to the second. The official position of the government was to support the coalition’s efforts to eject Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The Sultan told me that had there been no response to Iraq’s attack on Kuwait, Saddam would have been tempted to move against other small countries in the area. I asked his opinion about Saddam Hussein’s claim that this was a Jihad war. The Sultan denied that there was any legitimacy to this view because Jihad applied only when a non-Muslim country attacked a Muslim country. Despite these assurances by the Sultan, and Brunei’s support for the various UN Security Council resolutions, public opinion was strongly pro-Iraq. The average Bruneian saw a big powerful, non-Islamic country ganging up on a small Islamic country. This was reflected in the local media and on occasional placards displayed along the main road between the Embassy and the Residence, as well as one or two telephone bomb threats. However, we never encountered demonstrations or outward signs of hostility. It was clear to me that the Government was keeping close watch on the situation.

During several visits with the Sultan and other senior officials, I began to note a subtle shift occurring in attitudes toward the conflict. Within the government itself there appeared to be two factions: those, especially in the Foreign Ministry, who believed that Brunei should continue its policy of support for the coalition; and a more religiously hard-line faction which tended to reflect pro-Iraq public opinion. Caught between these opposing views, the Sultan tried to straddle the issues. In a 1991 National Day royal address (Titah) he reaffirmed Brunei’s demand for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. But he also expressed strong support for any moves which could result in a peaceful settlement. He then went on with a sharp criticism of the coalition forces, accusing them of violating the mandate of Security Council resolutions and blaming them for widespread destruction and the deaths of innocent people. Only a week or two earlier, the Sultan had told me that he would not wish to see any strains develop between the U.S. and Brunei over the Gulf War. Needless to say Washington was not greatly pleased by this royal address.

Q: Let's talk a bit about the Sultan and his role as both the religious and secular leader of the country. I understand that he also serves as Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

PHILLIPS: The Sultan, of course, is an absolute hereditary ruler who rules through a Cabinet of Ministers similar to the British system. And, as you noted, he also serves as Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. I have often said, in jest, that Brunei is the only absolute monarchy that has a semi-socialist system of government. It provides free education for all Brunei children, and free medical and subsidized housing for all citizens. To top it off, there is no personal income tax. All of this is possible because of the steady stream of revenue from Brunei's offshore oil and gas production. The Sultan himself, seemed to enjoy the respect of most Brunei Malays, who constitute some 55% of the population. It's more difficult to judge the feelings of the Chinese. They represent about 25 % of the population, but few of them have been granted citizenship. They are therefore ineligible for the benefits accorded Brunei Malays. Nevertheless, it is the Chinese who constitute the commercial class of the country, and those few who have been granted citizenship play an influential role in the life of the country.

As for the Sultan, it took me some time to get through his rather formal and reserved personality. Surrounded by all the trappings of a 19th century monarch, one didn't push too hard. I think the breakthrough for me occurred when I presented him with a framed photograph of the earth, taken from one of our spacecraft and autographed by a crew member, who happened to be a close friend of my son-in-law. The Sultan, an experienced pilot and much interested in space exploration, was clearly pleased, particularly when I pointed out that Borneo was at the center of the photograph. In time, I came to realize that beneath this reserved and diffident personality was a natural friendliness and a man who took his responsibilities as secular and religious leader seriously. Unlike other members of the Royal family, the Sultan took a second wife. Though Islamic law allows men up to four wives, this seldom happens in Brunei. Despite widespread criticism within the Royal family, in 1981 he married a very pretty young flight attendant on Royal Brunei Airlines with whom he had fallen in love and for whom he built a second, but substantially smaller palace. Whatever initial hard feelings there may have been, they were no longer evident by the time I arrived. On all official occasions the Sultan was accompanied by both wives - wife number one, Saleha, always seated on his right, and Princess Mariam, his second wife, on his left. As far as one could tell, the relationship was a harmonious one.

Q: Were there not rumors of misconduct and scandal among some members of the Royal family? Could you comment about these?

PHILLIPS: Yes, within the diplomatic community and probably among better informed Bruneians, such rumors were not uncommon. They focused primarily on the actions and activities of one of the Sultan's three brothers, Prince Jefri, who served as Finance Minister and as chairman of the Brunei Investment Agency, which manages Brunei's foreign reserves as well as much of its foreign investments. The rumors related both to financial improprieties and Prince Jefri's personal lifestyle. For example, despite a strict prohibition against the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages, it was well known that Jefri was importing substantial quantities of these for consumption in a hotel which he owned. Rumors also abounded about the attractive young women he invited to Brunei and put up in his various guest houses, where disco parties and other entertainment were provided. I have no reason to believe that the Sultan was aware of all these

goings-on. It's doubtful that anyone would have dared convey such information to the Sultan, but of course there is no way of being sure of that. I was always impressed by the contrast between Prince Jefri and his older brother, Prince Mohamed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The latter was a devout person who took his religion and his job seriously. I found him most helpful on a number of occasions, especially during the Gulf War period. At times when it was difficult to get through to the Sultan, I could always rely on Prince Mohamad for help. Of the three brothers, he was considered to be the closest to the Sultan.

Q: Let's turn for a moment to Brunei's economy. One hears much about the Sultan's enormous wealth, his lavish lifestyle and his extensive overseas investments. Can the economy sustain this indefinitely?

PHILLIPS: I think the answer to that depends largely on how long Brunei's oil and gas reserves last. As of a few years ago, known reserves were about 1.5 billion barrels of oil and 5.6 trillion cubic feet of gas. Some among the petroleum industry people guessed that the end could come early in the 21st century - but that, of course was only a guess. Basically, Brunei is a one-track economy with oil and gas accounting for 70% of its domestic product, and 99% of its exports. The Brunei Shell Petroleum company, which is half owned by the Brunei government and half by Royal Dutch Shell, produces most of the output. The government was well aware of the need to diversify the economy, but doing so had not been easy. During several meetings I had with Abdul Rahman, the Minister for trade and economic affairs, we discussed the current five-year national development plan. This focused on creating new jobs for the indigenous labor force and on efforts to encourage foreign investment which could promote exports. They were talking about such possibilities as the development of a glass-making industry from Brunei's ample silicon resources, the production of pharmaceuticals from products grown in the rain forest, and the development of tourism. None of these seemed to me to offer much hope of success. Next to the petroleum sector, Brunei's major source of earnings is from overseas investments. These are mostly handled by the Brunei Investment Agency, although it is sometimes difficult to know when a particular investment is in the name of BIA or of the Sultan himself. For example, the Dorchester hotel in London is owned by the Sultan, but other hotels such as the Beverly Hills in California and the Holiday Inn in Singapore, are owned by BIA. According to one well informed individual I knew, Brunei's national reserves as of 1991 stood at \$30.2 billion. A major portion of the income earned from this portfolio is reinvested, and only petroleum income is used as government revenue. Of course, the Sultan's personal fortune, which is shrouded in secrecy, is not included in those figures.

And so it seems to me that for the foreseeable future, Brunei's economy will be more directly affected by the world price of oil and gas than any other single factor.

Q: Before we conclude these discussions, are there any other issues or events you would like to comment on?

PHILLIPS: Well, there are a couple of matters about which I'd like to say a few words. The first concerns the impact on Brunei of something called Malay Muslim Monarchy, which stresses conservative Islamic values and the uniqueness of Brunei Malayan culture. Its origins go back to the reign of the present Sultan's father, but until recently, it wasn't a major factor in Bruneian

life. By the time I left however, it had reemerged as a very significant factor. Most Bruneians appeared to have to have little understanding of just what MIB meant. To those of us in the diplomatic community it seemed to have a distinctly nationalistic and anti-foreign flavor and an intolerance towards non-Islamic religions. During a meeting with the Sultan he was asked for a clarification of the purposes and objectives of MIB. He told us that Brunei had become so influenced by western values that its traditional cultural values were being threatened. It was therefore necessary to restore a balance between foreign and Bruneian cultures. But he assured us that this was not anti-western and that there was nothing chauvinistic about the concept. However, I think there was more to it than that.

In spite of the Sultan's general popularity, there were signs of growing unrest, particularly among young people, who chafed under the restrictions of life for them - no theaters, no movies, no discos. Additionally, unemployment was growing and had reached almost 6%. One of my ambassadorial colleagues once described it as "unfocused discontent." It appeared that a small but powerful group of hardliners within the government, led by the Mufti, had persuaded the Sultan that a more conservative Islamic orthodoxy was necessary in order to produce a greater sense of direction to his rule. But these policies were by no means universally popular, either within the government or among ordinary Bruneians. Some of my colleagues in the diplomatic community believed that if continued, they would eventually lead to social unrest and a destabilization of the country. My own hunch was that the influence of such moderates as Pehin Isa, the senior special advisor to the Sultan, and other moderates in the cabinet would eventually prevail.

