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LAWRENCE K. CRANDALL

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Peace Corps/Guinea
Long An Province, Vietnam
Pacification Studies Group
Revolutionary Development Cadre
John Paul Vann
Ken Burns PBS documentary on Vietnam
Political Attitudes Analysis System

Hamlet Evaluation System
Ambassador William Colby
Bangladesh Policy Reform Grant
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George Crile, 60 Minutes producer
Richard Armitage, State Dept Coordinator for NIS region
Haiti Pres. Aristide
Haiti Prime Minister Robert Malval
Jerry Bremer, head of CPA in Iraq
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is John Pielemeier, and I am doing an interview beginning today with Lawrence Crandall who is a long time AID employee and senior foreign-service officer. We have several countries to cover and a lot of content. So I am going to first ask you, Larry, to talk a bit about where you grew up and what led you towards international work.

CRANDALL: I was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. I went to the University of Colorado for my bachelor's degree where I started off with a strong interest in architecture. My friends talked me out of it saying I had a political, not a technical mind. I don't think I have a political mind. I don't even know what that means. At any rate I started talking with different people with a broader view of things than I had at that time, and I ended up in international affairs to include a master's degree largely because of the influence of my friends. I grew up in a very religiously oriented family in a small community in what was then a small town, Denver Colorado. So, international affairs opened up a lot of new thinking for me. As an international affairs student, I helped with the annual World Affairs Week at CU. On one occasion, my assignment was to pick up Buckminster Fuller at the Denver Airport and drive him to Boulder. It was fascinating to have over an hour long conversation with such an important and fascinating figure. That started it.

Q: Had you traveled overseas at that point?

CRANDALL: No. I never traveled east of the Mississippi River until after I graduated. My first job was in New York City in a defense oriented company. They produced high silver bearing copper with high electrical conductivity mostly for defense applications. Through this defense attuned business, I became more aware of the world outside. Through them, I was introduced to diplomats at the UN and people who had retired from the diplomatic world, mostly Americans, but other nationalities as well. One thing led to another and I decided that I needed to stop thinking about international affairs and do something. I came home from work one Friday night after night MBA classes and there was a letter from the Peace Corps asking if I would like to go to Guinea as a Peace Corps Volunteer. I thought about it over the weekend and on Monday I went in and quit. On Wednesday much to the dismay of my bosses, I was on a plane back to Denver for a few days with my family and then off for Peace Corps training. My parents and friends thought I was nuts to leave a job which had me on the 28th floor of the International Building in Rockefeller Center. My office over looked the famous skating rink below. I also left the MBA program my office was paying for.

Q: My goodness. You had applied to Peace Corps somewhere along the line.

CRANDALL: I had. I actually applied in my junior year at Colorado University. They offered me a placement in Tunisia or Morocco but I had to finish school. I said no. After I went to New York, this letter came out of the blue. Since I hadn't reactivated my interest they must have pulled my name out of a dead letter file. I don't know how that worked, but at any rate I took the offer and went through training at the all-black Southern University in Baton Rouge Louisiana. Then, I was off to Guinea for two years. While there, I lived on the very small island about halfway between Conakry and Freetown

Sierra Leone. The island was called Kabak which in the Susu dialect they speak there means mud. So, it is the “mud island” which was an appropriate name for it. I lived there pretty much by myself the whole time.

Q: You were alone there as a volunteer?

CRANDALL: Yes, I started off with two other guys, but they couldn't handle the isolation. They left and went to other assignments inland where they weren't so isolated. I don't know why I could manage the isolation. The UN Food and Agricultural organization and AID had a joint Riceland Reclamation Project on the island and that is where I came into contact for the first time with AID personnel. They were technical people, engineers for the most part, and some aggies as well. When I would make my infrequent trips to Conakry, I would see these fellows there too. They would visit me when they could. They introduced me to the higher ups in AID. One thing led to another and they encouraged me to apply to AID. So I did.

Q: Do you remember the names of any of these personnel?

CRANDALL: There was a soil scientist, a strange man named Schwonky, Dr. Schwonky. There was an AID engineer named Bill Shimasaki. I haven't thought about those names for a long time. There was a UN guy from Louisiana named Bill Amy who spoke Creole style French, which was very difficult for the Guineans to understand. They called him “l'homme sans fes” which means the man without an ass” in French. His back went straight down to his legs and it didn't look like he had a rear so that is why they called him the man without an ass. That is what I called him too most of the time. At any rate I actually took the advice and applied to AID from Guinea. This proved to be a slow process.

Q: What year was that?

CRANDALL: That would have been late 1966. About when the President of Guinea, Sekou Toure threw the Peace Corps out saying we were responsible for kidnapping his foreign minister from a Pan Am flight in Ghana. While his minister had been kidnapped, we were hardly responsible. While offered another assignment in another French speaking country, I left Africa and came back. I did campus recruiting out of the Regional Peace Corps office in San Francisco for several months. On one of my recruiting trips I met the Indian Agent for South Dakota at a political fund raising event. He asked me and another former volunteer named John Deason about our onward plans. He asked if we would be interested in being teachers and did we have teaching experience. Both of us had had some experience in the Peace Corps, John more than me. So, we took that offer. I was at the Porcupine School at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation for two-three months, Then I was contacted by AID about my application. They said they wanted to hire me but the only openings were for Vietnam. This would include one year of Vietnamese language training at the Foreign Service Institute. I was asked if I was up for learning an esoteric language? I said, I was but I didn't know what I was getting into. I left Wounded Knee and came to Washington. I was sworn in with several others and

began language training. This included, politics, culture and history of Vietnam plus a good introduction to counter-insurgency.

Q: Had you been to Washington before?

CRANDALL: Yes. When I got out of the Peace Corps I traveled around Europe for several weeks and I came back through DC to get my \$1500 check to make me solvent. All returning PCVs received “transition money.”

Q: Readjustment.

CRANDALL: Readjustment, yes that is what it was. As I got the check, I ran into some people at the Peace Corps office that I had known. They asked if I would interview for a job. I said, “What is it?” “Well would you want to go back overseas as a staffer? Or would you want to be here?” I knew I had my application in to AID but there was no AID acknowledgement of it at that time. I went through a string of interviews with the Peace Corps including Director Jack Vaughn, who later became ambassador to Panama. They offered me a job as deputy director in Togo and another for campus recruiting. This was before emails and easy overseas calls.

I took the campus recruiting job, not knowing whether that would be smart or not. It turned out to be smart. It just took longer than I thought to work everything out while I was recruiting and then teaching at Wounded Knee. When the offer letter and the phone call came staying in the US turned out to be a very good decision. I enjoyed the language experience, but it was more than that. The training included a foundation in counter insurgency theory and practices in several countries with a focus on Vietnam. This would prove valuable training for Vietnam and after.

That, in short form, is how I evolved into an “unconventional” career—involvement in three wars including Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq plus the “invasion” of Haiti in 1994. Certainly, the training and experience I had in Vietnam was crucial to AID seeking me out for these conflict assignments. I spoke the language of warfare and without that experience, I am sure I wouldn’t have been interested and/or would not he been considered for such positions

Q: Where were you in Vietnam and what programs were you working on?

CRANDALL: Because I was a language officer I was assigned to a “difficult province”. In my case it was Long An, the southernmost province in the Three Corps. Long An was one of the 44 provinces of South Vietnam and it was the second worst province in terms of poor security at that time.. It was a very interesting experience. We were often under fire and it was dangerous 24 hours a day. It was a learning experience for a Denver boy. I learned a lot about how to cope with and “do” the military thing which was extremely valuable for future assignments. Also, I learned to deal with the intelligence agencies which was valuable to me, especially for Afghanistan but elsewhere too.

I was in Long An for two years, but my last year a State Department friend was assigned to a MACV think tank asked me if I would be interested in joining the Pacification Studies Group. He is now retired and lives in the Shenandoah Valley on a 30 acre farmette. He is writing a soon to be finished book about the Pacification Program in Vietnam called "The Good Guys" referring to all those who took the long term training at FSI. Bruce was coming back to Washington for a job in the Intelligence and Research Bureau in State Department INR and he asked me to go to Saigon for an interview. They offered me a job. I left Long An and went to the think tank. I was pretty fluent in Vietnamese after two years in the field

Q: Can we just hold on for a second. What kind of work were you doing when you were in Long An? Can you describe some of it?

CRANDALL: I thought I was going to do pure non-kinetic pacification work, but because of the nature of where I was that was not easy to do unless you wanted to sit in a bunkered compound all the time. I had to get involved on the military side because I wanted to experience all aspects of pacification. You couldn't be uninvolved in one aspect and be involved in others.. It was all connected. I started going on joint military operations that would include US military advisors and Vietnamese troops. I would stick with the Vietnamese. I could talk to them and they could talk to me and they trusted me. I saw opportunities for things I could do. I could use my resources with great political benefit to repair a pagoda that had been blown up. I could fix a school that hadn't been used in years and find a teacher for it. I could send materials and let the villagers do the work. If I hadn't gone on the military operations I would not have met the villagers and these things wouldn't have happened.

There was an organization called the RD cadre, or Revolutionary Development cadre. It was started by the CIA at their training center in Vung Tau just north of Saigon. They were organized into fifty man RD cadre groups. They did census grievance and small follow on pacification activities as well as small scale military operations. They would sometimes do ambushes at night. I started working with them because they were closest to what I thought I was supposed to be doing. I did go out on other kinds of operations as well. I learned a lot from those guys because they were well trained and generally well-motivated. They learned from me too because I understood at least the rudiments of counter insurgency and could speak Vietnamese. We did a lot together. I was assigned to Can Giuoc District, bisected by a river. The side I lived on was the so-called "safe zone." In fact, it was not safe because we were under mortar and rocket fire a lot. The other side of the river was VC territory. We only went there in force. By the time I left Can Giuoc we managed to get maybe a third of that area under control. That is where I focused most of my attention. This brought notice to me because it was such a difficult place. Can Giuoc District and the area that I helped pacify was where some of the staging took place for the wide spread "Tet" assault on Saigon and elsewhere in February, 1968. That was because Long An was just south of Saigon and it was a good place to do it.

Q: Did you know John Paul Vann or were you involved with him?

CRANDALL: I did not know him as a friend but yes I knew him. My first assignment came when Vann was a hospital patient. He had choked on a chicken bone and had to be evacuated to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. They had a big military installation there at that time. He made all the assignments for the language officers, but he wasn't there when I arrived. His deputy sent me to Vung Tau. When Vann got back from his stint at the hospital he was upset that a language officer had been sent to a lesser priority place. In true Vann fashion, he unceremoniously jerked me out of there and sent me to the second least safe place in Three Corps. I met him several times and traveled with him once.

Q: By chance I am watching the Vietnam series by Ken Burns show that is on now. One of the questions that inevitably comes up is was the strategy the right strategy? Should it have been a different strategy in Vietnam?

CRANDALL: Well when you mention the Burns thing I may have a back story about that. Two plus years ago Burns was first thinking that he would only do a show on the pacification program, not on the war in general which is what this series is about. He had heard through different people that my friend Bruce was writing a book on the pacification program. He contacted Bruce and was very interested in collaborating with him. Bruce got involved with him for a while, but made it clear that if the collaboration took hold, that I was going to be by his side.. In any event, Burns decided to go in another direction with a broader treatment of the War. I never really agreed to what Bruce told him. He never asked me if that would be OK in advance. I watched the series with some interest. Last night I watched it for about an hour. And I didn't think the last episode was all that good so I didn't finish watching. When you are so steeped in the War as many of the language officers were, you are not going to be equally interested in the whole series

Q: Yeah, I was just asking in terms of the pacification approach. Was that the way to go or was it just overwhelmed by the other factors?

CRANDALL: Pacification did not comprise the whole strategy, but it was a very important part of it. Not doing pacification in any form would have meant ceding the political playing field to Hanoi. In general, the CORDS program was quite successful. Perhaps 80% of those who went through the long-term training I experienced made solid contributions to the overall effort. There were a few duds but not many I would say that CORDS made a good solid contribution. I know that AID, State and DoD have studied CORDS for applicable lessons learned for Iraq and Afghanistan. There have even been attempts to revive CORDS in some fashion. I penned a few ideas on how to do this a few years ago for AEI.

That said, the overall strategy was repeatedly undermined by the situation here in the United States. It didn't really matter what kind of field strategy you had if you didn't have political support back here. It was back here that things went haywire. After Tet Mau Than in February 1968 which the USG did not understand we had won, things began to spiral out of control. I got there in the first week of May in 1968. I arrived in time for "little Tet" which was like a second wave. At any rate, our after action Tet

intelligence was so poor as to make it nearly impossible to understand the true effect we had on the VC after Tet. We didn't know that we had decimated their ranks. We knew that we had killed a lot of them, captured many as well as destroyed a good bit of their weaponry and machinery. But we didn't know what the full impact was. It was a shocker for the American public to see dead VC inside the US Embassy compound in Saigon. More people at home began to doubt the War. More and more politicians began to fall off the band wagon. Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee denounced the War. At this point, Hanoi had little choice but to make plans for inserting into the South large numbers of regular North Vietnamese troops. Of course, it was these soldiers who routed the South Vietnamese Army in 1975 and took over the entire Country.

Q: And you were moved to Saigon to the intelligence program.