The other matter, which caused me more than a little frustration, concerned President Bush's invitation to the Sultan to meet with him in Washington for an official working visit. I had discussed this possibility with the President shortly before my departure for Brunei. He thought it was a good idea and promised to look for an opportunity to arrange the meeting. I wasn't particularly optimistic that anything would come of my suggestion. To my great surprise however, only a few months after my arrival in Brunei, I received instructions to present a letter from the President to the Sultan extending an invitation for the visit which, as I recall, was to be during the month of June. The Sultan was clearly pleased when I presented the letter to him. He asked for a few days to discuss the timing with his staff and promised to respond shortly. A week later, I was asked to return to the Palace for further discussions about the visit. During the course of that meeting, the Sultan asked if his trip to Washington could be postponed to coincide with the opening of the U.N. General Assembly in September. I cautioned him that this might be difficult, because that was the time of year when the President had an especially heavy schedule of visits with foreign leaders attending the General Assembly. Nevertheless, if he wished, I would convey his request to Washington. It was pretty clear to me that the Sultan was hoping to combine his Washington visit with a speech at the opening session of the General Assembly. It seemed highly unlikely that the White House would agree to the Sultan's request. I was therefore not surprised to receive word from Washington that the request had been turned down. To my considerable surprise however, I was then asked to inquire if the Sultan could give us a period of time during which an alternative date might be set. In due course word came back that the month of April, the following year, would be convenient. I passed this on to Washington, and soon thereafter received instructions to deliver an invitation to the Sultan for a visit during the last week of April, 1991. I also told the Foreign Ministry that Washington hoped for a prompt reply

because of the President's advanced scheduling requirements. A week went by with no word from the Palace. A few days later a terse instruction arrived from Washington which said, in effect, get a yes or no reply without further delay. I then met with the Foreign Minister and told him I had been instructed to press for an immediate response to the President's invitation. The next day I was called to the Palace for yet another meeting with the Sultan. After expressing his apologies for the delayed reply, he said his advisors had reminded him that the new dates would conflict with his annual post-Ramadan visits to all of Brunei's cities and towns. At that point I was nearly speechless, but I put on the best front I could, saying I was sure the President would be disappointed. My cable reporting this news to Washington, concluded with a strong recommendation against any further Presidential invitations to the Sultan.

At first, I was puzzled by the Sultan's rather casual handling of an invitation from the President of the United States. Why would he not have jumped at such an opportunity? The answer became apparent to me during my farewell call on the Sultan. At the outset of our conversation, he said how much he regretted that unavoidable commitments had prevented his trip to Washington, and that the missed opportunity was most unfortunate. When I explained to him how difficult it was to arrange Presidential invitations, he responded that he was now very aware of this and was especially appreciative of the efforts made on his behalf.

It was clear to us in the Embassy that there was no snub intended by the Sultan or his advisers. They simply had no idea of the demands made on the President's time, and naively assumed that they were not dissimilar to those made on the Sultan. We parted on a friendly note, with the Sultan expressing the hope that we might meet again in Washington the following year should he be there on either an official or unofficial visit. I couldn't help wondering if this was a not so subtle hint that he would welcome yet another Presidential invitation!

RICHARD W. TEARE
Director, Office of Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore Affairs
Washington, DC (1989-1992)

Richard W. Teare was born in Ohio in 1937. He received his bachelor's degree from Harvard University in 1948. His career includes positions in Barbados, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, New Zealand, and Australia. Mr. Teare was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in July 1998.

Q: Probably this would be a good place to stop because we have already gone two hours. So we will pick up '89 to '92 as the country director for Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei. Okay? We'll do that.

TEARE: Fine. Good deal.

Q: Today is _____ 6th, 1998. Well, Dick, where are we now?

TEARE: 1989 to 1992, my tour as country director for Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore in the EA/P Bureau.

Q: What was sort of the order? This was the Bush Administration?

TEARE: It was all Bush Administration, right.

Q: Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore and Malaysia...who was the head of East Asian Affairs?

TEARE: It was Richard Solomon.

Q: Whom I've interviewed. He is pretty much a China hand.

TEARE: Yes.

Q: Did you find you were off in left field or something?

TEARE: I would say that we were in the middle or outer orbit, yes, because a lot of his time and attention went to China and then to Japan and Korea. Southeast Asia got less attention although more I suppose than Australia, New Zealand and the Islands. The East Asia Bureau had gone through a number of re-organizations. Holbrooke back in the '70s pumped up the importance of the Islands and created a separate Office of Pacific Island Affairs under Bill Bode apart from Australia and New Zealand. And then later, after the Compacts of Free Association were negotiated with the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, a third office came in. It was my old negotiating office transmogrified. It was the Office of Freely Associated States Affairs. So at one time there were three offices dealing with the South Pacific. Now they are all combined into one since 1997.

Q: I suppose the best thing to do is to go through these because these are all very separate places really.

TEARE: They are.

Q: During the '89 to '92 periods, let's take Indonesia first. What was the situation there?

TEARE: That was the biggest and it became the most complex. I imagine it would be hard to sort out the time I spent but I would guess that over the three years it was something like this: Indonesia 40 percent, Singapore 30 percent, Malaysia 20 percent and Brunei 10 percent. That is very rough but it adds up!

TEARE: Perhaps of more impact around Southeast Asia was the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. I was in Brunei when the invasion took place. I had gone out on Secretary Baker's plane to the ASEAN Post Ministerial Meeting in 1990 and had stayed on in the region to visit other posts. I was due to give a talk at the University in Brunei with a heavily political-military audience

including some British and other expatriate instructors. I tried to draw certain parallels for the Bruneians between their situation and Kuwait. For example a small oil rich country with larger, much more powerful neighbors. Two kingdoms, sultanates, if you will, sheikdoms, whatever Kuwait is or was at that time and, hey, you're both vulnerable, this is a bad sign, there are strains within Islam that can be dangerous, so on and so forth. I think the Bruneians were rather skeptical and I of course didn't know and I think Baker had just scrubbed his hunting trip in Mongolia and flown on to Moscow to meet with his Soviet counterpart. I didn't know what the response was going to be although I hoped to hell the United States would respond in some fashion. This, again, was in early August 1990.

Eventually of course we did put together the coalition, first Desert Shield and then Desert Storm and everybody knows the outcome there. I'm not sure the Bruneians drew much of a message from it even so.

Q: Did you find yourself in the position of supporting our efforts to drum up support from Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, particularly, in our operations against Iraq?

TEARE: The Sultan of Brunei, I think, was implicitly in favor of Kuwait and against Iraq, and the Indonesians, I think, came farther faster than the Malaysians did. But it was not automatic or unqualified.

Q: Well then moving to Brunei...this is a place that one only hears about every once in awhile when there is some extravaganza on the part of the extremely wealthy ruling family or that we are trying to collect money for some cause or something.

TEARE: That's true. There was the famous ten million-dollar gift to the Iran Contra cause, or the Central American Contra cause, really, by the Sultan, which Ollie North put in the wrong Swiss bank account. That had happened before my time.

Relations with Brunei were relatively calm during my time. The big thing we worked on was trying to arrange a state visit to the United States by the Sultan. We had difficulty in that because those visits as you know are rationed very carefully. The East Asia Bureau as a whole could only count on two or three per year and you had to cover a six-month period in advance. That is you'd have to get in by December your nominations for the January to June period.

We once at least managed to get the Sultan in as one of East Asia's two visits for the half-year or whatever. Then he turned down the dates because it was too close to Ramadan. When the Sultan wanted to come was in September in connection with a visit to the United Nations and an appearance in the general debate at the General Assembly. But of course that is when everybody else wants to come to Washington also and the chances of getting in then are very small.

We also worried a little bit that whenever the Sultan did come he would be hounded by questions about the contribution that Ollie North misappropriated. We also were not certain how he would handle the matter of his wives because he has two of them and he has six children by the first and four by the second. Would he bring them both? If so how would that play out in protocol terms? He has taken both of them on state visits to other places. Not every time, I think, but some occasions.

So the whole time I was there and so far as I know down to the present he has not visited. We have never been able to work out the dates or the details. Now, since then other things have happened to Brunei including that former Miss USA who has alleged that she was taken out there to be a sex slave, law suits against the Sultan which were dismissed on the grounds of sovereign immunity, and against one or more of his brothers. And there has been a falling out within the royal family and financial difficulties and so forth. So Brunei is perhaps more embroiled in bad publicity than it was in my time.