CRANDALL: The Pacification Studies Group was a think tank and was widely thought of as such. Yes, there were occasional intelligence elements to it in terms of the work PSG generated. CORDS was like that in general. We weren't hung up on he is a CIA guy or he is a DOD guy? That stuff didn't mean much. If you work in a traditional embassy and I know you have, then you know how different agency perspectives sometimes get undue importance.. But in CORDS we generally worked together. In my office we had CIA and we had uniformed personnel from the Army and the Marine Corps. And we had State and AID. We did joint assignments and we did individual ones.

One of the major efforts by Secretary of Defense McNamara was to quantify everything possible into the reporting. This approach ignored any political sense of what the Vietnamese were thinking. Ambassador Colby was the deputy ambassador for CORDS and he tasked PSG to do something about this. I was the second head of the Research Unit which created the PAAS which stands for Political Attitude Analysis Survey. It was a cohort to the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) that came out of the DOD which RAND designed for them in keeping with McNamara's desire for quantification. The PAAS was very different.

We hired 300 Vietnamese interviewers, including some former VC. I had 12 Americans who worked for me as well. Every month, interview teams would do 2500-3000 interviews all over the country on political questions of the day. We often got questions from Colby and sometimes from Washington. The questions would be translated into Vietnamese and we would go through a training session with our interviewers to make sure they understood the questions. I went with them sometime but the interviewees never saw me. It was the early days of computerizing things and believe me the computers we had were crude although I did not know it at the time. Anyway, we had the ability to computerize our work. We put out a monthly report on politics. That is what I basically did in PSG. I did other assignments as well such as interviewing NVA prisoners regarding a captured document called COSVN Resolution Number Nine. I got an enhanced political feel for the War through the PAAS but also from the political people that I had to interact with at MAC/V, the Embassy and in Washington. It was great fun to produce valued information.

We produced indices that measured the popularity of President Thieu and Vice President Ky. We measured public attitudes about the Cabinet and other ranking officials. We looked at the performance of ranking provincial officials. We looked at the favorability of the VC compared to the South Vietnamese Government. The list goes on.

After I left and ceasefires were attempted and peace talks opened in Paris, the PAAS developed ceasefire agreement indices measuring whether the ceasefire was good for the Country and whether the communists complied with the agreement. It was a very useful tool.

Q: How old were you at this point?

CRANDALL: 27-28

My assignment after Vietnam was Ethiopia and there I was low man on the totem pole. Nobody cared about my Vietnam work and there were a few who were hostile to the War.

Q: Did you bid on the AID mission? How did you get there?

CRANDALL: No, I didn't bid. It was a set of interlocking events. I had come to the belief in late '70-'71 because of loss of will in Washington. that the War wasn't going to end well. I was bothered by the constant street demonstrations, Kent State, the divisive politics surrounding the release of the Pentagon Papers and the like. Of course, I couldn't predict what would happen but the PSG assignment allowed me to see much more of the War through my travels to all 44 provinces. I started making it known that I wanted to move on. AID at the time was not encouraging. HR said we have spent a lot of money training you and you have been recognized for your service. You have been given a lot of responsibility and we want you to stay. We don't want you to go someplace where all of that experience and knowledge can't be used. But I was insistent so they said they were not going to give me another assignment. So I said, "OK."

Q: Who did you say this to, was it a person up high?

CRANDALL: I said it to the head of personnel. I didn't realize it at the time but I was actually calling their bluff. That is the way they looked at it anyway. But I said OK, we will call it a day when my assignment is over and I will move on. I applied to law school and some other things..

Cathy, my wife, is Chinese from Vietnam. We were getting engaged and starting to make plans. The way things worked then you couldn't have a spouse live with you in Vietnam. The only way we could get married was to get married someplace else and then I would come back by myself and she would go live in one of the "safe haven" posts—Bangkok, Taipei or Manila.

Q: Bangkok or the Philippines?

CRANDALL: Yes, but that didn't sound very exciting to me. At the eleventh hour, AID said maybe we will send you to Ethiopia. They started reneging a bit but still insisted they wanted me to stay. So, Cathy and I went to the Embassy to fill out papers. I completed all the paper work and submitted them. The RSO called and said, "You know we have a real problem here with your application. Your wife is Chinese and she has relatives in China." I said, "...isn't that surprising. She is Chinese." So the RSO said, "Well we don't have diplomatic relations so we don't have an embassy there. In other words, we can't do the security background check on her. So I can't approve your paperwork. You have a choice. You can either not get married and stay on board or resign and get married and find another job."

Here is the fun part about the story. Ambassador Colby had met Cathy at a social gathering and he remembered her. It is the only time he ever met her but he liked her. I was in his office with my supervisor, Lee Braddock, an AID guy. Lee and I were talking to Colby about something, I don't remember what it was. He said, "Larry are you still dating Cathy?" I said, "Yes." So I told him the story about the RSO. He went bonkers. He said, "That is the stupidest God damn thing. This is how we lose good officers. This will not stand. "Larry, you are going to hear more about this." I didn't really know what he was going to do but a day or two later, I get a call from the RSO. He said, "Larry I think I have figured out a way we can make this work." Obviously, Colby called him and read the riot act. Whatever he said he never told me and the RSO wouldn't say but all of a sudden it was smooth sailing. The RSO was doing everything in his power to get my paperwork done in record time and that is what happened. I stayed on through July of '71 when I came back and Cathy followed. We got married in Silver Springs and went off to Ethiopia for four years where both our daughters were born. But, I didn't stay on in Vietnam and yes that experience did not become critical until some years later.

I sometimes wondered if I had made the right move or not. But going to Ethiopia was a good transition because we had a big military presence there owing to a big "listening station" in Asmara and a significant agency presence as well. That was our largest post in Africa at that time. We had 5,000 uniformed Americans there. It was an important post. I didn't feel out of place because I knew I was involved in something important. AID had outsized resources for an African mission. We even had our own airplane.

Q: And you were a program officer?

CRANDALL: A junior one at that point because I hadn't really done much AID work up to that time.

Q: But you were in that slot.

CRANDALL: Yes.

Q: And the Mission Director, who was that?

CRANDALL: The first was Roger Ernst and later John Withers. I got the opportunity to learn something about development. I knew a lot about political and security issues in a war zone to be sure, but traditional development was something I didn't have a good feel for. I learned a lot there, and from there we went to Afghanistan for two years to learn even more development in another large mission. Little did I know that my experience in Afghanistan would presage a five year involvement with Afghanistan running a unique cross border mission.

Q: So you were there two years.

CRANDALL: Four years. Both of our children were born in Ethiopia. I met Chuck Johnson in Addis who had transferred to Kabul.

Q: I know Chuck.

CRANDALL: Chuck was at that point in Afghanistan and he sent a cable and asked me if I would come for a couple of weeks TDY. I said to do what?" He wanted me to see if I wanted to be assigned to Kabul. But he wouldn't say that in the cable. I almost said no. But I went and I kind of liked it. It was a pretty rough and tumble place. I went back and asked Cathy if she would be interested. She didn't know anything about Afghanistan. One thing led to another and we were assigned there for two years

Q: Is that when Vince Brown was there?

CRANDALL: Brown was the Mission Director. Years later, his son worked for me when I was the Mission Director in Haiti. Vince later worked for me as an evaluation contractor for the Afghanistan cross-border program. And later yet, Vince and his wife visited their son in Haiti and attended an office party at our house. How the world turns. What was his wonderful wife's name? A French lady.

Q: Françoise. I have met her.

CRANDALL: Françoise, yes. Cathy has a great memory for this stuff. She and Cathy got along very well. Vince and I didn't always get along because he seemed indecisive on important topics. George Carner another program type and mission economist Ray Hooker sometimes created headaches for Vince.

Q: You were there for two years or four years?

CRANDALL: Two years, then Chuck Johnson contacted me again.

Q: Before we leave Afghanistan the first time what kind of programs were you involved with?

CRANDALL: Well, we had a huge program. We had 55 direct hire. We had 1000 FSNs. We had 100 drivers. Huge motor pool. We had the equivalent of a junior college campus

for our offices with separate buildings for the Program Office, Controller and the rest. We had scores of contract personnel, PSCs and TCNs..

By the time we got there in mid-75, the GoA (Government of Afghanistan) was rapidly moving towards communism. If Cathy and I wanted to invite Afghans to our house for a social event, we had to submit a list of Afghan invitees to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which would put those people in jeopardy. They would be seen as friends of the west. It was always dangerous, not for us but for them because if they were caught they would be in serious trouble.

The mission managed to muddle through and do quite a bit of good. There was a huge rural development program headed by a deputy prime minister. His name is Mir Mohammed Sedik who has been in this living room many times since. That is because Mir Sahib later became a chief-of-party for me when during the five years I directed the cross-border program against the communist Afghan Government. When I began that work, I contacted him in Yemen where he was working on a World Bank contract and I told him "I want you to leave the World Bank and come to work for me." He said the best I can do is to come over there and see you in Pakistan and we will talk about it." So we did that. He was good to his word. I took him to Peshawar and introduced him to some of the Mujahedeen. I said, "Mir Sedik, I want you to recreate the Rural Development Department you headed in Kabul before the Soviets invaded. It must be done in a different fashion. It could be dangerous and it will certainly be difficult. He said, "It is for my Country and against the Soviets so I will do it." I told him "OK, here is how we are going to do it. By coincidence, a friend was the president of an NGO in Washington. His name is Henry Norman and he was my Peace Corps Director in Guinea. Henry was the head of VISTA and was coming to Islamabad in a few days. I will ask Henry to write up what you did in Kabul as Deputy Prime Minister and modify it as a cross border proposal. I will help both of you. VISTA will submit it, and I will approve it. You are going to be the chief of party." That is how we did it with Washington's final approval of course. We could do things like this because we had certain authorities normal missions didn't have. The most useful was the "...Notwithstanding any other Provision of Law" provision which appeared in our statutory authority. In essence, and only with justification, we could waive statutory impediments to implementation which other missions were required to follow.

Q: Going back to the first time you were there you met Sedik then and were working with him. Was that in Kandahar Province?

CRANDALL: We had a lot of activities in Kandahar. They were agricultural in nature including an ag training center which was an adjunct of Kabul University. We had a land reclamation project with the Soil Conservation Service. All projects tended to be big in Kandahar owing to its general political importance. There was one semi-abandoned AID project as well, the Kandahar Airport. It was built with AID predecessor money in the late fifties to serve as a stopping point for propeller driven planes coming from Europe heading east. By the time it was finished, jet planes with much greater flying distance were common and so the airport was not needed and was rarely used. I remember going

to Kandahar on business and at the end of the day we would take our big Suburbans to the airport for a bit of drag racing on the runway. Of course, during the Soviet era it became a major installation of theirs and after 9/11 a key facility of ours.

Q: Your kids were with you. They weren't in school yet?

CRANDALL: Our kids were not of school age. We had a wonderful K-12 school in Kabul at that time, the American International School of Kabul but we had no use for it at that point. Now, of course, AISK is gone. After 9/11, I went back to Kabul many times on various contracts. At the first opportunity, I visited the old USAID compound. Totally gone. We had a big junior college like campus compound for AID but it had been totally destroyed during the internecine warfare during the early nineties after the USG stopped supporting the Mujahideen. Most of it was a posted minefield. From a distance, I could see the blue outlines of the swimming pool edge because it was painted blue. The only other remaining relic was the metal front gate with the USAID letters still intact. I hope we have time later to return to the subject of abandoning the Mujahideen after the Soviets left.

Q: After two years you left? Where did you go?

CRANDALL: To DC. I was the Israeli desk officer which consisted of taking a check to the Israeli Embassy once a year for \$850 million. Really, that was the essence of the job along with all the bureaucracy to make it happen. I recommended the job be abolished. So, I then moved over to the Asia/DP office for a year.

Q: Improvement?

CRANDALL: Yes. Then Joe Toner who was the mission director in Bangladesh came to town for a CDSS strategy defense, the Country Development Strategy Statement. Chuck Johnson was with him. We got together for lunch and I met Joe for the first time. Joe said, "Would you be interested in Bangladesh?" I said, "I have only been back here for a few months. I don't really want to go back out right away." He said, "Well maybe we could make it interesting to you." So one thing led to another and we went to Dhaka. We were only here for eight months. There were no politics there in the Dhaka AID mission so it gave me an excellent opportunity to do pure development.

Q: That would have been what year?

CRANDALL: We were in Dhaka from '78 to '82. It was after that that things started to get interesting. We came back in '82. I ended up as program officer in Dhaka and came back as deputy director for DP in the Asia Bureau.

Q: Before we come back, Bangladesh was becoming a real success story in many sectors. I assume you were right in the middle of that period with agriculture, family planning and certainly health. Were there any programs you felt you personally had an influence on?

CRANDALL: Yes., I was the chief drafter for the Policy Reform Grant. In it, we would give the Government \$15 to \$20 million dollars each year for policy changes we thought they needed to make. For example, there were a number of pricing issues with respect to rice, fertilizer and jute that we went after. There were education policies that we went after. There were family planning things we went after. Those are the ones I remember at the moment.