I visited there a couple of times. Our ambassador in those years was Christopher Phillips. I saw the place and got out a little bit into the countryside. It's extraordinary. For one of my visits, the Defense Attaché, who is non resident, he is the Army Attaché from Singapore, was coming over to coincide with my visit and he had lined up a dinner that we would host for the entire top brass of the Brunei armed forces. We got there, and I guess we learned the day before that his Majesty the Sultan had graciously decided to allow the armed forces to celebrate his birthday on the evening we had planned for our dinner. So our dinner was scrubbed and his Majesty went to the Defense Headquarters and received honors on his birthday.

I watched the television coverage the next night on the local news and it was all full of how he had graciously attended and graciously allowed the assembled generals to offer their good wishes and then he had graciously consented to cut the cake and so forth. That is the way things are there. I was told stories. Essentially, if there is a royal motorcade coming you get off the road. There were stories about the several hundred polo ponies that he kept. It was not true, I am told, that all of them have air-conditioned stalls. Only a small percentage of the stalls have air-conditioning and that is for ponies that are sick or recuperating.

Q: Were there concerns for Brunei as far as oil or what might happen? It has neighbors surrounding it who might be greedy; or are there internal issues? During this period did we sort of keep a finger on the pulse of what might happen?

TEARE: I think we tried to. I know we tried to. I think Brunei's situation at that time was relatively comfortable in that it was getting oil revenues. The oil is all done by Royal Dutch Shell. There is no primary American interest there. I think we have some drilling contractors and others who are involved on the edges but not direct or not central I should say.

In security terms Brunei has taken care of itself rather well. It has a training facility used by the Singaporeans. There is usually close to a battalion of Singapore infantry there at any given time. There is also a battalion of Gurkhas who are technically retired from the British Army and then recruited directly by Brunei. They serve there also. So I think anybody on the outside, Malaysia,

whose states surround Brunei on the North Coast of Borneo there, would think twice before attempting anything. And indeed there is no reason to.

I think the Sultan has gone out of his way to maintain good relations with Indonesia.

So nobody is really threatening Brunei. It could be captured by an invading force in a matter of a couple of days I expect. But it might be rather a bitter pill to swallow. I think the main emphasis is deterrence. Now Brunei has no political party system at all. There is some intolerance of religion other than moderate Islam. Some Islamic fundamentalists or radicals were cracked down on during my time. A couple of the Christian churches and Chinese temples had problems with their land rights or rentals or whatever.

I haven't reviewed the Human Rights Reports of those periods but Brunei doesn't come out terribly well. On the other hand there were not the sorts of problems we had with Indonesia by any stretch.

Q: You say three countries had to give agrément?

TEARE: For me. So it took weeks and I think it was August before all three *agrément* went for me. So my nomination was not officially announced until some time in August or September. My confirmation hearing was not until the end of September.

Sorry! When I say vacancies for '93...there were some big ones, too, once the election took place. Japan, Korea, Australia...but I was sort of in the little group, to which Brunei was added also. Because the Ambassadors I had sent out... had coached and taken through briefings in '92, two of them were Political Appointees, Singapore and Brunei. They both got bounced. In each case the Ambassador had children in school and so after a special appeal to Secretary Christopher, those two were allowed to stay at post until June of '93 instead of getting out by March as most Bush Political Appointees had to do. So that's what happened.

During that time in limbo I did three or four different things. First off, almost as soon as I left the desk in September, I went to New York as the extra hand for East Asia and Pacific for the first half of the General Assembly. Theresa Tull, who was in line to be Ambassador to Brunei, did the second half. Then I came back to Washington and I was grabbed by my former Deputy on IMBS, Barbara Harvey, who at that time was Deputy Assistant Secretary in Personnel, to do a study of multi-functionality and what it was doing to the upper ranks of the Service. That took me essentially November through February.

I did a lot of interviewing and some statistical work and came up with a recommendation which was adopted that people promoted multi-functionally to OC not have to re-qualify. They effectively were forcing out a lot of administrative officers in particular at the end of their OC time because there was no way they were going to re-qualify as multifunctional.

Then I can't remember all that I did after that. I finished that report the end of February. I must have done some other things. I sat on the Threshold Promotion Board in the summer of '93. All of this was possible because the White House was moving not at all on my nomination!

THERESA A. TULL
Ambassador
Brunei Darussalam (1993-1996)

Theresa A. Tull was born in New Jersey in 1936. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland in 1972. Her career included positions in Brussels, Vietnam, Washington D.C., Philippines, Laos, and ambassadorships to Guyana and Brunei. Ambassador Tull was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November 2004.

TULL: So, you were asking what I was thinking about for my next assignment. Fairly early on in my service with Winston Lord and his team, it was suggested that I would be a good candidate for the ambassadorship to Brunei. Winston was interested in getting a career person in that post. Since its independence from Britain we had only had political appointees there and it apparently in the eyes of the Department needed a professional. It was suggested that this would be a good possibility for me, not concretely offered, but strongly suggested. I remember on this one occasion in the spring of '93 I guess it was I had been sent over to Thailand. There were two conferences in Bangkok, one related to human rights at which the Department definitely wanted to have representation and I was asked if I would go. Winston made good use of the fact that I was an ambassador, so we'll send Ambassador Tull. I was assigned to go to this conference. When the embassy found out about it, well, they were happy, I knew people there. They said there's another conference that we would really welcome having Ambassador Tull attend. It's going to be about four or five days after the one that she's coming for. Is there any way in which you can consider having her stay and attend that other conference since she's in the region anyway. I liked the idea and I suggested that I could go to Laos in-between and see what type of changes had occurred. This was now '93. We had an ambassador there now I believe, yes, Charlie Salmon. I said I'd be happy to go up to Laos if its agreeable to the ambassador and just for my own curiosity see what's what and take a breather before coming back for the other conference.

That was worked out, Charlie, an old friend, was happy to have me. I attended this one conference which was interesting. I think it was a UN conference of some kind, the first one, and then the second one I don't recall the details. Between these two conferences I flew to Vientiane and saw what had happened in the years since I had left. They had made a lot of changes. At the time that I was leaving Laos in '86 they had pronounced that they were undertaking a new economic plan which would lead gradually to more private enterprise and things of that nature. I was frankly skeptical of it and hadn't seen much materialize from it while I was there. In the years that had passed they had really opened up quite a bit. Vientiane was alive with motorcycles and also the little type of Jeepney they have in Bangkok. Brightly colored little things, little vehicles, maybe the size of a station wagon in the old days and people would hop on and off,

very colorfully painted. They had imported those to give people quick trips around town. There were cars, more cars on the street. A couple of new hotels had opened. You could actually see tourists around, whereas when I was chargé d'affaires there, I mean a car on the street was unusual. People would be on bicycles or walking, but I remember one of the main drags you'd drive down and maybe there'd be another car and it would be a government official or something and you'd have your vehicle. It was quite a contrast.

Likewise, the reception I got was a surprise. The ambassador, Charles Salmon who I had known in my Vietnam days and had stayed in touch with, he said well they're happy to have you. The government officials want to meet with you. We've got appointments laid on and so it was really interesting. I met these folks and they acted like it was old home week. Ambassador Tull, how nice to see you again. I'm thinking well, you didn't treat me this well when I was here, but hey, okay, very good, you know. The next day Charlie shows me the Lao newspaper, the government newspaper, my picture on the front page with this minister I had met with and they had translated it to something about I had come back on a good will mission or whatever it was, so it was quite interesting.

Q: Oh, yes.

TULL: To see the changes and everything. Well, another interesting thing happened when I was there. I got a phone call at Charlie's from George Moose who was Assistant Secretary for African Affairs at the time. I had known George also in Vietnam and subsequently. George asked if I would be interested in being the African bureau's choice to be ambassador to Burundi. Rolling around in the back of my brain, Burundi, isn't that near Rwanda and isn't that a horrible place with problems, with really major problems? I said, "Well, George I'm just delighted that you would think of me. You know I have no African experience." He says, "No, but you've got good experience. I'd be pleased to put you up as our candidate." I said, "George, thank you so much. Let me, give me a day, okay?" "Yes, no problem." "Just give me a day to think it over and I'll be back in touch with you." I knew in the back of my brain that Winston Lord was thinking Brunei, but it hadn't been concretely offered. I got the human rights report, which are wonderful volumes of information. I got out that book and sure enough Burundi was what I thought it was and I'm looking at it and I'm thinking oh my gosh. On the other hand, one doesn't turn down an offer. If you're seriously interested, you've got a few more years. It would be nice to go out as a serving ambassador, to retire as a serving ambassador. I thought it over and there had been some improvements at that point, we're talking '93. It was before the Rwanda genocide, but at any rate, I thought, yes, okay, I'm going to tell George that he can put me forward. In the back of my calculating little brain was the fact that as soon as I got back to Washington I had an obligation to tell the East Asia bureau, Winston, through his deputy at least if I didn't deal directly with him that he should know that I had agreed to have my name put forward for this other ambassadorship. That's what I did and I think Winston was away, whatever, and I dealt with his deputy. I think it was Lynn Pascoe, I forget, but Lynn might have been the senior deputy at that time. I said, "Look, I feel I have to tell you that I was approached to see if I'd be willing to have my name put forward as an ambassador, the Africa bureau's choice for Burundi, and I have accepted." "But we want you for Brunei." I said, "Well, I'm delighted to hear that, but this was a real firm offer and I didn't feel that I had that firm a commitment here." "I'll double check it, but yes. I'm sure, but I'll be back." He did talk with Winston and yes, I was the bureau choice to be

ambassador to Brunei. My understanding of it was that when the Deputy's meeting which determines the State Department's choices for these embassies came up, my name was put up by two bureaus, from Africa and also from East Asia. The word that I got indirectly was that the White House had a choice for Burundi, a political appointee wanted Burundi, and therefore Winston pushed very hard for me to get Brunei. We want Tull for Brunei. The White House agreed, so I was selected to be ambassador to Brunei.

Q: So, you were at Brunei from when to when?

TULL: I went over to Brunei in early December I think, late November, possibly early December of '93.

Q: You were there until when?

TULL: Until my retirement April 30th, '96.

Q: What was the situation in Brunei, I mean sort of political and economical?

TULL: There was no political situation in Brunei.

Q: There's no economic situation either was there?

TULL: They were drowning in money.

Q: Where do you stack it?

TULL: No, it was interesting. One of the ironic things was that as a result of this effort we had made to establish this APEC summit the Sultan of Brunei was coming to Seattle and he would be part of this gathering that would meet with President Clinton. Because of the protocol of not meeting with the head of state before you present credentials, it was determined that I could not go there and meet the Sultan. He went to Seattle and I went to Brunei. Once I got there it took a week or so to present credentials.

Politically, there was really no political situation in Brunei to speak of; the Sultan was a total dictator, a benevolent dictator who seemed to be genuinely loved by his people. The same family had ruled Brunei for 600 years. There had been a fair amount of inbreeding, but I found the Sultan to be certainly of adequate intelligence for his position. There were no political parties, there was no national assembly. There was a government mechanism, of course, with ministries and ministers, but they answered to the Sultan and he answered to God, I guess. This was the way that worked. Being a political officer by nature I was always interested in seeing was there anything out there, what's going on, is there unrest, and I couldn't find it. There really wasn't much. There were a few cases stemming from many years before as far as we were aware, a few cases of political prisoners, people who had been rounded up at a time when there was a mini invasion/revolution that they launched from Indonesia I think it was. At that time a few folks were rounded up and put in jail and you never really could find out what had happened to them. They were probably still alive, but at any rate there was very little political foment in Brunei.

The country economically was thriving on oil and natural gas money. The population of the country was very small, and the Sultan who lived like an incredibly wealthy person nonetheless shared a lot of that money. A lot of that money got down to the average person in various ways. When I was there it was probably a little better for the average person than it is now because in the last couple of years they went through a bad spell with some corruption on the part of the Sultan's brother apparently and also when oil prices went down. When I was there oil prices were at a reasonable level, production was good. There was absolutely no tax of any kind in the country, no income tax, no real estate tax, no sales tax, no taxes whatsoever. Free education through the university level for those capable of benefiting from it. Free health care. Most people who were Bruneians worked for the government in various capacities with a very relaxed type work day. The government was the largest employer. The grunt work in the country was done by imported laborers from the Philippines and Indonesia, but the Philippines were the largest single contingent. The average Bruneian would not mow a lawn or do anything of that nature. The grunt work was done by foreigners. It wasn't a bad life for Bruneians. Being a Muslim country, the government gave interest-free loans or near to it for the purchase of your home. There were dirt cheap trips organized by the government to take people to Saudi Arabia for the hajj, the pilgrimage that Muslims are supposed to make once in their life if they can. It was hard to find a lot of discontent in Brunei at that time.

One area of concern was the fact that the Chinese element in the community was discriminated against on the question of citizenship. They tended to be intelligent professionals or business people, the Chinese, and they'd been there a few generations, but the Bruneian constitution made getting citizenship very difficult for non-Malays, including being able to speak the language of Brunei, a variety of the Malay language. That was a little difficult for the Chinese. On the plus side, all these tax-free elements I mentioned made it easy if you were a good business person to profit, to have nice homes and to live well, but you couldn't really participate in the sense of being a full citizen. Of course no Bruneian could participate in the political life of their country, either, as there was, in effect, no political life there.

With regard to religion there were also constraints. Brunei is a Muslim country, a moderate Muslim country, but with an element in the country personified by the education minister at that time who wanted a tougher, more fundamentalist approach to the Islamic religion. The Sultan, in my view, walked maybe a middle path. He was certainly not a fundamentalist conservative Muslim, but he would give a little nod this way to conservatives and then a nod to the more liberal approach, back and forth, so they didn't get extreme re the practice of Islam. I mean they didn't have too many religious police going around. There were some. I heard about them sometimes from ministers' wives. They would tell me sometimes that they were really annoyed because their daughter or someone had been criticized by somebody or they had gotten a phone call because their daughter was seen out at night, for example. But basically it wasn't as bad as in many Muslim countries.

As an indication, women could work anywhere they wished to work. I'm talking Bruneian women. They were encouraged to cover their hair, but not compelled to. One of the Sultan's sisters flatly refused. She was one of the princesses, and she didn't do it. They had beautiful colored gowns, the type that Malay women would wear, beautiful gowns encrusted with jewels

and some of them would have a very pretty matching headdress. It wouldn't cover their eyes or anything of that nature it would just be a lovely little scarf type thing. You wouldn't see hair, but it would be very nice. If they didn't choose to wear it, they weren't beat up about it either. They could drive cars. They could do all of that by themselves. It was a decent life for women considering Brunei was a Muslim country. The right wanted to push Islamic practice a little further. For example, the education minister introduced a requirement that from kindergarten on or preschool the little girls had to cover their hair. Now you think of little four and five year olds with little headscarves on. That's a drag, running around the play yard. As an independent woman, I did not think that was a particularly good thing to do. Essentially I think the Sultan walked a bit of a tightrope, but leaning on the side of liberalization.

One element, for example, apparently the previous year to my being there one of the stores or hotels had put up a Christmas tree and they had it taken down under government order because you don't have things like that in a Muslim country. Well, when I was there, there were Christmas trees with some lights up in some business establishments and nobody came and tore them down.

On the religious question, there was nil tolerance, I'd say nil tolerance for the expansion of other religions. The Chinese were represented in both the Catholic Church and also in the Anglican Church. So, when I was there, there were at most two Catholic priests. I think there might have been just one Catholic priest in the entire country. He was Chinese, Bruneian. He joined a religious order and was working overseas in Pakistan as a missionary. At a certain point, several years before I got there, the Bruneian government expelled all foreign priests from the country. There had been mostly Australian priests, white Australian priests, and ministers, too. They were expelled. Brunei was not going to have any foreign priests there. The Catholic Church called upon this ethnic Bruneian priest to abandon his missionary work and come back to Brunei which he did.

I happen to be a practicing Catholic. The Catholic Church in Bandar Seri Begawan was a very small wooden structure with a reasonably small concrete area outside. Now you had huge numbers of Filipinos in Brunei doing grunt work, maids, construction workers, things like that and Filipinos go to church. The core I guess of the traditional Catholic Church there before all this influx had been Chinese, so there were frictions between the Chinese Catholics and the foreign Filipino Catholics in terms of the services and who should do what and what are you doing running the church and this kind of thing. The priest I think did a good job of trying to balance off both group's concerns. I remember being really surprised the first time I went to church. It was a mob scene. The outdoor area was filled with people standing, sitting, whatever they could do, but it was really crowded. Of course they had loud speakers so those outside could hear the service. I thought well, this is a good sign for me, the next time I'm going to have to come a lot earlier. I was just standing in the crowd. Of course, the arrival an American ambassador, particularly if she is a female, is news. In some countries you get a lot of pictures in the paper, and Brunei was no exception. One of the Chinese ushers spotted me and came running out and said I had to come into the church and I said, no, I'm late, I'll stay here. He said, no, come on. I got in church and I thought well, all right I'll go with this. People seemed to be happy and nodded and smiled as I went by. Nothing would do, but he takes me right up to the front, moves somebody out of their seat and plops me down. I thought I don't like this, this is not right,

me being a egalitarian democrat, but then I thought it over and I thought, you know, again this sends a signal to the government that what they're doing to the Catholic Church is not going to go unnoticed because the American government cares about people's rights to practice their religion. There's the ambassador sitting right there. I also think at that time, the Korean ambassador was Catholic when I first got there. I spoke with the priest afterwards. I said, you know I felt really bad, I got here and there were no spaces and they insisted on bringing me in. He says, no, we really appreciate that. He said, that's great, really wonderful to have you here. Visible to everybody, it's an element of additional protection.