Anyway, I roughed out the idea, and took it to Frank Kimble the Director. I said, “Frank we have got all this money and sometimes we don’t even know what to do with it every year. Washington keeps throwing it at us. Let’s try something like this. He said, “Ok, flesh it out.” I got significant input from other folks because I didn’t know everything, but we got the project approved in Washington without incident. That was roughly when President Zia was murdered by his own Army near Chittagong. I was duty officer when that happened. What a mess. At any rate that project got the frail Government to start thinking about larger issues. Our project caused them to think about how to improve things through policy. Then we started using other projects like our large family planning project to introduce policy changes. Then we started thinking about how to affect fertilizer issues through our fertilizer plant construction project which received \$50 million a year for just this one project.. The GoB (Government of Bangladesh) started feeling like they were an important part of each project affected by the Policy Reform Project. They weren’t just an AID recipient, they were substantive participants. They wanted to make input. So, the Policy Reform Project was positive all around

Q: All right, so four years in Bangladesh.

CRANDALL: Four. Joe Toner was replaced by Frank Kimball and Kimball was replaced by Jim Norris. Frank was called back by Administrator Peter McPherson to become the first counselor of the Agency. Peter later went to Michigan State University and the Bank of America. I saw Peter in San Francisco when he was at the Bank and I was visiting with my Senior Seminar colleagues.

Q: Then what?

CRANDALL: Frank was the mission director in Peru when Peter was a Peace Corps volunteer. So they met there. Frank was about the only guy in AID that he knew so he called Frank and said, “Come on back; I want you to be my counselor.” That is how that worked or at least how Frank told the story. I think it is probably true.

Q: So three different management styles I would imagine from three different directors.

CRANDALL: Yes, very different..

Q: How would you describe them since you later became the head of missions. How did they impact your management style?

CRANDALL: Joe was a touchy-feely kind of guy. He wanted everyone in the

Government to feel really good about what he was doing and what he was saying. He never wanted to challenge Government officials. The Policy Reform Grant that I just discussed was not one he would have liked because there was a political tension associated with policy reform. If project ideas didn't fit with what he felt would keep him in a full 100% comfort zone with the Government then he wasn't going to go with them. That is how Joe operated. When Frank arrived, things changed. You could come up with ideas that might shake the Government a little bit and Frank would not say no. He would welcome them as long as you could articulate the ideas verbally and on paper. If you could do that, he was OK. And he was tough. He could be really tough on personnel issues. I found this refreshing because Joe was not tough on personnel issues and we had some that needed attention. Frank took care of that. Frank leaves, Jim comes, and it is more like the Toner model. He was an incredibly thoughtful and nice person to be around. I really liked him and still do, and worked with him on other occasions over the years. Joe, of course passed away some years ago. Frank retired to a golf community in Myrtle Beach and recently passed away. Jim is retired here in DC. Maybe you have seen him.

Q: I have at a USAID Alumni Association (UAA) meeting.

CRANDALL: I haven't gone to any of those meetings so I don't know who attends, but I know he is here.

Q: So by this time you are how old. You are much older, aren't you? 35 or something.

CRANDALL: Something like that. During that time, I should say something I am actually very proud of about Bangladesh. When we got off the plane with our kids, we were met by Chuck Johnson.. Walking across the tarmac Chuck said, "Would you be interested in being on the school board?" God almighty Chuck, I am beat up and tired and hungry and you ask me about the school board. The next day in the office he brought it up again. It turns out that the AID deputy director was leaving He was on the school board and they had an opening. So I said, "OK, can I talk to somebody who is on the school board?" The econ counselor's wife was on the board and so I met her. It sounded OK. My mother had been the president of a couple of school boards in Denver. So I thought it couldn't be that bad. One thing led to another and I ended up as president of the school board for 2 ½ of the 4 years I was there, and built a new school during that time. I got the land purchased through a personal meeting with President Zia, raised \$4 million privately and built a new school. As soon as we cut the ribbon I made it clear my school board work was done.

Q: It really is an achievement. It really is.

CRANDALL: Yes and as you know Dhaka is not a naturally inviting assignment. With a quality school it makes it easier to attract good officers not only for the USG but other countries as well. They put a nice brass plaque in the entryway of the School thanking me for my work.

Q: So, you had been overseas then for several years.

CRANDALL: Vietnam three years plus a year of language school, Ethiopia four years, Afghanistan two years.

Q: But you only had eight months in Washington, a short period.

CRANDALL: Yes, that was a short period before going to Dhaka.

Q: After Dhaka what did you apply for?

CRANDALL: I didn't apply for anything. Frank, as I said, was the Counselor for the Agency to the AID administrator. He pulled Tom Oliver from Asia DP to be his special assistant. Do you know Tom?

Q: I do know him, yes.

CRANDALL: Tom became Frank's assistant, and Tom called me and asked if I would like to replace him. He was the deputy director of DP. I was the Dhaka program officer. I asked a few questions and said yes. We came back and that is when my career started morphing in terms of ramped up security related work which I did almost non-stop after that.

The State Department was growing increasingly concerned over the South Pacific. They invited me in my capacity and some other people in the Asia Bureau to attend a "let's think this thing through" meeting. The question was what are we going to do about the rapidly rising number of Russians appearing throughout the South Pacific? At that time our assistant administrator was Charley Greenleaf. Charley was in the meeting as was Rocky Staples his deputy.

Q: Staples?

CRANDALL: Yes, Rocky Staples was there too. I didn't know anything about the South Pacific, and didn't say much. Rocky and Charley didn't know anything either. We did have a couple of people who had been out there and knew a bit. Anyhow, AID did not factor big in that meeting. By what means I don't know, but Charley called me a few days later and asked me if I would go to the South Pacific and lead a State/AID team to draft a South Pacific strategy. I said, "Charley I don't know anything about the South Pacific. Why not let the State Department do it? They are the ones who are freaking out. Charley said they don't know how to write strategies and that is why they have asked us.

The team was assembled. It included one USDA guy who was very good, and others. There were six of us. We started with a meeting at the University of Hawaii where there was real expertise. After meetings there, we split up because the South Pacific is so enormous all six of us couldn't go everywhere together. I went with the USDA guy to Australia because they had the political sense of what was going on in the South Pacific. At the end of our respective travels the team gathered in Fiji to draft the strategy in a

hotel in Suva. We returned to DC and I finished it up over a long weekend. The State Department people loved it, probably because they didn't have anything else to love or hate at that time.

A year plus later, after the South Pacific adventure, Afghanistan appeared ominously on AID's radar screen. The Soviets invaded on Christmas Eve of 1979. President Carter signed the first NSC "finding" in January 1980 which provided the CIA with \$15 million for covert lethal support for the mujahideen. This money initiated the covert program that became the largest ever up to that time. By 1984, it became apparent that the Afghans could fight but they couldn't govern the terrain they controlled.. There was a need for at least the semblance of a shadow Mujahideen government and make the Soviets believe that it was more than just a hollow structure. Charley and Rocky knew I had served in Kabul and asked me to go to Pakistan and do what I did in the South Pacific. I was to head a team with two State Department officers with experience in the region. We needed to collaborate with the CIA, DIA and even DEA given their strong interest in the opium trade. We went out for six weeks.

The State officers made marginal contributions.. One put our schedule together and arranged the motor pool. The other wrote a three paragraph political background section for the preface. I wrote the strategy which quickly became a secret document that went through a series of inter-agency discussions. These meetings culminated in a briefing for Secretary Schultz. On the appointed day I went to his seventh floor office and went right in. He said, "You are Larry?" "Well I am George. I read your report and we are going to do this. I don't need a briefing. Are you willing to take this thing to the nth degree?" I said, "What does that mean?" He said, "I don't know what it means. We have never done anything like this." I replied that I would do whatever it takes to get it going."

I returned to tell Charley and Rocky what had happened. In the event, the strategy provided a political context in which a series of AID activities would be funded that would include close cooperation and even implementation by the Mujahideen. I purposefully didn't include a budget in the strategy knowing that some people would be more interested in the numbers than the substance. I knew it could be costly.

I returned to Islamabad to assemble a budget. Deane Hinton was the ambassador of course. I had already met him when I was out there earlier. Deane was a tough manager and some people didn't like him. I was one of those people who greatly admired him. In some respects, he reminded me of certain people I had worked with in Vietnam. I went in to see him and told him I was going to develop the budget.. I told him about the meeting with the Secretary. He said, "Oh yeah, I heard about it." He said, "Let me call Bill in. Bill Piekney was the chief of station whom I had met with on my earlier visit. We talked about how Bill could help from his perspective that included cooperation with the Pakistan intelligence service, ISI.

After I returned nobody criticized the budget in AID or State. I certainly didn't know whether it was full of nonsense or not. It was nearing the end of the fiscal year, and I didn't want to scare anybody with a large number so I recommended a 15-million-dollar

budget that I knew would have to be obligated by September 30. I also knew it could rapidly escalate after that. The 15 million was quickly approved. Then things got a bit complicated. I was already assigned to the National War College. Cathy and I had gone to the first “grip and grin” with the faculty and other students.

Q: It was at Fort McNair, right?

CRANDALL: Fort McNair. I had received my books, locker key and outlined my first writing assignment and got it approved. It was on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan simply because I had just done the cross border strategy and I thought it would be easy to do my first War College piece on Afghanistan. When I went to Islamabad for the budget, it was around the Fourth of July. The Ambassador and I had several meetings to discuss the strategy, budget and modalities of working with the Pakistan intelligence. At one of them he said “You are invited to my 4th of July bash.” I said, “I don’t like those things. They are boring to me. He said, “I am the Goddamned ambassador and you are coming to my Goddamn party.” I said, “No I am not. I am not in your chain of command.” Which was true but it was also insulting to say that. But this is how we talked to each other. Both truly enjoyed the others company.

I didn’t go to the 4th of July party. I sat by myself at the Embassy pool and ate a hamburger. The Residence was on the other side of the compound and I could hear the party noise. The next day I had an exit meeting. Hinton said, “I didn’t see you at the Goddamn party.” I said I wasn’t at your party, that is why you didn’t see me. “What are your plans he asked?” “I am going to the War College.” He said, “You are not going to the goddamn War College.” You are coming here and you are going to do a real war.” I replied “No I am not. I am going to the War College. It is already a done deal.” He barked “Well, done deals can be undone.”

I had not been back in DC a week and the War College assignment was undone and I was handed orders to pack for Islamabad. Our daughters were upset; they had already started school. Cathy was upset because she had started a new job. I was upset because I wasn’t going to the War College. Yet, it turned out to be one of the best if not best assignments I ever had. It was challenging, difficult and fun. I could have gone to the War College and who knows what would have happened after that but I am happy I did Pakistan/Afghanistan. Cathy and I think to this day that Islamabad was our best post. That was the Country the whole family liked the best. In the event, I was awarded the Meritorious Presidential Award and the Distinguished Presidential Award as well as a Distinguished Unit Citation. By the time we left, my hair was completely white.

Q: that would have been...

CRANDALL: ’85 to ’90.

Q: Five years.

CRANDALL: Five years. The Soviet effort collapsed and left Afghanistan in 1989. I

remembered sitting in the CoS office and was handed a cable from Langley which described the modalities of their departure. The CoS said “Pinch yourself, it’s true.” I thought OK this is my time to leave. Bob Oakley was the Ambassador at that point. Arnie Raphael had replaced Deane Hinton. Arnie was killed (murdered really) with our military attaché Brigadier General Herb Wassom along with President Zia in a plane crash. Bob replaced Arnie.

When we learned the Soviets were leaving, we started sending cables and other pieces that said we can’t leave the Mujahideen high and dry. We have to help them prepare to govern. We know these guys and we can work with them, not perfectly, but at least to some extent. We can’t abandon them just because the Soviets have left.

The then chief of station collaborated on some of these pieces. To make a long story short, I was asked to stay on for a fifth year because AID didn’t know what to do. The Bureau didn’t have a ready replacement for me. They asked me to stay on the fifth year.

By then, former Vice President Bush was President and I learned he had been left out of the deliberations on the War in Afghanistan. The reasons were never clear, at least to me. This was the guy who had been head of the CIA. At one point, he was heard to say roughly the following: “The Soviets are out. We have won this war.” (Fair enough, that much was true.) “And we are leaving. We are not going to stay there and hold hands with them. That is not going to happen.” So everything started coming apart. First, the huge CIA program unraveled because a weapons program could no longer be justified. The AID program unraveled though this took longer because humanitarian assistance could always be justified. It was no surprise the Mujahideen contacts unraveled with my replacements having little contact with them and no prior experience in conflict operations. That is when things really started to go to hell and the whole Country collapsed from the infighting between the seven parties or “tanzims” that we had supported. Chaos ensued and that led to the rise of the Taliban in 1993 and its unholy alliance with Al Qaeda. Those of us who had worked closely with the Mujahideen knew something like this would happen and made many recommendations to avoid much of this though certainly there would have been difficulties. All such recommendations went unheeded and sometimes unanswered.

Q: Let me take you back if you have the energy. Can you talk a little about the Afghan program itself? I know part of that was run out of Pakistan (actually all). We called that the cross-border program.. For people who are going to be reading this oral history, we have got to go back to a little bit of the basics. What kind of things was the program doing?