The core element of both the catholic and the one small Anglican Church was the Chinese, who generally were wealthy people. The church had plenty of money. The Catholic Church, in particular, wanted to buy land and build a bigger church. They were thwarted every step they took. They were just denied, denied, denied permission by the government with one excuse after another. They were not told no, we don't want a bigger Catholic Church. It was just, well, no, that land is not available. The government might want that for something later. The whole time I was there the Catholics were never able to expand from this very small church and the extremely crowded conditions for these poor people even though money was not an object. They could have written a check and built a nice church, but they were forbidden from it and I believe the same thing happened with regard to the Anglican Church (although most Filipinos were Catholic, so the numbers of Anglicans were smaller than the Catholics). The government had not closed these churches, but the religions were prohibited from proselytizing. I mean you have to realize in Saudi Arabia you wouldn't even have a visible Catholic or Anglican Church, but everything generally in Brunei was in moderation, but with pressure being exerted.

Q: I was wondering with Brunei being known as a place with lots of money and I know I've talked to people, I think it was Barry King who was saying that after the Gulf War we were sitting around and sort of hat in hand trying to get money from Brunei. Was Brunei seen as, from the people in policy elements, seen as sort of a cash cow that we should go to from time to time to get money for this or that during your time?

TULL: That's maybe a little crassly stated. We knew they were wealthy and we did hit them up for various initiatives for example on KEDO, Korean Energy Development Organization, I did approach the government and got commitments for assistance from Brunei for that. Also for Palestinian aid. They came up with money for Palestinian aid.

Q: These are quite legitimate concerns with which we're paying a lot, too.

TULL: No, well, I don't think it was overdone. I mean the most embarrassing situation they had preceded my time when the government of Brunei was approached to provide money to aid the Iran Contras and they did. Then it turned out that the money was put in a wrong bank account and apparently it was never used anyway. That was a bit of an embarrassment, but that preceded me by a few years. No, I have to say that I was treated very well by the Sultan and I would say by his ministers. He accepted the idea of having a woman ambassador. I was the first resident woman ambassador in Brunei. There might have been someone based out of country who would come in a couple of times a year, but I know I was the first resident one and he handled that very well. He treated me like he would any other ambassador.

Now, interestingly, a couple of the older elements of his administration did not quite share that view. The first time that I had an occasion to be at the palace with the entire diplomatic corps would have been at the conclusion of Ramadan when you have the celebration of Aidilfitri. You have three days of visiting people and wishing everybody well. The Sultan had a reception for the diplomatic corps in the palace. Now, the palace is another piece of work, 1,700 rooms I think, incredible. Just absolutely incredible. Wild. At any rate this would have been in January 1994, I think. I presented credentials when the Sultan got back from Seattle. I think I presented credentials in December. That was a very nice formal situation. You had to rehearse for it and it was very nice and I had a good discussion with the Sultan. Then this would have been just a few weeks later, the first big opportunity to share a reception in the Palace. The diplomatic corps was ushered into this main reception room of the palace to meet with the Sultan. When I went into the room the ministers' wives were all seated off to the right and the spouses, the wives of the ambassadors were all also seated off to the right, chit chatting with each other. I was not a spouse of an ambassador I was an ambassador, so I remained in the central area with the ambassadors and ministers. I had a little company because the Philippine chargé d'affaire was also a woman. Her ambassador was ill and was in the Philippines a good bit of the time so she was also there.

We're there and chit chatting and I feel it's my job to meet these ministers. I had met some of them and so I greeted them. Suddenly this older Bruneian gentleman came over to me and said, "Women over there. Women have to be over there." I said, "How do you do? I'm the American Ambassador, Theresa Tull." "Women over there, women have to be over there." I said, "Well, actually I believe that's for the wives. I'm the American Ambassador, but thank you." I edged away and he started to follow me. I spotted the deputy foreign minister and so I went over and explained what was happening. I said, "You know, I'm not going to go over and sit with the wives." He said, "No, no." He looked a little nervous. He was a little jumpy. I said, "That gentleman is telling me that I have to go over there, but I'm not going over there." He said, "Oh, no." He still looked nervous. The Philippine chargé had gotten the same word from this man, but she'd moved with me to the Deputy Foreign Minister.

At this point the Sultan and his family came in. On this particular occasion he came with his wife and his children and we lined up by protocol rank, in terms of when you had presented your credentials, so I was at the end of the line, the chargé was next to me. The Sultan couldn't have been nicer, just completely normal, shook hands which I discovered subsequently a lot of Muslims don't want to do, to touch a woman's hand, but no he extended his hand and we did that and we chit chatted. His wife was with him, and the children. After this formal phase was completed, the wives came out from their area and everybody mingled. I didn't get to eat much of the delicious food because I was working the floor. I also wanted a few minutes with the Sultan like the other ambassadors were getting, so I managed that. Nothing substantive, just to let him know who I was and I did my job. I had to say it was a little disturbing initially to have to deal with an attempt to chase me to the other side of the room.

Ironically the following year at the same reception, a similar incident occurred. An officious woman from the palace staff told me, "Oh, no, no, you have to go over there (with the women)." I said, "Well, no, I'm the American Ambassador. I'm not the wife of the ambassador, so I'll remain here with the ambassadors." "No, no, you have to go over there." I thought, lady, you're

going to have to get a crane, I'm not leaving this area. By this time we were starting to line up in protocol rank. By this time there are a few more ambassadors behind me who had presented credentials after I had. She was getting a little vocal. I spotted a minister who was very close to the Sultan and I had gotten to be pretty close to him and his family and I left my spot in the line. I went to him and I said, "Do you see that lady there?" He said, "Yes." I said, "She is insisting that I have to go over there with the women and I'm not going to do that." He said, "I am so sorry. I thought we had sorted that out. She must be with the palace. She's not with the foreign ministry." He said, "You just ignore it and if it happens again, if she really tries to move you again, just come to me." I said, "I've been here a year and a half now." He said, "I know, but they've got a slightly different arrangement this year." Again I stayed where I was. When the Sultan came in his wife was separated from him. He only came in with his sons and the wife and the daughters went over to the other side of the room and they met with the spouses. Again there was no way in the world that I was going to go over there. No problem. Again the Sultan was as gracious as can be. As I say any time I needed to meet with the Sultan I got very quick favorable responses, even when it was a little unreasonable as far as I was concerned in terms of deadline. When you get something on a Friday, the Department would sometimes insist they had to have this answer from the Sultan by Monday. You know, they've probably been fighting it out in Washington for two weeks. But the Sultan always came through for me, I have to say.

I had several occasions to go in and seek funds for various causes that we were pushing. I usually got a favorable answer, maybe not as large a chunk of money as they might have come up with, but \$5 million or whatever, nothing to sneeze at. They were receptive to what I thought were legitimate appeals. I knew they'd have no trouble coming up with money for the Palestinians. I thought they might be a little more generous, but I think it was \$5 million. It turned out it probably went down a rathole anyway, but no, he responded. The Sultan dealt with me very straightforwardly, very charmingly I would have to say. I had a good relationship with him.

One of the things that ambassadors are these days are sales people. I was frequently required, and I was perfectly willing, to push U.S. products even though they were in some instances military products. We were pushing hard for Black Hawk helicopters to be sold there because they were in competition with the British, a couple of other outfits were pushing hard, so I knew the British were pushing hard for various things and I figured it's my job, too, so I pushed hard and we did get the helicopter sale. I pushed for Boeing for Bruneian Airlines. They were pretty committed to Boeing so that was good. I met with a lot of defense contractors who would come through and we would set up meetings for them and attempt to get other sales. There was not a great deal of room really in Brunei for the import of U.S. products because the market was so small so it would be hard to interest too many exporters. As far as Bruneian products were concerned I think we did take some of their oil. One of their big problems with their economy was the lack of diversification. The government talked about the need to diversify because all they had really was oil and gas and a population that was not the most energetic skilled group. The citizens were used to working in government offices. Occasionally the government would make efforts to bring in a clothing manufacturing company, but inevitably it would be Filipino workers who did the work, with one or two Bruneians theoretically at the head of the company. It really didn't do a great deal to broaden their economy.

We had good military relations with Brunei, interestingly so because the British were very much the dominant foreign power there, which was to be expected given the history. But the British had a large contingent of active duty officers who were assigned to the Bruneian military in various capacities, principally logistics, ordering major purchases, things of that nature, pushing goods but also helping to train the military. The Sultan was defended by Gurkhas, the tradition of the British from Nepal. The British had quite an "in" as far as having access militarily, but the Sultan was always happy to see U.S. military visitors come to the country. He relied on the 7th fleet there, the Pacific fleet. We had a lot of high level visitors. I don't think we got CINCPAC himself when we were there, but we had his deputy, we got the head of the army in the region, we got the head of the navy in the region, vice commander, and a couple very senior officers from Washington who came out to just tour the area. I was always happy to have them. I had an excellent defense attaché, Colonel Richard Welker, who was based in Singapore as the army attaché in Singapore. We developed an excellent relationship and in Brunei he was the defense attaché so he could have a broader base of involvement. He was a marvelous help. He liked the leeway that I gave him and I had complete confidence in him. He was instrumental in getting ship visits and would help with the arrangements and enjoyed military exercises and things of that nature to increase the U.S. visibility to let Brunei know that it was not alone, you know, that little tiny Brunei wasn't alone in Southeast Asia and that it was highly regarded by the U.S. We had good military to military relations there. In fact I gave my farewell reception on a visiting navy ship because it was scheduled for just about the time I was going to leave and I had always had some kind of an event, a reception, on the visiting ships and thought well, I can't really do this one night and then expect the same crowd to come two days later. Let's be sensible and look at it from a sensible financial point of view and it was a lot of fun. The navy was delighted to do it. The reception went over very well with the Bruneians and the diplomatic corps.

Q: While you were there were there any problems with the Bruneians with Malaysia or Indonesia?

TULL: No, no, none at all, that had ended several years before. Decades earlier there was stress when there were incursions over the border from Indonesia with elements and expat Bruneians who had come into Brunei to attempt to overthrow the Sultanate. It was very frightening for the Bruneian government at the time, but the incursion was quickly defeated. I don't think the Sultan was even in power then, it might have been his father. I would say this took place in the late '60s or early '70s before they were independent. In fact I believe that the Sultan's father who was Sultan at the time used that incursion as an excuse to extend the British Protectorate. He was not eager to become independent at that point. But no, ASEAN, the Association of the South East Asian Nations to which all these countries belonged, which was developed in the late 1960s to curb some of these differences between these countries who were frightened about what would happen when Vietnam fell.

Anyway, the ASEAN countries got together and thought we've got to at least start talking to each other and stop this border nonsense and insurgency and accept the status quo. They were frightened because particularly Thailand and Indonesia were the famous dominos that the U.S. was concerned would be the next to fall to Communism when Vietnam became totally communist. Those countries believed it, too and they formed ASEAN. Gradually they began working together better. But no serious problems existed between these countries when I was in

Brunei. There are frequent meetings of ASEAN. In fact one of the reasons I was pleased to be named ambassador to Brunei at the time is that the ASEAN foreign ministers meetings and the ASEAN regional forum was going to be hosted by Brunei in the summer of 1995. I thought it would be very interesting to host the Secretary of State for these meetings.

That was one of the reasons I was pleased to accept this ambassadorship and in the summer of '95 then Brunei hosted the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting and the ASEAN regional forum. Secretary of State Warren Christopher came with an entourage of too many. We took over -- we fought for this -- but there was only one decent hotel in Brunei at the time, but others were being built, but one that was very convenient to the embassy was the Sheraton and we were able to get almost the entire hotel which is what it took to have the U.S. contingent. We had an incredible number of people. I had asked the Secretary's people to please keep the size of the delegation as small as you can, but I think we had about 100 people come with the Secretary. Awful. They thought that was small I think. He travels with all the Intel and everything else that he might need. We had secretaries of state or foreign ministers from all the ASEAN countries which by this time had expanded. I believe that membership had bumped up to 10 with Vietnam itself joining. Also present were all the dialogue partners, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, China, countries with an interest in the Pacific, Korea, South Korea. It was an impressive gathering. I wanted to get the Secretary to the embassy, but his staff said that was impossible, but he did reserve about 20 minutes to meet with the staff at his hotel. He posed for pictures and he was quite gracious. It would have been good if he'd seen the embassy. I used to joke that we were the only American Embassy in the world on the top of a Chinese restaurant.

I had had a very favorable opinion of Secretary Christopher back when I was in the human rights bureau. I believe he was deputy Secretary of State, but he had the particular portfolio of human rights and cared about it deeply. I had seen him in action and felt that he was a very good person. I have to admit to being a little disappointed in Brunei. I think I'll attribute it more maybe to the arrogance of the Secretary's staff and their approach that this was God and what do you, the Ambassador, know. For example, the opening session, was held in the Bruneian conference center, chaired by the foreign minister who was the Sultan's brother and a decent man. I had made it clear to the Secretary's staff that it was going to start at a certain time. It was important to be there, that things started on time in Brunei. So, what happens. Everybody is there, all of the foreign ministers are in their places and I'm looking to see where is the Secretary of State. I got my staff on phones trying to track him down, and he was late. I didn't think that was very nice. He was staying at a hotel that was only two miles away. I had really emphasized to his staff that Brunei was a place where things start on time. All of the other foreign ministers -- China, Russia, etc. had made it on time. I think the foreign minister might have actually called the meeting to order, and then I walked in with the Secretary of State and his delegation. I just thought that was not the way to go.

Another tradition of these ASEAN meetings is that on the final night there's a kind of oh, let your hair down, have a fun type affair and the various delegations and ministers get up and they do skits. Well, I don't fault the Secretary for this. He wasn't too keen on doing a skit. The rest of us put together something and we're going to do a skit. Well, again, I made it clear to his staff that all of the foreign ministers were going to meet in the anteroom in the reception area with the foreign minister of Brunei, the host, and when they were all gathered then they would walk into

the main ballroom to their tables. They were all going to gather by 7:00 p.m. and they would meet for a few minutes with the foreign minister of Brunei. 7:00 comes and everybody is there except Secretary Christopher. 7:10, 7:15 and I'm getting concerned, queries from vice foreign ministers as to where is the Secretary of State, all the other ministers are waiting for him so the planned evening activity could begin. I had my staff on the phone pressing for the Secretary to come to the meeting site. One of my staff told me that one of the Secretary's staff was really indignant that I was pressing them about this, that the Secretary would be there when he finished. Well, what he had to finish was he had decided to have a little cocktail party for his staff to celebrate the end of the meeting. They're there back in the hotel from what I hear having cocktails and foreign ministers from 14 or 15 different countries are cooling their heels waiting for him. He bopped in I guess around 7:30. In this case the foreign minister, Prince Mohammed, did wait until he got there, but as soon as he walked in the room, they all came out and walked into the dining room. Now, that kind of thing irritates me because what does courtesy cost when you are the only remaining world superpower, can't you show courtesy to a little country?

Another irritant related to the visit involved security concerns. Everybody was required to pass through a metal detector on entering into the conference center. Well, the word came from the Secretary's staff, he doesn't go through metal detectors. My staff asked if there was a particular reason, thinking does he have a pacemaker or any problems of this nature? The staff would not respond except to insist that the Secretary would not go through a metal detector. I told me staff to ask again if there's a medical reason. I think eventually we were told it wasn't, or else it was none of our business and butt out, but Christopher wasn't going to go through that metal detector. My deputy, a decent, competent person, pushed hard with the Bruneians to get an exception for the Secretary, all the way up to the vice minister of foreign affairs. A more substantive person was the permanent secretary, a fine person and very capable diplomat. He told my deputy that Prince Mohammed, the Sultan's brother, is going through the metal detector, and since he is, everybody is going to do so. Unless there's some medical reason not to do so, everybody has to go through it. I told him to tell the Secretary's staff that that's the case. The Secretary will go through the detector like everybody else. But the word came back that I had to make a personal appeal. Again I asked if there was a medical reason, a pace maker? No -- finally I got the answer -- no, there wasn't. My deputy is saying, they're insisting you have to do something. I said, okay, I'll make an approach to the permanent secretary. I went to the permanent secretary and I said, I understand my deputy has been to you more than once on this issue of a metal detector. He sighed. I said, well, consider that I am making a personal request to you. This is what I'm doing now. I have been asked to raise the issue at my level. He looked at me and I said, but I'm just going to report whatever your response is. He said, there's no change, the prince is going through the detector. It is a hard and fast rule. Everybody goes through the metal detector. I said, fine, I've raised it. So, I'll tell the Secretary's staff I raised it and the answer is no. So, he went through the metal detector, and lived to tell the tale. But I mean this type of thing is nonsense.