CRANDALL: Where to start. First, it is important to understand that the program grew exponentially from the initial \$15 million. It eventually included P.L. 480 Title Two and a large Department of Defense support program. The latter sent monthly C-140 and C-5 flights to Islamabad. These non-lethal excess properties were then trucked or “muled” across the border. The flights included medical evacuations of wounded Mujahideen who required specialized attention not available in Pakistan. US, British, French and even

Japanese hospitals gave free specialized medical attention to wounded mujahideen. All we had to do was deliver them to the hospitals and arrange for interpreters.

Key to the political success of our involvement with the resistance was slowing down the flow of the refugees. At the point I arrived, there were 3 ½ million refugees living in Pakistani refugee camps and another million or so in Iran from an assumed population at the time of some 25 million. That is a big number, and if that flow continued, the political and food support for the Mujahideen would dry up and the War would be lost. In short, these guys wouldn't be able to get the local support they needed to fight if there was no population in which they could work with and from. The game would be over. This was in my strategy paper--we had to dry up the refugee flow using as many tools as we could muster.

There are many reasons why people become refugees and a prime reason was not having schools available for Mujahideen's children. Another important part was having sustainable agriculture that could support families and villages. In this respect, we knew that the Soviets were trying to destroy agricultural infrastructure where ever they thought the resistance would be hurt Another part is having various commodities available to them to help maintain a reasonable quality of life—clothing, pots and pans and everything you can imagine. So, we put together an education program through the University of Nebraska at Omaha who had been doing education projects in Afghanistan for years. That is where the only US based Afghanistan Studies Center is located. They had some great Afghans on the staff. The program used very creative ways for getting educational services to Afghanistan. Elements of it are still used to this day in Afghanistan and elsewhere. This included light weight and durable purpose developed materials on cloth that could be easily concealed in larger shipments and in the villages where they were used. The agriculture side was two pronged. We had a rural development program that was run by Mir Sedik who, as we discussed earlier, headed up that program during pre-war times. This consisted of all kinds of small agricultural activities. There were small local dams, flumes, and irrigation canals. It included just about anything to make the farmers operate more efficiently in order to offer incentives to stay on the land and produce food that could be accessed by the Mujahideen.

Q: So these were in areas where the Russians were not.

CRANDALL: Oh no, these were in areas where the Russians were and were not. The Soviets could not tell an AID employee from anyone else or an AID funded flume from one built with regime support. The locals could. We had schools on the outskirts of Kabul as well as medical clinics that people from the city would visit. The Soviets never knew though the Afghans did. Through the auspices of the DoD flights, we received large excess property construction equipment that was used to build roads and even more complex "Bailey" bridges that we flew in from the States. One road went to the outskirts of Kabul and the Afghans put a sign on it naming it the "Crandall Highway." A bailey bridge was built in Kunar Province that provided winter time access to several provinces from Pakistan for the first time in history.

Q: Still these contractors could go in there and do work.

CRANDALL: The Americans and most TCNs could not. There are stories about that we can talk about, but the Afghans could go anywhere. I ended up with 11,000 Afghans working on this program.

Q: 11,000, wow.

CRANDALL: Yes, 11,000. After 9/11 I was asked to brief Administrator Natsios on Afghanistan, I mentioned the figure to him and he was quite surprised. He said AID “has never had that many in locals in one program.” I replied that I knew of at least one. We had them all over the country doing many things. We had a somewhat traditional agricultural program where we provided ag inputs. We brought in fertilizer and improved fruit trees that DoD flew in from Turkey. We provided improved wheat and other seeds. Our agricultural program was headed by Dr. Abdul Wakil, former Minister of Agriculture trained in the US who was first rate. He was encouraged by Afghans to get into politics but he wouldn’t do it. Some Afghans wanted Dr. Wakil to become President after the Soviets left. He had my vote. He recently passed away in Houston.

You probably know what a conventional commodity import program is that are usually found in the larger missions like Egypt. I put something in the strategy called a CEP, or Commodity Export Program. Here, we would provide whatever commodities we could think of that could be useful to the resistance. We would give them to all of the seven resistance groups and they would move them across the border. These included portable drilling machines for digging into the sides of mountains to create small caves for housing and shelter from Soviet bombs.

The CEP included vehicles. The first vehicle buy we made was for 1000 Toyota pickup trucks. I sent my procurement officer to Tokyo to buy 1000 pickups and, believe me, he was the man of the hour while he was there. The Toyota guys loved him. So we shipped 1000 pickup trucks via ship to Karachi. That was the first tranche. Later, we brought in more vehicles but that first buy really made a statement to the Afghans. They wondered who was behind this program? All of a sudden, I was the man to meet. Also, we found a group of high-quality nutritionists at a university in Karachi. I said, “OK, think Afghans; don’t think Pakistanis. Think their diet; don’t think your diet. There are important differences.” Think about what it would take to nourish one person for one day with a pack that he could carry on his back or place on the back of a mule.

Q: About half a meter by half a meter.

CRANDALL: Yes, something like that. I was making it up as I was going along. We put together a list of things that would fit in a small water-proof canvas bag. I asked them to research the best contents and then figure out the size of the bag. It had to be something that could be carried by one man without great difficulty and should last three weeks. It turned out to be one of the most successful things we did. We found an outfit that would supply the bags and we channeled them to the Afghans who took them cross border. It

was so successful that we couldn't keep up with the demand. The other agency asked if they could help and they did. They copied our food bags with their money.

Let me tell you a humorous story about the pickup trucks. When I left Pakistan in 1990, I went to see the President of the resistance. Each head of the seven political parties could be the president for three months and then he would rotate out and a new one would come in. The president at that time was Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi. I went to say goodbye to him and thank him. He was a very nice man with a Ph.D. in Islamic studies from Al Azar University in Cairo. He was very smart, educated and competent fellow in many ways. So, Bob Oakley went with me which gave him a chance to do a little business of own. His press assistant was there whom I knew very well over the years. His name was Hamid Karzai who later became President of Afghanistan after 9/11.

Q: Oh my.

CRANDALL: When the 1000 trucks first came in, Hamid heard about them and he called me at my office in the Embassy from Peshawar. Hamid said, "Mr. Crandall it is very important that I see you right away. It is critical." I said, "Hamid, I am coming down to Peshawar in a couple of days and we will meet and have lunch or whatever you want to do. He said, "No, I will come to see you. It is really important." I said, "Hamid it is a three-hour dangerous drive. Then you have to drive back. Just wait unless it is life threatening. He said. "Well it is not life threatening but it is very important to me." I said," OK come up." He arrived at the Embassy that afternoon and I left word with the Marine Guard to let him pass the front gate. He comes into my office and sits down. I gave him a cup of tea and say, "Hamid, what's up?"

"Mr. Crandall, you are bringing in many pickup trucks." I said, "Yes." He asked "How many?" I said, "1000." I said, "Hamid, you are a Peshawar warrior. You don't go inside Afghanistan. You only do the political fights in Peshawar. The trucks are for the war in Afghanistan. These are not for driving around Peshawar." I obviously knew what he was getting at. He said, "Oh Mr. Crandall, have you seen my car outside?" I said, "No, but I have seen it in Peshawar." He said, "It is no good." He said. "Mr. Larry will you give me a pickup truck?" I said, "No, I won't give you a pickup truck. These trucks are going to be used solely inside Afghanistan to move goods that we are providing to the Mujahideen." If I gave him a truck, then every other political operative in Peshawar would expect one. He was very unhappy. I offered to let him stay at my house for the night but he said he had to get back. Later I am leaving Pakistan as I said and came to say goodbye. Hamid gets up and walks into the next room and comes back with a beautiful Turkoman Maori rug in his arms and he rolls it out. This was a going away gift.. I turned to Bob because I knew we weren't supposed to accept gifts above a certain nominal value. I didn't know what the amount was. Bob said, "Thank him." So I thanked him and we finished our discussions and left. We got in the car and drove away. Bob said, "That rug isn't worth very much. That is the biggest piece of sh-- rug I have seen in a long time. You don't have to worry about whether it meets the ceiling or not." I later learned the ceiling was \$300 for gifts from foreign countries.

Q: As long as you report it you can do it. Speaking of transport. There was one other element of the program that I was familiar with that you may have forgotten. That was the mules.

CRANDALL: You want to know about the mules? Okay, but first let me add a footnote to Hamid Karzai. As President, Hamid made several trips to Washington. On one such occasion, he was staying at Blair House across from the White House. I was invited to meet him one Sunday evening along with two Congressmen, Jack Kemp and a few others. The meeting was set for 7 pm. I reached the entrance right at 7 only to see Andrew Natsios arriving at the same time. He said "What are you doing here?" "I was invited" I told him. We enter the meeting room to find the event had just started. Hamid sees me and gets up, crosses the room and gives me a big hug asking about my health, the family etc. He turns to Andrew and says "Hi Mr. Natsios" and doesn't shake his hand. But here is the sad part. I was asked several questions by the President related to policy and politics. Andrew was not asked and I could see this bothered him. After an hour, the President said he had to go across the street for dinner with President Bush. We got up to say our goodbyes. Again, Hamid gave me a big hug and again he said a rather cold goodbye to Andrew. As I walked to my car, I thought this was not the experience I expected or wanted.

Q: First of all tell what was the mule program?

CRANDALL: I don't believe the antecedents for how AID got involved in delivering American mules to Pakistan by 747's are well known. Why should they be? Still, interested observers like you bring it up. In short, the other agency had been bringing mules into Pakistan across China by road over the Karakorum pass. It was very difficult to do and the poor quality animals the Chinese provided didn't fare well during the arduous truck rides. Nor did they fare well in Afghanistan. That road has been improved over time but then it was a very dicey trip. Then, the other agency tried to do it with Spain, this time transporting the animals by ship. For the first shipload, half the mules got sick and died and had to be thrown overboard. The second and last shipload from Spain found the entire cargo sick by the time they reached Pakistan and were destroyed.

In a discussion about this with the Ambassador I said, "Well let me see what we can do." I had some country boys on the CEP contract staff with useful experience. They knew where to find mules in the United States. There was a guy in Tennessee named Hub Reece. His baseball hat shows "Hub Reece, world's largest mule dealer." My guys went to Tennessee and met him and asked him how many mules he could produce on a monthly basis for export. They didn't tell him anything beyond that. He figured a little over a 100. On most months he could come up with 100 really good mules. So, then we started negotiating size and age which determines price. "Fourteen hands" was the ideal measurement agreed upon with vet inspections.. So, then the problem was transportation to Pakistan. Primarily because of my Vietnam experience I knew about Flying Tigers Airline.

Q: Is this the one that started as Air America?

CRANDALL: I believe you are referring to Civil Air Transport or CAT. So, I asked Wes Tribble an AID retiree and President of American Manufacturers Export Group which held the CEP contract if they could help. Did you know Wes?

Q: Yes.

CRANDALL: I asked Wes to contact Flying Tigers. I knew that they flew live animals around the Middle East from an article in the Economist, but that is all I knew. I said, "Contact them and see if they can fly mules from Tennessee to Pakistan." They could. It took a while to assemble the logistics. All this had to be worked out with Pakistan intelligence, but they were delighted. At any rate, when the first 747 containing 110 American mules arrived at midnight in Islamabad by 747, we had trucks at planeside to take the animals directly to Peshawar. It worked like a dream. These mules were big, strong and happy and they were not diseased. The Paks and Afghans were amazed and delighted. So, from that point on we were off and running. We dried up the available mules in Tennessee and Missouri. You couldn't buy another one at any price. I don't recall how many flights we conducted but that was a very successful program The Afghans loved it; the Paks loved it and the State Department colleagues thought the program was great. AID was more reserved. We haven't talked about Charley Wilson but he loved it too and the facility where the animals were kept was his first stop on his next visit. Being from Texas, he insisted on riding a mule so he was obliged. We called it the AHF the animal holding facility. Charlie called me from his office on the Hill. He said, "All right I am coming out there and the first f---ing thing I want to do is see all those f---ing mules." We took him to see the mules and he rode one. By the way, Charlie's language was always rough so pardon the language. For the record, it cost \$230,000 per flight which included cleaning the plane in Algeria on the way back. The GoP (Government of Pakistan) refused to clean the planes so going to Algeria added cost.

Q: I have just got one more thing about that whole episode. Because at one point I came out with the USAID Assistant Administrator for Asia, Julia Chang Block who was doing a trip to see the program. We were in Peshawar and you took us to see the holding facility.

CRANDALL: Okay

Q: Julia was a very aggressive woman, a Chinese American woman who later became ambassador to Nepal. She headed the Asia Bureau. She was looking at these mules and a handler happened by. Julia grabbed his hand and shook it to say thank you for doing all this work, and the handler understood absolutely nothing of what Julia was saying. He turned and scurried off. You said something like he isn't used to shaking hands. A woman doesn't shake hands with an Afghan. I said, "Well what is he doing now". You replied: "Probably cutting off his hand."

CRANDALL: See that Chinese screen in the corner. That is Ching Dynasty screen from China and there is a long story about that. It involves Julia and her husband Stuart who saw the screen in Islamabad when it was still for sale at a local antique shop. The story

says something about Julia Chang Block and her wealthy husband Stuart. I will share that one another time.

Q: Right. Larry, we have been going for a couple of hours. Do you want to stop or should we keep going?

CRANDALL: Well we can do another session.

Q: This is John Pielemeier. This is the second interview with Lawrence (Larry) Crandall. Last time, we were talking about the cross-border program in Afghanistan run by Larry out of Peshawar. One of the things he mentioned that I wanted to go back to was his interactions with the leadership of the mujahedeen, and how that leadership was structured and a little bit about the difficulties of working in that kind of a context and anything else he would like to say.

CRANDALL: I will just do a little stream of consciousness and we will see where it goes. One day near the end of the six weeks I was in Pakistan for strategy preparation, I was in the London Book Shop that had been started in the 1880's by the British when the Northwest Frontier Province was part of India. It was still operational and it had rare books about the Raj and the Frontier that you couldn't find anywhere else. I went in and found a couple of texts that I wanted and bought them. I was walking out and a guy in a big bushy beard and Afghan costume came up and said, "Mr. Crandall, Oh my God. It has been a long time, how are you?" I looked at him and I said, "Who are you?" I could not place him at all. He told me who he was and then I recognized him immediately. His name was Dashtagir. In the big AID mission we had in Kabul he was the guy that organized our travel out of Afghanistan.

After the Soviets invaded in late 1979 he had to leave. He went to Peshawar where he joined one of the seven political parties we and the GoP supported, Hezbi-Islami, which means the party of Islam. Its head, was the infamous Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He became a notorious member of the seven parties we supported because he fought as much against the other parties in Afghanistan as he did against the Soviets. That was always very problematic for the U.S. Government because we were providing arms and ammunition and other things to help. He was quite effective. He certainly wasn't always doing the things we wanted or expected. Dashtagir worked for him as a political advisor and he offered to take me to meet him. I knew that he hated Americans and I knew that he hated to meet with Americans and I knew he didn't want to be in mixed meetings with Americans. I knew all that. Still, Dashtagir was one of his political advisors and I thought if he is a political advisor and he takes me in to see him that should be worth something.

Hekmatyar had six safe houses in Peshawar where he stayed at different times. I was taken to the one where he stayed at that particular moment. We walked into his office and Hekmatyar was stunned to see an American. He didn't know who I was at that point. He was absolutely stunned. But even though this cutthroat butcher, and that is the best I could say about him, was stunned he nonetheless was a Pushtoon and was required by the

code of Puktunwali to be welcoming., The code says all Pushtoos must treat guests, even the ones you hate, with dignity. He did that. He ordered tea and crackers and I was very surprised to learn that he had passable English. Dashtagir spoke idiomatic English and he stayed to interpret where necessary. But, Hekmatyar wanted to show that he was educated. In fact, he was a failed engineering student at Kabul University many years before but still he wanted to show that he was educated so we did as much as we could in English. We had a good political discussion about the War. He was the first leader I met though he was certainly the least respected by at least some elements of the USG. The next time I met him was with all seven leaders and he acted as though we had never met.

When I got back to Islamabad a few days later to finish my report and meet with the Ambassador, I told him about the meeting and he was dumbfounded. He said, "You know you are the only American who has met with this guy one on one. I said, "Well it is not something that I set up myself. It was a former travel guy in AID/Kabul who made it happen." He said, "Would you write a separate cable about this so I can report it back to Washington?" I wrote the cable. He sent it almost word for word as I wrote it. When I got back to DC, State was very anxious to meet because they wanted to hear more about this meeting. Any rate that was the first one of the leaders I met. But over the years I met them all many times and got to know some of them very well. I spent considerable time courting these guys because knowing them and getting them to trust me was critical to the success of the program. .

Ambassador Arnie Raphel replaced Hinton. Arnie was killed along with the Embassy's senior military advisor Herb Wassom when President Diaz's plane went down. Secretary Schultz came out to pick up the bodies and take them back. He brought a CODEL with him. Our DCM, Beth Jones was the charge' at that point. Schultz wanted to see the faces of the seven leaders and shake their hands. He had never met any of them. So Beth asked me to arrange it following Zia's funeral which the Secretary planned to attend. I was the only one who really knew these guys and could make the arrangements.

The Secretary's schedule got so jammed up that all we could do was arrange a meeting at the funeral. The seven leaders were "required" to be there. I was waiting with the seven near the Faisal Mosque and introduced each to the Secretary. Not all could speak English but some could and they served as impromptu interpreters. When I introduced Hekmatyar, the Secretary said "I have heard about you." Hekmatyar smiled but did not reply. Schultz moved to the other introductions.

To end this long answer to your question about the leaders, until this past year Hekmatyar remained on the outs with both the Afghan and U.S. Governments. He was on our most wanted terrorist lists to the point we tried to kill him twice with drones but missed. I heard Special Forces went after him but they missed too. I guess his age finally caught up with him. He is 70 something and probably tired of living in caves and being chased around. He lied about his willingness to cooperate with the Kabul Government and he was allowed to return to Kabul with some of his armed henchmen with the promise that he would cause no trouble. But as soon as he got back, trouble ensued though he denied involvement The Ashraf Ghani Government put the screws to him. He slowed down but I

don't think he stopped. Julia met one of the Presidents.

Q: What was his name? Rabbani?

CRANDALL: No, Nabi Mohammedi. Rabbani was one of the leaders but he was assassinated two years ago, reportedly by the Taliban. Strangely, Rabbani was the chief GoA negotiator with the Taliban. The last time I was in Kabul, I met with former President Mojaddedi to pay my respects. He was quite frail and forgetful when I met him. Others leaders are still around except for Nabi and Rabbani who are deceased.

At our last encounter, I forgot to mention how I met with another of the leaders, Abdul Rasool Sayyaf who is and has long been a hand maiden of the ultra-conservative Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia. I repeatedly tried to meet him privately but it didn't happen. He kept saying no. He wouldn't meet with me even when I was doing things to help him and his party. I had a very good relationship with an ISI colonel in Peshawar. His name was Omar. I asked Omar for a meeting with Sayyaf and he said, "OK, here is what we are going to do. He will be mad at me but I will set up a meeting saying I need to talk to him tomorrow afternoon. And I won't tell him that you are coming with me. We will just go." He lived in the outskirts of Peshawar in a big militarized compound with anti-aircraft guns on the roof of the building where he lived and worked and incredible perimeter security. We roll in to his compound and walk in. Like Hekmatyar, Sayyaf was absolutely shocked to see an American there. I mean this guy is a Wahabi among Wahhabis. So Omar who is a Pushtun quieted him down in his own language. The Pushtin code kicked in and he was required to be hospitable. So, it was a repeat of the Hekmatyar meeting and he was charming and gracious. He spoke a little English and did the best he could. So, the ISI colonel did the translation. Sayyaf speaks idiomatic Arabic. Anyway, those are some of the things I had to go through to meet some of these guys. My colleagues in the other agency wouldn't do things like that. I told the ambassador about that one too. Hinton was still there. This was shortly before he left. He said, "Jesus Christ how do you do this?" So I told him how I did it. I had to write that meeting up too and put every detail in the cable I could remember. The next time I came back to Washington the Langley people wanted to meet with me to talk about Sayyaf. They even sent a car to pick me up and deliver me back to State..

Q: So the seven of them had a rotating leadership.

CRANDALL: They did.. Keep in mind that the sort of unspoken purpose of the cross-border program was to give as much of an appearance with substance as possible to their being a government in exile. We didn't talk much about that because people were nervous about AID's involvement. You know how the bureaucracy works. So, when we felt that we had enough momentum in the program after 6-8 months, the other agency leased a big compound in Peshawar for the AIG or Afghanistan Interim Government.. There were several buildings on this compound, with adequate space for the rotational government.

As I said, every three months there would be a new president. They called him the interim president. Once the AIG building was open and I started going there for meetings,

I realized the place was not going to function well unless office equipment of various kinds was installed. I asked the President for a wish list which he provided and I added 10% to it and asked my logistics guys to go buy it. When the trucks started showing up with their stuff these guys went nuts. Suddenly they had business machines whirring all over the place and they started feeling proud of themselves.. The functional offices gave them a sense of pride. That is how we began to develop the interim government. Then we started taking CODELs to them and placing stories in the local newspapers saying CODEL this and CODEL that visited or STAFFDEL this and STAFFDEL that visited. Other governments started visiting adding more credibility to the Afghan Interim Government. We created this aura of reality around it even though the ability of the Afghan Interim Government per was limited because the parties were so narrowly defined along tribal and other lines. It was difficult for them to cooperate. The rotating presidency every three months didn't help. We made sure that the Soviets knew about the AIG in Kabul by constantly referring to it

Q: Was there a Tajik as one of the leaders.

CRANDALL: Yes, there was Rabbani and his more famous commander Ahmed Shaw Massoud He belonged to Rabbani's party. He was a guy that during the war, absolutely refused to come to Pakistan. He was in the north in the Panjshir Valley. So, I knew his representatives in Peshawar who worked with Rabbani but I never knew Masood. He was killed by a two Tunisian al Qaeda operatives They went to the Panjshir posing as newsmen. They had a camera with a bomb in it. They arranged an interview with Masood and they let the bomb off and it killed one of the so-called journalists and badly wounded the other. Massoud was badly wounded and was helicoptered out for treatment but he didn't make it. He was very effective in fighting the Soviets even though he commanded a local force. He didn't have his own party but he acted like he did. French newsmen referred to him as the "lion of the Panjshir". Because Masood had attended the French lycée in Kabul "Lycée Istiqlal" and could speak French, they loved to interview him and travelled to the Panjshir to do so. One of these journalists was also a medical doctor and worked for our program for three years. Extremely competent.

Q: This relationship went on for how long?

CRANDALL: The parties lasted for the duration of the Soviet period from roughly 1980 when the parties started forming in the refugee camps to 1989 and beyond in changing configurations until the Taliban took over in 1993.

Let me give you a bit of history about how these parties were formed. After the Soviets invaded Christmas Eve, 1979 they overturned the government in Kabul that was communist in name but not communist enough for Moscow. The two communist factions were called the Khalqists and the Parchamites. At this point, people started getting scared and began heading for either Pakistan or Iran. They were pouring across the borders in large numbers and the Paks were doing the best they could to organize camps with water, food and shelter. Afghan political parties began springing up in all in these camps. At one point, there were 84 independent political parties. In early 1980, President Carter signed

the first national security finding which gave Langley \$15 million to start a covert program against the Soviets. This put them in contact the resistance through the parties but it was impossible to deal with 84 of them. ISI, forced the number down to seven. The seven chosen by ISI were the ones the USG cooperated with throughout the War. The Carter “finding” contributed to the reduction in the party numbers.

New, small parties appeared at times but they wouldn’t last or would flounder because ISI wouldn’t tolerate them. So that is how we got to seven. It wasn’t the best of situations but the parties represented a good swath of both Pushtun and non-Pushtun tribes. It was good enough to force the Soviets out with USG and other help with exceptional GoP cooperation. The Soviets agreed to leave because they were over powered politically with the things AID was doing with and through the AIG and because of the successful covert program. As I learned later when I met Soviets in my NIS role, the Soviets never understood the omni-presence and political impact of the cross border program. Of course, a great equalizer was the introduction of the stinger ground to air missile over which there was a long fight between Congress and the DoD to make them available to the Afghans. But that is another story. It is not my subject anyway

Q: What about your good friend Charlie Wilson? I say that with a wink and a nod. I think you are in a movie or a book about him.

CRANDALL: I am in a book called “Charlie Wilson’s War” by George Crile, now deceased, but a former 60 Minutes producer. We can start with elements that appear in the book though we could start a lot of different places with Charlie. The first time I met him was after I had been appointed to the job and he was a must-see guy. I had been to Pakistan a couple of times, first to write the strategy and then to do the budget. Hinton got me jerked out of the War College to be assigned to Islamabad. A meeting was arranged and I went to the Hill to meet Charlie.

Q: He is on the Hill?

CRANDALL: Yes, in his Congressional office. I quickly learned he was very knowledgeable about the war. He wasn’t a crazy guy when it came to the War. He knew his stuff. Yes, he had a wild private life and some of that is in the book and the movie. As I sat down, his first words were “Ah, shit. Another one of these fucking do gooder people who think they know something.” That is exactly how he talked. We can bleep that out.

Q: That is up to you, we don’t have to.

CRANDALL: That is a quote. I looked at him as a bully boy which he was. I don’t always respond well to bully boys. So I said “That is a nice way to start a relationship.” His senior aide was Charlie Schnabel who I got to know well. He was in the meeting too. We settled down and started talking and he realizes that I know something about Afghanistan too and he loosens up a bit. He said, “You know you were awfully miserly when you asked for your first tranche of money. Why are you such a small thinker?” I said, “I am not. If I would have come in knowing that I had just one month left in the

fiscal year to initiate work in the field and I asked for \$100 million, I would have started a needless bureaucratic battle. I wanted seed money to demonstrate that we can do things. I said, "If we can make this a short meeting then I can get back to work." At that point, I think Charlie and I started to feel like maybe we are going to be friends. He said, I hear you. I am going to be watching your ass and by God the next time you are in town or I am out there, we are going to have a long talk and I am going to want to know everything about you and what you are doing." I said, "Either way is fine with me." I left.

So that is how it started. He and his assistant Charlie Schnabel visited Pakistan several times during my five years and I would always see them when I came in on consultation. He became dependent on me for information about certain Afghans. The relationship became embarrassing when he threw a party for me at his lush penthouse condo in Rosslyn. Upon arriving, I noticed smells in the room that were probably illegal if you know what I mean. Charlie was a past drug user, a trait which was well documented. He ruined his health because of it and in his final days in Lufkin Texas he received a heart transplant and became feeble. I called him after his transplant and his voice was quite weak.