Q: Well, it sounds like the staff is playing a game isn't it or not?

TULL: That's what I thought.

Q: That's what I gather all the time.

TULL: Trying to exert power? Yes.

Q: I mean, again and again you find that the people around a high important, particularly the Americans tend to make these demands. You know they're really down at an essentially low level.

TULL: I know it.

Q: But they're exerting their power.

TULL: Yes, they're trying to and they're leaving a nasty taste. As I say when I found out that the Secretary was having cocktails with his staff and keeping all of the others foreign ministers waiting, I was angry. We had spelled out the drill minutely on is schedule. Maybe he never looked at his schedule, maybe I'm angry at him when I should just be angry at the staff. It would seem to me that you would at least skim it and see you know, this is what you do, you have to get there at this time and do this. Why come halfway around the world and leave a nasty taste in peoples' mouths? Now, one thing that that session did develop, we were having a very difficult time with China at that time. I don't know whether the cause was one of our planes making an emergency landing in China or something else, but our relations had been in the freezer for months.

Q: Was that when we had actually put some rockets into the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade?

TULL: What time are we talking about here? It might have been.

Q: This was Kosovo.

TULL: Yes, that was in the early '90s, wasn't it?

Q: Mid '90s.

TULL: It might well have been that. In any event, our relations had soured. We wanted to reengage with China at a high level. The thought was that since the Chinese foreign minister and Secretary Christopher would both be at these meetings that maybe we could arrange a bilateral on the fringes. That was done and it took the chill off the relations. It was the first contact we had had at a high level for many months, so that was a positive result of the ASEAN meeting.

The next day after the dinner, the last event on the program was a press conference to be attended by all the foreign ministers and a very sizable press corps who had come for these meetings because we also had the regional forum discussions which were security related. There was a large contingent of press, some from the U.S. and Australia, New Zealand and the other countries that were involved in the meeting and it was to be a press conference by the foreign ministers. That morning I was informed by the Secretary that he wanted me to handle that press conference, that he was taking off for Malaysia. Again it was on the schedule and whatever he had worked it out that they would take off an hour earlier than originally planned and they would

head to Malaysia. I asked if he had any particular points he would like me to make. We talked about it for maybe 10 minutes or so in the car as I was taking him to the airport. So I learned with virtually no notice that I was going to get up there on the stage with all these foreign ministers, and I'm hardly at their rank, and it looks again as if the Secretary was ducking out of a commitment. Of course, the first question of the press conference was directed to me. I forget what it was, but anyway I handled it. Then another question to me and after that it was quite clear that I was the ambassador, I wasn't the Secretary of State, so all the other questions were directed to foreign ministers. It was a rare experience, sharing the stage with the foreign ministers of various countries.

We got a sizable group of people in from the Department to help with the arrangements for the Secretary's visit in advance. They were decent sorts. They worked well with my staff. We had a very small staff in Brunei. Initially my inclination was to involve myself in the details of the arrangements. But it became clear that that wasn't necessary, the advance team, working with my staff could handle it well. I backed off and confined myself to the substance of the meetings, including meeting with the Bruneians to draft the final communiqué, which are always worked out in advance of the actual meetings. I worked on these issues. I think, all told, the logistical arrangements, and the substantive ones, were handled well.

On the first day of the meetings we were notified that there was a bomb threat at my residence. Now the Secretary's security people had brought in a sniffer dog which fortunately we knew about in advance so we were able to assuage the concerns of a Muslim country about bringing in a dog. The team kindly went out to the residence and checked it out and didn't find anything. I remember when the Secretary met with my staff at his hotel the sniffer dog handler came over to me and said, "Please, can I have your picture with the dog?" So I posed with the dog and the handler by a flag. I told the handler, "Well, I appreciate his service." Thank you very much. I shook the dog's paw.

I might back up and say a word about the embassy itself in Brunei. I'd like to say that to my knowledge it's the only American Embassy in the world that's on top of a Chinese restaurant. It was in an office building in downtown Bandar Seri Begawan. There was a very good Chinese restaurant on the floor below us and we occupied a good chunk of the floor above it. Of course we had no security whatsoever, not that much was needed. We had a very small staff, perhaps five Americans and ten local employees. When I first went to Brunei I knew that the deputy there, the number two gentleman who had been chargé for a reasonable period of time between ambassadors, had a poor reputation for performance that seemed to follow him. I knew that he was not exactly a winner, but he did things right in terms of settling me in and arranging introductions. He was a decent enough human being. But the day after Christmas (now, I had presented credentials maybe two weeks before) he is notified that he's selected out and he must report out to Washington no later than like March 1st or something like that. He's gone, finished with the Department, no ifs, ands or buts. I'm thinking, my God, no matter how inadequate he is he's a warm body and he was the only political officer there. I mean there was the ambassador, a communicator, this gentleman who was the political officer and we had a GSO and a consular officer, it was consular/admin. We had about maybe eight to ten Bruneians there, none of whom were Bruneian; they were all foreigners, you know, from the area. I'm thinking, I'm going to be flying solo if they pull him out now. The assignment cycle isn't until the summer. This is just

ridiculous. I cabled the Department and appealed for an extension, listing all the reasons why he should not be pulled out just then. At least let him stay until the summer, I asked. My plea was rejected. I might have bought him another 30 days at max. He left and that was the end of that. I didn't get a replacement until at least August. I was juggling a lot of balls and trying to put the place back on a more professional level. Fortunately, the admin/consular officer was an excellent young woman who had felt stifled under the departed deputy. She flourished frankly with me there and the communicator I remember paid me a good compliment because he was due to be out in about two months. He said, "Gee, Ambassador, if I'd known we were going to have a good person like you, I would have extended." I thought that was nice and he did get a replacement on a reasonable time frame, so we weren't left without a communicator. As I said, it was a very small staff and I did not feel well served by having my deputy away with no replacement lined up for several months because of our small staff. We were supposed to be a "special embassy". I didn't see where we were freed or spared from much in the assignments being made. I mean you would get half a dozen appeals for representation on UN votes or votes in various multilateral institutions. You'd have to go and to try get the Bruneians to support the U.S. candidate for this or the U.S. position on that. We had to go in for various financial appeals. At the same time we were supposed to do a little reporting about what was taking place in the country, as much as we could manage. At the same time I was trying to straighten out the administration of the post. It was a killer of a job. You would not think that Brunei would be a huge pressure post, but when you don't have staff, when you lose your political officer, it was very hard. In addition the staff had problems a little bit similar to Guyana in terms of off-duty entertainment. For me, it was in one way like going from an economic basket case to Nordstroms in the sense that if you wanted to buy anything in Brunei it was there, in contrast to Guyana. They had material goods galore. But it was a Muslim country an entertainment outside the home was scarce. You could not legally buy an alcoholic beverage outside of your home. They allowed diplomats to import alcohol for their own personal use, but if we went out to a restaurant, you couldn't have wine or liquor. Occasionally the Sheraton Hotel would get a little frisky and maybe bring in a bottle of wine for special guests, but basically alcohol was prohibited. There was one movie theater in town that I understand was rat-ridden and showed a lot of old Indian films from India. It was primarily patronized by the expatriate worker community, the Filipinos and people like that. There was not a great deal for the staff to do in the way of entertainment.

There was a club with a swimming pool and tennis court, so most of them belonged to that. The DCM's house had a small swimming pool. My residence pool was open to the staff, but it was a 30 minute drive from where most of them lived. You could go out and buy the goods you needed, but you didn't have a whole lot of amusement opportunities. It was a pretty monotonous place to be for young active Americans. Fortunately for morale, we had regular pouch runs to Singapore. Someone went to Singapore every week, over the weekend, so each staffer, including the ambassador got to get away to Singapore roughly every six weeks. I followed that tradition, too because I would have gone stir crazy if I had stayed there without a break. Also Singapore provided certain essential services for us, certain backup. There were some economic interests to pursue. I would meet with U.S. businessmen there looking for opportunities, and we discussed the status of certain contracts they were trying to get and I felt was worthwhile. But we did get our people to Singapore. It was not the easiest assignment in the world for staff. I mean if you're the ambassador or senior officer working up the ladder, you can put up with a lot of isolation and deprivation, and not having much opportunity for a recreational life. If you're there as staff

you're not going to get the same job satisfaction that the ambassador would get or that a senior officer would get, so it was not the easiest post for those folks. I had some good people there. You always end up with a loser or two, but I had some good folks. In general it worked out.