In addition to Charlie's personal friends there were serious people at his party from different agencies. He could attract them all. The talk was all about Afghanistan. I enjoyed the event and reciprocated socially for him in Islamabad—less the smells. I traveled with him around the border areas and did briefings at ISI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We became as close as two very different people can.. He thought that he had probably scared me into productivity by bullying me, but that didn't have much to do with it. I just let him believe that and I wouldn't respond to bullying. But I always tried to be responsive to him. I wanted to give him insights into the kinds of things that made him happy so that he would do things for the program.

Once, he was in Pakistan with a couple of wealthy private sector people from Texas who he was trying to get them involved in the war effort. For what specific reason I don't know. But he was going back to Texas for a fundraising week when he got back. He said, "Larry I need you to do something for me." He gave me a lot of money and asked me to buy 18 fur coats. They raised different animals for fur coats in Pakistan and actually exported fur coats. I said, "Charlie I don't do fur coats." He said, "No I am going back to Texas and when I go around to my fundraisers, I want to give a coat here and a coat there to people who matter." I said, "Charlie this is highly unusual."

At that point we had a successful arrangement with the Department of Defense where two or three times a month they would send C-5s and C-141s with non-lethal equipment. The planes would fly out full and fly back to Dover empty and he knew this. He said, "I have already made arrangements with DOD. All you have to do is hand the coats to the captain of the next flight and he will do the rest. In this case it was a C-5 so it was going into Dover when it got back. You just have to get the damn coats on the plane." I protested but in the event I bought 18 fur coats. There was no downside on that for AID. That was just a personal favor. I thought it was pretty shaky to put them on a DOD flight but he had taken that onus away from me and had put his own arrangement in place. The next time I

am back in Washington I go to see him and Jim Norris went with me to see Charlie. He was the DAA for the Asia Bureau and hadn't met Charley at that point.

Q: Head of the Asia Bureau?

CRANDALL: Deputy. At this point, the program had already been given several big bumps in the budget and I believe most of this had come out of the Asia Bureau's hide. The Bureau had to take it from other Asia programs in order to boost Afghanistan. In the taxi, Jim said "Larry, I am going to do the talking because I don't want Wilson to think he is going to squeeze AID and especially the Bureau for more money. This has to stop." I replied 'Jim, be careful with Charlie because he has a mind of his own. He doesn't know you and he knows me. You might be better off if you stayed semi quiet in your first meeting with him.'" Because I respected Jim I didn't want him to get into any trouble with Charlie. After formalities, Jim wants to carry the conversation on the budget topic. I could sense Charlie was seething. He said, "What is your name again?" "OK look. This is a meeting between me and Larry. I really don't want to hear any more from you. OK?" That is how Charlie talked. Vintage Charlie Wilson. I thought Oh my God Charlie, what are you doing to me. Jim was my AID boss and a friend.

Jim persisted with budgetary talk. Charlie said something like "if you speak one more time I am going to put it into the Bill we are writing now for AID and I am going to double Larry's program. Is that what you want?" He said, "No we wouldn't stand for that." "We write the God damn legislation, not AID." I asked Jim to let us talk about Afghanistan a bit and maybe we could revisit budget. I knew once we got into that conversation we would never return to budget.. Charlie and I had our discussion at which point he says "Meeting is over, I am out of time Thank you very much. Larry, we will be seeing you out there." Again, vintage Charlie. On the way back I said, "Jim I tried to warn you about this guy. He is a volcano and you just never know when he is going to erupt. You have to be very careful with him."

Q: How did your budget change over that five years?

CRANDALL: Because we started getting DoD support flights of excess property and PL 480 an unspoken budget truce went into effect for a while as we absorbed these new inputs. You can't imagine how much you can put on a C-5. They are enormous airplanes. Some flights were worth millions depending on specific cargo. The Soviets were always trying to dry up the Mujahideen food supply. So as soon as we understood the scope of their efforts, we made a pitch for PL 480 Title II. I would have to check but I think AID money peaked at upwards of \$100 million.

Interestingly, our program was becoming quite well regarded by the embassies who had a role in supporting the War including the Saudis. The Saudi Ambassador and I met from time to time to discuss Afghanistan. I was invited to a couple of Saudi events and I invited the Ambassador to dinner at our house. Before we knew the Soviets were actually going to leave Afghanistan, the Saudi Government offered to give our program \$500 million if we would use it in existing activities. But, they insisted on giving the money to

the CIA and the CIA would serve as a pass through to AID. They wanted to have some deniability about where this money came from for their own reasons. So that created problems for AID because there is legislation saying AID can't accept money from intelligence agencies. The language is a little vague but it is there and for good reasons.

There were a host of meetings in Washington to discuss this. I came back on a short TDY to participate in meetings. The guy who carried the most weight was the CIA lawyer. CIA legislation existed that AID was unaware of that would allow this to happen. He and the AID lawyers agreed it could probably work as a legal matter. It would have been a high level AID policy decision for the transfer to actually happen. But, we learned that Gorbachev was going to pull the plug and get his people out of Afghanistan. When they started actually withdrawing, I started backpedaling. I thought there were upsides and downsides for AID to take the Saudi money though it could have been used. I thought that if the story ever got out that we had taken money from the Saudis washed through the CIA we would never be able to explain it. So, the fact that the Soviets were leaving created the opportunity to back away and we did.

We did cooperate with other donors. For example, there was a British member of the House of Lords, by the name of Sir Robert Cranborne. I first met Robert in Islamabad. Some people referred to him as the British Charlie Wilson though he was more house broken than Charley. He was hinting that they were looking for ways to put more money into the resistance. I gave him a few ideas and he was appreciative.. Through the British Embassy, Robert learned that I was going to overnight in London on my way back to DC on TDY. He asked his Embassy to ask me to stay in London for three days. He wanted to introduce me to a few people. The extended stay included a personal tour of the House of Lords and a ride around London in his Aston Martin.

We also cooperated with the Germans. I met their people in Bonn and had a similar result there. One final thought on the Saudi relationship. They are very secretive about what they did and how they did it but I always tried to give them as much information as I could without compromising US interests. I think some of those things were of value which may have been why they offered the \$500 million.. I will never know for sure but I suspect so.

Q: So what size staff did you have and how did you recruit them?

CRANDALL: When I first got there. it was me and a secretary for a couple months. Ambassador Hinton was more than good to me starting by allocating prime office space on the second floor of the Embassy. Given the many unknowns and the sensitivity of this new program he insisted on locating me in the Embassy where security was tight.

I had to obligate the \$15 Million in contracts during the last month of the fiscal year. I knew the contracts I wanted and with whom I wanted them executed. So basically, it was just saying put this amount in this contract and that amount in that contract. That was what the first month was. I could do that myself with help from the Pakistan Mission contract officer and Washington. All the while, I was certainly lobbying to build staff.

Charlie Greenleaf could see there was a potential steamroller coming at him. I asked for eight positions initially. I didn't get pushback on that. But then finding people who were willing to work in a non-traditional program was another thing. Traditional AID people weren't altogether comfortable with a cross border effort that counted the local intelligence agency as a key counterpart. There was one officer who had served in Afghanistan and had an absolute love affair with the country. This was Tom Eighmy, a Ph.D. economic geographer. He was in posted in Liberia at the time.

Q: Big, tall guy?

CRANDALL: That's him. He was begging to be assigned to the program. AID insisted that he go to the Sudan from Liberia. He went to the Sudan and "wasted away" there for a year but finally got reassigned to the cross border program. He was a treasure trove of knowledge about the Country. Then it became more difficult. I went after a couple of program officers and they thought they would ruin their careers if they got involved. There was a guy who I didn't know but who came well recommended, Val Mahan. Val had served in Vietnam and I knew his experience there might make him amenable. He was looking for reassignment. There was a "forced placement" of a health officer, Carol Palma. Her husband had already been assigned to Pakistan as a military attaché. Carol was not comfortable with the program but she was a good sport. It just wasn't her thing. John Gunning became the program officer. I needed somebody who could manage the budgets and John is very good at that. These people became the early core and then we began adding over time including our economist Phil Church and then Diana Swain on the program side. I found some first-rate PSCs. For example, there was someone I knew from our days in Kabul. Al Nehoda. He spoke fluent Dari and fluent Pushto, the only American I ever met who could do that. He was a Yale graduate. He had gone into the Peace Corps out of Yale and became a wonderful language student and very successful Peace Corps volunteer He was a PSC contractor for the AID mission in Kabul when I first met him.

Q: What was his last name?

CRANDALL: Nehoda. When the program started I called Al. He was living in Ohio with his father who was not well at the time but he agreed to be my day to day guy in Peshawar. He was the most knowledgeable, the most tuned in and the most gifted with the languages. Then the contracts themselves picked up some very good people. The health contract went to Management Sciences for Health in Boston. Their chief of party was Dr. Jack Lazar. Jack had been in Afghanistan and he had a real craving for it. He drafted their health project along with some other MSH people. There weren't any loser contracts though there were individual weak members on a given contract.

When Bob Oakley came out to replace Arnie Raphel, the problem arose of what to do with his wife Phyllis. She was already an accomplished FSO. We were in the early stages of conceptualizing a cross border narcotics program and I suggested to Bob that she be assigned to me as the narcotics officer for Afghanistan. He talked to her. She talked to State and I talked to AID/W. It worked. I wrote in her first efficiency report that she was

so accomplished that I expected to work for her someday. That didn't happen but it would have been an honor. Later, Phyllis became the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research at the State Department. Charlie Greenleaf, who liked sports analogies, said I staffed the Mission like a pick-up basketball game. There is some truth there but the record speaks for itself. A one off program like this didn't lend itself to normal personnel practices.

I gathered information from many places. There were American and European journalists who travelled in Afghanistan. I tried to talk to them all. There were academics from several countries who visited Pakistan to gather info and insights for their writings. I talked to everyone I could. The other agency occasionally fielded somebody who had useful knowledge and I would always sit down with them, though more often they wanted to talk with me.

Very few people knew that the USG used Special Forces at secluded places in Pakistan to train Afghans on military subjects. On one occasion, the CoS asked me travel with him to one of the sites and talk to the SF about Afghanistan. I did that on only one occasion. The optics were not good for me to be seen in such situations.

Q: Were there any evaluations of those projects? How can you possibly do that?

CRANDALL: With difficulty, to be sure. But it certainly wasn't impossible. The first evaluation, if you want to call it that, was carried out by the Regional Inspector General Office out of Singapore.

Q: The RIG?

CRANDALL: Yes. They generally specialize in criminal investigations. The Singapore office had jurisdiction over our program. The officer they sent had served in the RIG in Addis Ababa when we were there. The head of RIG office in Addis and his wife were close friends. I knew we weren't doing anything criminal and they were welcome to investigate any thing they wanted. The RIG officer walks into my office and says "What the hell are you doing here?" So we sit down and reminisce a bit and then he makes his prepared speech about the solemnity of investigations which really wasn't one since there were no specific concerns. I spent considerable time with Gordon trying to educate him on what we were up against and how we were trying to do things. We gave him every courtesy we possibly could. He was there three weeks. He went back and wrote a comforting report with no findings.

This experience suggested we needed to be increasingly transparent about the program. I started asking the Bureau to set up evaluations for different projects. Washington could pick whatever firm or individuals they wanted and send them out. In the end, we picked most of the evaluators because finding competent people to evaluate this non-traditional program was not easy.. All were generally positive.

I also hired a retired AID auditor to come to Islamabad once every quarter to look at

specific things. His reports helped calm the waters in Washington as well.

I also asked for a mission management assessment.. I drafted it. I suggested something which from the Mission perspective was the most important part of this report. I suggested the report should recommend the mission create an in house Afghan assessment capability. Trained Afghans would go into Afghanistan, assess different activities and write reports for specific contracts. This was to serve as a check on all contractors. The logistical contractor was asked to hire 60 of the best educated Afghans they could find. It was a little patchy at first, but they started working out the kinks, and then everybody started looking forward to receiving their products.

Q: Were there any people from the Hill who visited the program?

CRANDALL: Yes, quite a few.. Charlie Wilson was a frequent visitor. And, he created the Congressional Committee for Afghanistan. It was House, Senate, Republicans and Democrats. There were ten members, but only two were truly active.. Apart from Charlie, the only other one who showed more than cursory interest was Gordon Humphrey, republican Senator from New Hampshire. It made sense to have a friend on the Senate side as well. He didn't have deep knowledge like Charlie did, but he knew the politics for moving and shaking on the Hill with respect to Afghanistan. He was very insightful so I always learned from him. But he was also mercurial like Charlie.

Many years later I am the deputy in the Newly Independent States Bureau for the former Soviet Union. I get a call from Gordon Humphrey, He was out of the Senate and working as a lobbyist. I didn't like to deal with lobbyists but because he was helpful on Afghanistan I agreed to meet him and his colleagues. His colleagues wanted to sell pre fab houses and blueprints. Somehow, he learned I was the guy who was heading up the design work to determine how to get 5000 Soviet Officers out of the Baltics where they were no longer welcome. They were left behind when the Soviet Union dissolved. The Russian Army didn't want to bring them back thinking they would be a political problem if they all ended up in Moscow. This subject had come up in a conversation between the Embassy and Moscow Government. A cable came back and of course it lands on AID to figure out what to do. I made several trips to Moscow to sort things out. Anyway, Gordon got wind and that is why these housing people hired a lobbyist to help them sell their wares. In the end, they didn't get involved.. Some years later, Charlie Wilson called me while I was the Mission Director in Haiti. His health was failing at that time, having received a heart transplant.

Q: He was still a congressman?

CRANDALL: Yes. We had just "invaded" Haiti with the 10th Mountain Division and several Special Forces units. I went to Haiti in March of '94 and most of that time was spent with a small nucleus in the Embassy trying to figure out how we were going to make things happen after the coming invasion in September. There were several attempts to encourage the Cédras regime to step down, all to no avail until the last. On this occasion, former President Jimmy Carter, former Senator Sam Nunn, Colin Powell and

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Hugh Shelton visited Port au Prince.

They met with Cédras in a hotel and told him the US Army was coming and he needed to step aside. The discussions were slogging along when General Shelton told him if he was still clinging to power when his soldiers arrived, then he could be killed. This got his attention and the conversation turned to where he would go and would the USG rent his two houses and would we forward the money to him. He was told that arrangements were already made for him and his family to go to Panama. As for the houses, he was assured we would rent them and send the money. So, we invade and essentially we ran the Country for a year. No decision of importance was made unless the United States Government was involved

On the houses, Ambassador Swing asked me after the invasion if AID could pay the Cédras rent. I assured him there were no provisions in the AID legislation that allowed for payment of a fallen dictators rent.

Back to Charlie. He knew Haiti was a big priority for the Clinton administration. He called me. We had a nice visit for half an hour talking about the old days. Then I said “Ok, Charlie, what do you need? “Larry I have a constituent who is driving me crazy.” He got himself in a financial bind by buying a lot of second hand parking meters.” “Parking meters?” “Yeah, he thought he could unload these at a nice profit and he has not been able to do that. Larry is there any way you can use parking meters in Haiti?” “Charlie, I haven’t given that a lot of thought but I know parking meters wouldn’t go down well with the Government. He said, “Well that allows me to tell this guy that it won’t work. in Haiti.” So, the two main member of the Congressional Committee on Afghanistan tried to sell parking meters in Haiti and houses in Moscow. You gotta love it.

Q: All right. So how did your stay your five years in Pakistan come to a close? What actions led you to depart?

CRANDALL: I wanted to leave in ’89 which was the year the Soviets left. I thought that my role and the things I could do were basically done. It was time to move on. It was a high-pressure job and I had been doing it for four years. I didn’t think it was good for my mental or physical health to continue. Carol Adelman former AID health officer became the political head of the Asia Bureau. She came to Pakistan on her inaugural visit. She thought the program was “so interesting and wonderful.” She told me the Bureau was looking for a replacement. For whatever reasons, a suitable person was not found so I was asked to stay a fifth year.

By this time, the program was on automatic pilot so I spent considerable time with Bob Oakley and the station trying to convince Washington that we shouldn’t walk away from the Resistance. We had good contacts and understandings with all the Tanzims. If we left them to their own devices, they would become more divisive and start fighting each other.. It would be chaotic. We drafted a number of messages. I was key drafter on many of them. But then there was an unexpected development. Father Bush had become President and during the Reagan years had never been involved in any of the

deliberations on Afghanistan. Someone else will have to explain why. I don't really know the reason. When he became President, he turned a tin ear to all the political arguments for staying involved in the post-Soviet era. He reportedly said that it was Reagan's War and it was over as far as the U.S. Government was concerned. State and Langley were hushed on the subject. We kept polishing our arguments trying to find a weak spot where we could stick a shim in. No luck.

I was replaced by Bob Bakley who was a CPA by training. At that point, Bob was the director in Delhi. As it happened, Cathy and I were going to Delhi for a long weekend. I called Bob to chat about the transition. I quickly realized that talking to Bob about the resistance wasn't going to work. Insurgency politics wasn't his subject. When he took over, he made little effort to know the Afghans and he didn't have the close working relationships with ISI that I had. These relationships were critical to making the program work. My counterparts saw Bob as a signal that the program, was winding down. Two years after I left, it was shut it down after Bob left and the remains were handed to the Pakistan Director for disposal.

With \$30 to \$50 million we might have kept the resistance glued together. We could have stayed in close contact with them. I could have gone back and forth on TDY to troubleshoot. We could have trained others to do more. It was a cheap investment. Look what has happened since. Sadly, it is not something you can go back and change..

Q: Was the President saying AID had no ability to move help in any way. Was there anybody in AID trying to support you?

CRANDALL: From my understanding, the President was not talking about AID per se. He wanted the USG writ large out of Afghanistan. There were sympathetic AID folks but their voices were not heard. State had a good DAS, Bob Peck, who thought it was shameful that we were walking away. Bob made a very strong effort with NSC to turn it around. But the NSC works directly for the President of the United States. The other agency tried but with the same result. It was one of those things that could not be overcome.

Q: Where was Charlie Wilson in all of this?

CRANDALL: Charlie tried. He did. He called me a couple of times and talked about what he was doing. He tried to pass legislation with a special authorization for Afghanistan that would allow our programs with wiggle room for others as well. He couldn't get support because the Administration's position was known. It just didn't work. After 9/11, I was in strong demand even though I had retired in January 1998. After all the USG policy mistakes, 9/11 made it imperative that we reengage with Afghanistan in a significant way. My Afghan contacts and knowledge became critical once more.

Q: We didn't open an embassy in Kabul after the Soviets withdrew in 1989?

CRANDALL: It was chaotic. Until '93 there was a titular communist head of government

in Kabul. His name was Najibullah. The Afghans called him Najib-i-Gao which means Najib the cow in Dari. He was a big man. The resistance managed to overrun Kabul in 93 and take him from his hideaway in a UN office. They hanged him from a nearby light pole. Pictures of the event were widely circulated in the media. As the Afghans the USG had supported took over the Country they started fighting each other as we had predicted and much of the Country became a war zone. Of course, this gave rise to the Taliban. I don't want to get into the specifics of how the Taliban came to power. Several books have been written on the subject. But after 9/11, it became very clear that that the USG would get seriously involved once again. Two officers I knew in the other agency called to talk.

I gave seminars in this very living room on history, personalities and politics offering as many ideas as I could about how to get re-engaged. I was later approached by them to help start an Afghan NGO which I agreed to do. I drafted the concept, and lined up key Afghans. But due to the ineptitude of one high level political appointee whose name I will not mention, that initiative was scuttled. Then, I got involved with different contracts, different people and different outlets to help out. Some were here in Washington and some in Afghanistan. I went back and forth a number of times to include stops in Pakistan. The NGO idea was a good one that would have served different masters but would have been very useful to USG interests.

Q: I guess it did not take place.

CRANDALL: It did not happen. The money was there, the core people were there, the concept was there and fully agreed upon on paper and otherwise. It was all there. All we had to do was flip a switch until this self-serving political appointee came along. I stayed involved giving presentations at think tanks including the RAND Corporation. I helped RAND with policy papers as well

I don't know if I mentioned this but after my five years in Pakistan, I went to the Senior Seminar for a year.

Q: Not quite the National War College.

CRANDALL: I think the Seminar was better, at least for me. Bob Oakley was instrumental in that. I knew about the Senior Seminar but it didn't occur to me that it was something I might like to do. I thought of it more as a State thing. Bob disagreed with me and sent a personal cable to the Undersecretary for Political Affairs asking him to secure a seat for me. He did and I went.

Q: This was Bob Kimmitt.

CRANDALL: The Undersecretary was Bob Kimmitt. I had met him but I didn't really know him.

Bob's cable simply said let's put Larry in the senior seminar. That is basically what he said, and it happened. I didn't fill out an application and when I received the nomination

cable I learned that State had not coordinated my nomination with AID. Still, it was a wonderful year of travelling around the world with 30 fascinating officers from other security agencies—learning from them, the travel and the great speakers that were brought to our location at the Foreign Service Institute. After five years of constant pressure in Pakistan, I needed to decompress. I wanted to make a career out of the Senior Seminar.

Q: Before we leave the Senior Seminar, did you have to write anything there, any papers related to Afghanistan and your experience there?

CRANDALL: Yes and no. Each seminarian had to bring a speaker for the class. I chose the Minister of Finance in the Afghan Interim Government. His name was Hedayat Amin Arsala. He was a loan officer at the World Bank when the Soviets invaded in late 1979. He stayed with the Bank for two or three years after but made trips to Pakistan as often as possible to “size up” the Afghan political situation. We met in Islamabad and became friends.

He wanted to get involved in the War. I told him he was not a warrior and he shouldn’t think of that. I told him he should use his education and Bank experience and aim higher so that he might positively affect the new AIG. In fact I told him I would back him if he became the AIG Minister of finance a position I knew was vacant and for which he was being considered. He left the Bank and became the Minister. We rented a building for his office, filled it with office equipment and paid the running expenses less salaries. At his request, we fielded consultants from the Treasury Department to help with technical issues. His Ministry probably had more Afghan expertise in it than any other. My Senior Seminar colleagues thoroughly enjoyed his discussion of the AIG, the various political leaders and the prospects for the future. When the Hamid Karzai Government came to power after 9/11 Hedayat became the Minister of Commerce and later the “Senior Political Counselor” to President Karzai

After his presentation to the Seminar, I invited Hedayat and his wife to dinner here at the house. He revealed that he was trying to become president and asked me for help which I couldn’t provide—I was out of Pakistan and therefore out of the game he wanted to play.

As a footnote, the Afghan who became Karzai’s national security advisor was Zia Mojaddidi. Zia was my main man in Quetta Baluchistan for four years. I first met him in Quetta where he was barely existing as a stringer for the Voice of America. It was from Quetta that we serviced the southern provinces of Afghanistan. I recognized his deep political knowledge of the southern provinces and asked him to leave VoA for a full time job with me. He did. I always spent considerable time with Zia when I went to Quetta. I could always get useful information on the south from him that not only informed my program but also the Embassy when I reduced our talks to memos or cables.

Zia was helpful in many ways including an anti-opium growing project focused on the southern provinces. At the time, the chief trafficker was Mullah Malang, a fierce anti-Soviet cleric who used his drug earnings to fuel his fight against the Soviets.

Unfortunately, he was also ruining lives. I asked Zia to arrange a meeting with him in Quetta telling him I was interested in providing support but without details. It took three months of persuading, but a meeting was arranged. It happened in the AID Guest House in Quetta.

He was a fierce looking man with contempt in his eyes for me and I suspect all westerners. In essence, I told him a man of God should not be trafficking in opium as it destroys lives. He argued that trafficking allowed him to fight the godless Soviets. It was a standoff but we agreed on a second meeting a few weeks later. For this occasion, Phyllis Oakley my new narcotics officer came with me. On this occasion, I explained that we would match every dollar he lost in opium revenues with supplies from the cross border program but without weaponry. To our great surprise he agreed. I am not sure of the dynamic at work, but he must have conferred with at least some of his lieutenants around Kandahar and concluded that maybe a new approach was worth a try. Whatever, he insisted upon meeting Ambassador Oakley. With his wife in the meeting, that was a no brainer. The meeting was arranged in Islamabad a few weeks later. Again, he agreed on our terms and I explained that as soon as we could confirm that production was decreasing we would start supporting him. I further explained that we would send monitors to growing areas to gather evidence and the US would use satellites to take pictures of known poppy fields. Mullah Malang left this meeting after multiple handshakes and travelled from Islamabad to Peshawar where the next day he was nearly cut in two by three AK-47 wielding assassins. We later learned that some in his organization did not approve of our deal and killed him so that their drug profits would continue. This delayed our narcotics project but did not stop it. Malang was the largest trafficker in the Country, however, so our other activities were smaller by comparison. Today, Afghanistan is the largest producer of illicit opium in the world.

Q: When was the last time you visited Afghanistan?

CRANDALL: The last time I came close to going was three years ago. A friend at the RAND whom I had met in Baghdad and worked with on several activities called with an “unusual” request. He said, “Well this is one where all you have to do is agree to a meeting. The First Infantry Division G2 (division level intelligence officer in the Army) is deploying to Afghanistan. Will you talk to her about Afghanistan.” I replied in the affirmative. He gave her my phone number and she called and we talked for about two hours. She had never been there and her staff was almost equally green. At the end of the call she said “Can we get together?”

I invited her to the house. She was coming to town from Fort Benning on business at the Pentagon. One thing led to another and I realized she was recruiting me. She said, “Look when I get out there and get my feet on the ground, would you be amenable to thinking about an assignment with my office?” I said, “You know I have done different things in my career and I always try to do it in the background. If I took a contract with you, then everybody would think that their suspicions were now fully justified about me.” She got out there and she called me and sent several e-mails. I asked, “How free are you to travel around Afghanistan?” “It is very hard because I have to travel with lots of security and I

always go in my chopper and I can't stay any place very long." I said, "You know the kinds of things I have done don't lend themselves to such restrictions." I said, "Every time I have visited since 9/11 I have stayed with Afghans and not on the American compound or hotels. I told her that would really put a crimp in my style if I couldn't see people. She said, "Well we could maybe overcome some of that but maybe not all of it." She offered a generous contract. I talked to Cathy about it, and she asked how many more of these things I had to do. I ended up saying no. The last visit was maybe six or eight months before the G-2 offer.