In the summer of 1994 I did get a good person as a DCM. He worked out well. He was a competent drafter. He had a wife and two children with him. He wasn't as diehard committed to working the hours that I had foolishly done all my State Department career life, but I think it was also clear that he wasn't going to make ambassador, either. He was a good solid officer who after he had been there maybe a year came down with cancer, Hodgkin's Lymphoma. This became apparent right after the ASEAN meetings, in the summer of 1995. He was diagnosed not long after those meetings and he had to leave post. Did I ever get a replacement for him? No, I didn't. I worked without a deputy/political officer for the rest of my tour.

I had decided to retire December 31, 1995, but no deputy had been assigned to the post. I was feeling ticked off that the Department couldn't come up with a replacement and get him over there. I asked for a TDY person, someone to hold the fort, but that didn't happen. When it became clear the Department didn't have anybody lined up to replace me and no interim chargé on tap, I offered to extend my service until the 30th of April 1996, but I need the month of January off because my plans were made on the basis of me retiring December 31st. I had arranged to take a trip to Indonesia for the month of January and I had friends coming from the States to accompany me. So if you can come up with a chargé for that period then I'll stay until the end of April. That's what we did. An interim chargé came a few days before I left and I introduced him a little bit and I went off on my very interesting trip to Indonesia and I came back. Now, that would have been like the end of January and I stayed February, March and April, three more months during which time the Department still did not have a replacement for my deputy. They were lining up a replacement ambassador and the assumption was that they would have another chargé. I think the same man who had replaced me for that month was going to come back and hold the fort until the new ambassador came.

Brunei was a very interesting tour in the sense of having the ASEAN meetings and watching ASEAN take on new members and having the experience of the Secretary's visit which, all told, went very well. We had a visit just a week or so before those meetings: Winston Lord came. I forget what the occasion was for that, but anyway he came and we had a good session. We had a difficult consular problem around that time. The Bruneians had a lot of foreigners piloting their airplanes, private airplanes, piloting some of their Bruneian Air planes and planes belonging to the royal family. There was a very nasty episode where a young American woman was brutally beaten by her husband who was a pilot for one of the Sultan's brother's airplanes, Prince Jeffrey. This woman had gotten in touch with our consular officer because this was not the first time it had happened. She was frightened for her life and so the consular officer told her well, if it happens again, call me. He apparently did beat her up with a golf club or something and she was really frightened for her life and she grabbed her little boy and called the embassy, got the consular officer. She came to me and said, what should I do, she's pleading for help. I said you've got to go help her. She said, well I know her personally. I said I'm not surprised, there's not that many Americans here. But because you happen to know her personally does not mean that she is not entitled to help, so I authorized it. She got our GSO, a nice young fellow, and they went off and they picked her up at her house with the little boy. Her husband saw this car leaving

with his wife and child and he got in his car and gave high speed chase to the car and tried to bump them off the road. We're talking an American doing to this to an official American car, trying to bump it off the road. It was very scary and hairy for them and at one point he's pushing and bumping and there was a ravine, not a deep one, but a ravine. They could have been seriously hurt. They were approaching as it turned out the Pakistan Embassy. They pulled into the grounds of the Pakistan Embassy and went inside and I will hand it to the Pakistani Ambassador, he was a general, he basically gave them refuge. The American husband, the wife beater comes charging down trying to get in and the general was very strong. He wouldn't let him in. My people call me. I got the police and the American was arrested. The consular officer and GSO brought the wife and child to the embassy and she was in tears. Her whole face was beaten up. It was terrible. The husband apparently was a pretty vicious person. The child was frightened. He was a boy about five years old.

Then we had a problem. Brunei had the some of the same laws on the books as Singapore including caning for certain offenses. This was not long after there had been an episode in Singapore where an American teenager who had violated a Singaporean law and was sentenced to be caned. This became an international incident. Despite U.S. intervention the young man was caned. Now, in Brunei, charges are being brought against this American for beating his wife and also for damaging our vehicle while trying to run the car off the road. You could have almost levied an attempted murder charge.

I had conference calls with the Department -- three or four elements on the line -- and initially the Consular Affairs Bureau was very supportive. They were really appreciative of the courage shown by the consular officer and the GSO for saving this woman. The next question was what to do about the assault. We agreed that the American wife definitely should bring charges. Her husband was in custody, but he was very close to Prince Jeffrey, the Sultan's brother. I hadn't heard from the Sultan on the case, but I warned the Department to be aware that this was going to be high profile. I reminded the Department to bear in mind that Brunei also canes as punishment and we had just gone through the Singapore incident. We had a lengthy discussion, thrashing this whole thing out and the decision was that the American be brought to trial. I insisted that the Department had to clearly understand that if he is brought to trial and he is sentenced to caning, I didn't want a word of complaint out of the Department. I told them caning was a possibility and all had to be aware of that fact. I urged them not to take a tough line now and then later be shocked if he's sentenced to be caned. I noted that perhaps because of his connections it won't happen, but if we're taking a tough line, it's got to be a tough line from now through the end. All agreed, a tough line was taken. But over time that started to unravel.

I engaged a lawyer who was pretty gutsy, a 40ish, Chinese woman who was brave enough to take me on to serve as my advisor with regard to Bruneian law on this question. I wanted to be sure we were maneuvering correctly with the whole thing because at trial my staff members were going to have to be called as witnesses. They might well be maligned and I wanted to know first of all from the Department, could they be called as witnesses? What type of immunity would they have in this? There were a lot of issues involved. Again, the high ranking connections that this very despicable young American had with officials in the Bruneian government was an element, but it was not going to deter me. At any rate, we found out that when it was coming to trial the Bruneians had arranged to have a Queen's Counsel come from Great Britain to represent

him. A Queen's Counsel? This was a really big deal in the British court system. I asked the State Department for help from L, the legal bureau. I said I need help on this. I have a very capable Chinese lawyer who is advising me, but I need someone else here.

A very capable lawyer from L came over to help us. We were concerned frankly about the stress that would be put on our staff if they actually had to testify, particularly the consular officer who was a woman with two little children. It was not impossible that she would break down and cry on the stand, however capable and excellent she was and is. The representative from L met with the Queen's Counsel and with the Bruneian lawyer for the defendant. I believe the case came to court, but on the first day our people did not yet have to testify. After this however, the lawyer worked out a plea agreement whereby there was a cash settlement made to the wife and a cash settlement made to each of my officers, plus payment for the damage of our vehicle. Our officer from L thought that he had worked it out that there would have been a minimal jail sentence for the defendant. But when push came to shove that wasn't the case. I think he got probation or a warning or something of that nature. It was put behind everybody with some satisfaction. The wife was astounded that she got anything and she went back to the States to divorce him and at least she had a little settlement from her injuries and my two staff members received \$10,000 each which I thought they were fully entitled to for all of the grief they had been put through.

Now, an interesting sidelight to this to let you know how highly placed this miscreant was. During the Ramadan house visits, the ambassadors had to call on every government official of any substance, all the ministers, deputy ministers, etc. It was an ordeal. One of the highest-ranking people in the Bruneian government was a man who was very close to the Sultan. He was sort of like the Sultan's chief of staff. He was very powerful and very decent, I had thought. I went and called on him in his home at Ramadan and as I entered the room to pay my respects this American pilot and his lawyer scurried out of the room and went up the stairs. He was obviously staying with this high-ranking official because he had been a good friend of the family for many years. I just don't think that you should turn your back on a woman being beaten to a pulp just because her husband works for the Sultan. It worked out, but it created extra stress for all of us. I suspect that in a Muslim country, even a moderate one like Brunei, women's rights vis-à-vis husbands were not taken as seriously as I would have liked.

A few months later, on April 30, 1996, I retired from the Foreign Service and left Brunei. I had been in the Foreign Service for 33 very interesting years. I was grateful for the opportunity to serve my country in such a fascinating, challenging way. I believe my career demonstrates that in the United States a meritocracy was a reality, that capable, dedicated people could rise to the top ranks of American diplomacy, without political or other connections. I am proud of that reality, and of my service to the country.

End of reader