Q: So this would have been almost four years ago.

CRANDALL: Yes.

Q: So now we are in 2013.

CRANDALL: Just before the event I just described, the son of the former Minister of Defense asked me to help him start a business in Afghanistan. I knew his father when he was in the resistance. He had been a general in the Afghan army before the Soviets invaded and he had to leave. He went to Peshawar. He was a very active member of the resistance. He wasn't a politician; he was a real soldier. His name was Rahim Wardak. His son went to Georgetown University and had become a Rhodes Scholar. It turned out that I had the contacts with American businessmen who fit what he wanted to do.. One was Cochise Security run by Jesse Johnson who was part Cherokee Indian and former deputy commander of the Delta Force in the Army. A good man. There was another--an entrepreneur style businessman in Texas by the name of Tom Box. Both of these guys had backgrounds that would be helpful to Wardak. They were solid.

We all met in Kabul but little did I know that the son was less than honest. He expropriated resources from both Tom and Jesse and everything came a cropper. But he learned enough from being around these guys that he was able to get started on his own beginning with an Afghan security company.. He got multiple contracts with DOD I think because of his father. I am sure there is a connection there. Twice he asked me to come on board and offered a nice salary to be president of his company. I said, "I will consider it if you give Jesse and Tom back the money you stole from them." If you don't do that, I won't consider it. He said, "I didn't steal anything from those guys." I said, "Well they think you did and I think you did, so the answer is no."

I did several things in Afghanistan post 9/11, too much to recite here. I am not going to go into them all. I will briefly describe my last trip to Pakistan. AID and the Embassy Coordinator for Afghanistan, Robin Raphel, asked me to travel to Islamabad to make recommendations on how to "Deradicalize Taliban Detainees." I knew something about Saudi efforts to deradicalize their jailed detainees and thought my experience with Afghans might add up to something useful. I went out for three weeks and spent most of that time in Peshawar talking to senior Pakistani officials like the Home Secretary and the Chief of Police. I also met with private sector Afghans and Pakistanis with an interest in the subject. There were several thousand all male Taliban detainees in Pakistani jails and

many of them were in their teens. They were radicalized in their religious schools (madrassas) and now they were being further radicalized in their cells through rape, labor exploitation and torture. In the event, it was difficult for the Peshawar Consulate to assist with setting up meetings with the GoP and others because at the time the USG in general had poor relations with the Pakistan Government. I wrote my report as best I could and briefed the DCM, CoS, political section and AID on my findings. They were enthusiastic about most of my recommendations but admitted that the sensitive cooperation needed from several GoP institutions meant nothing could happen for the near future. And, nothing did happen.

Q: Well this has been great. Before we close, I am going to have to leave at 4:00. Your next assignment was the National War College but you didn't go.

CRANDALL: I was reassigned from the War College to Pakistan. After 5 years there, I went to the State Department run Senior Seminar. This was a one year sabbatical for senior security related USG elements. Thirty were chosen each year to attend. We had outstanding speakers, fascinating domestic and overseas trips and we learned from each other.

Q: Senior Seminar. So, you went to the Senior Seminar and AID assigned you to your next post. What happened?

CRANDALL: Ron Roskens, the former Chancellor of the University of Nebraska became the AID administrator. John Blackton was his special assistant. John called and said PPC was being reorganized to include a new Office of Strategic Planning and would I be willing to organize it and head it? I said, "I didn't know much about PPC, John argued that AID needed a long range planning capability to help protect itself from the State Department and I had some credibility there. I met Roskens and talked to him about the offer. I eventually said I would do it, though I was not overwhelmed by the new Administrator. I assembled a staff of twelve strong officers with solid experience and I barely got started in the job. The Soviet Union had disassembled while I was in the Senior Seminar and now AID was going to create the Newly Independent States Task Force with a \$3.2 billion budget.

Q: OK, let's not get into that yet. We are going to end this interview and we will continue it next time.

This is John Pielemeier talking to Larry Crandall. This is our third session. We will be starting with some information that Larry didn't cover last time that gets more into the cross-border program in Afghanistan. Then we will move on into other parts of his career. So Larry, Charlie Wilson.

CRANDALL: About the third year I was in Pakistan I got a call from 60 Minutes in New York. They said they wanted to do a 60 Minutes segment on Afghanistan that would include our program. I informed the caller, George Crile, that this is a sensitive program and it is not something the Administration would be comfortable having on 60 Minutes. I

explained some element or all elements of the program could be jeopardized but I really didn't know what they had in mind. George was a producer for the show and later author of the book, "Charlie Wilson's War" which was turned into a movie of the same title starring Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts.

I told George I would check with the Ambassador and Washington and get back to him. Everybody felt pretty much the same way I did. We didn't want the program on 60 Minutes or any other news program for that matter. If they wanted to come it would have to be according to our rules, not theirs. There would be no attribution, no quotes, no filming that would be used on 60 Minutes etc. In other words all they were going to get was background information that they could use for whatever else they were doing. There could be no attribution to AID. There could be no link in other words. George was not happy with that when I called him back. But he said he would come out and see if he could make it work.

My experience with journalists is when you make an agreement they are usually pretty good about honoring the deal. George, at least for a while, was pretty good about honoring the deal. He came out and we showed him around a bit. We showed them some of our activities along the border. He actually filmed mules at the Animal Holding Facility but with the same ground rule—the film couldn't be used and nothing could be attributed to us. He also interviewed me or rather we had conversations in my Embassy Office and during the three-hour ride to Peshawar. He produced a segment that didn't have anything to do with us. It was called, "Charlie Did It". That was a quote from President Zia who was interviewed for the program. He was asked how the Pakistan Government was able to help the Afghans in such an effective way and put them in a position to maybe even win the War. He replied with a smile and a wink. "Charlie Did It!" meaning Charlie Wilson was the mover and shaker in Congress that made everything happen there and in the Executive Branch..

The segment was more focused on Charlie than anything else. Then comes 9/11. At that point, George figured that the promises he made about non-attribution were void because the War was over that I was involved in. He thought he could use all the material that he got from me in a post 9/11 book that he decided to write because of the internals of what caused 9/11. He produced the book in short order. He had a lot of material so he didn't need to find much new stuff. He put several pages in the book about me and he never asked permission. When the book appeared, I called George at his office in New York. He was still with 60 Minutes, I read him the riot act. "You didn't honor our agreements." He said, "Oh come on, loosen up. Nobody cares about that stuff anymore." I said, "Well I do, and my former Agency might."

It turns out George was right. The Bush administration was not sensitized to pre-9/11 concerns. They had other things to worry about. Anyway, George and I made peace. Soon after his book and later the movie, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and died soon thereafter. I did see George on two other occasions outside of Pakistan. When I was in the Newly Independent States Bureau. I was in Moscow and ran into him there. He introduced me to his very interesting Russian friends while trying to put a 60 Minute

story together. We met in the famous Metropol Hotel down the street from the old KGB Headquarters. A few years earlier, I was Mission Director in Haiti when George visited Port au Prince to develop a 60 Minutes segment on the aftermath of the September 94 invasion. He knew I was there. He didn't call in advance but just showed up at my office. My secretary told me who waiting and I almost had a heart attack. But at any rate I didn't change the ground rules. I said, I would help him to some extent but there would be no attribution with everything on background. He agreed. I introduced him to some interesting Haitians, and helped him with his 60 Minute story. He produced his segment for 60 Minutes but nothing to do with AID. I am happy to say.—he honored the ground rules. As a footnote, my successor gave an interview to 60 Minutes some months after I departed which embarrassed the Agency. Apparently no ground rules were established. She was removed. I was asked to help with the brouhaha but I was already retired and could do nothing.

Q: And did you like the movie?

CRANDALL: The book was pretty good. I knew Charlie fairly well and I knew about many of the things the book described. It wasn't an in depth academic treatment but for popular reading it was more than acceptable. Was the movie good? Not to me but I am not a dispassionate critic. I like Tom Hanks and thought "Saving Private Ryan" was a good movie. I thought Julia Roberts was good in "Pretty Woman." But I think both were miscast for this film. Tom Hanks tried hard to play flamboyant and mercurial Charlie Wilson, but fell short. I suspect Hollywood wanted to fit their idea of what a winning story line would be in terms of box office receipts. I do remember I shook my head throughout the whole thing with mild disgust. I think for people who didn't know anything about Afghanistan it would be fine. But for somebody with my background not so much. OK, let's move on to the next subject.

First, here is a brief excerpt from Charlie Wilson's War taken from the several pages George Crile devotes to the cross border program. I do not agree with everything George wrote but appreciate the laudatory comments he gave the cross-border program.

Book excerpt follows. "...in a curious way, Crandall's cross border programs made an enormous difference and may have provided the greatest lift to the spirits of the warriors because for the first time, the Afghans could say and believe that the United States was moving in behind them. Until this point, they did not really know where the CIA guns were coming from. The weapons were all of Soviet origin and were handed out by the Pakistanis. But now, Crandall was handing out brand new Toyota pickups, and the word was getting out about the giant cargo planes that landed in the night and disgorged incredible amounts of U.S. goods for the mujahideen. Crandall and his team were holding regular meetings with the mujahideen leaders, filling them in on the programs they were going to start and have the Afghans run.

"It was a stunning concept. Crandall was going to provide them with the wherewithal to roll back the scorched earth policy. For five miserable years, the Afghans had retreated from their Country, watching as their villages were destroyed and families forced into

exile. Now, the pink-faced bureaucrat was setting up clinics, training medics and doctors, creating schools and teaching Afghans to read. Crandall wanted them to begin preparing for the time when they would return to Afghanistan and begin rebuilding their Country.”

As I explained earlier, abandoning the Afghans after the Soviets departed has generally set the timetable back by at least a generation.

CRANDALL: I didn't go to the War College, I went to the Senior Seminar.

Q: I think that is where we left it last time.

CRANDALL: Then we don't need to talk about that.

Q: I think we did. I think we did cover it.

CRANDALL: OK, enough, then. I was asked to be the Director of Strategic Planning in PPC which I only did for a short time because the Soviet Union had fallen apart and the administration wanted to place a significant new program into the former republics of the previous Soviet Union. AID was going to lead that effort, and a whole new operation had to be set up. I think I mentioned last time. Malcolm Butler was the director, I was the deputy.

Q: Malcolm Butler, yes.

CRANDALL: There was a very fast appropriation of 3 ½ billion dollars.

Q: Billion?

CRANDALL: Yes, \$3 ½ billion to start the program. We had our work cut out for us in putting together a program in the former communist states now termed the Newly Independent States.

Q: This was around 1989, 1990?

CRANDALL: 1991. We had to put together a strategy and as it turned out I was the only one who had much experience with communists, having worked in Pakistan for five years and with the communists in Vietnam for three years. But that was a different thing. I wasn't in day to day contact with communists. I certainly met a lot of communists over the years, but I cannot say that I gained insights from them that would be helpful for the NIS program. At any rate, I was a resource and there weren't many of them in AID at the time. Initially, we could find only one Russian speaker in AID, a housing officer and son of immigrants from the Ukraine who spoke passable kitchen Russian.. We started looking for as many experts as we could find. It was difficult, but we managed.

On the strategy, we wanted to maximize the use of our resources to make as many of the

republics immune to a return to communism as possible. The best way to do that was through privatization of state owned assets. At that point. AIDs privatization expertise was limited.

We used what we had and contracted as much as we could. Again, the contracting opportunities were limited as well. But there was a strategy that was generally agreed upon among the involved agencies. I am simplifying here, it wasn't just privatization, but that was the core of it. Once that was approved then politics began to rear its head. There was significant lobbying by various politicians trying to help their constituents through our substantial budget.

It had been decided by the Administration that an extra layer of bureaucracy would be added through the State Department Coordinator for the Newly Independent States. Its first head was Rich Armitage who had been the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Light Intensity Conflict at DoD.

He brought in mostly political people to help him in that coordinating effort, including Liz Cheney who became problematic at times for AID. There were very few careerists. There were three or four former military people who were good on logistics and they became an asset to everybody.

Q: When you were doing the strategy were you going out to the region?

CRANDALL: I made a lot of trips to Moscow often going to other NIS countries from there. I can give you an hour on how difficult it was to travel out there in the early days. You have no idea.

Q: Give us an example.

CRANDALL: OK. Congressman Kennedy from Massachusetts wanted to visit Moscow and then Armenia. He had Armenian constituents in his district and they were pressuring him to do something for downtrodden Armenia. I had been to Yerevan once before. I was doing a recon mission to figure out what was doable. At any rate Kennedy was given a plane to fly to Moscow and Yerevan by Texas businessmen. I met him in Moscow to serve as his day to day liaison officer.

Q: Are these Armenian Texas businessmen?

CRANDALL: They were not Armenian. I am not sure what that airplane thing was about. I did meet two of them and they were clearly not Armenian. At any rate we met up in Moscow. I was to fly from Moscow to Yerevan with him and I brought Charlie Moseley along who was the regional energy officer working out of the Moscow mission. We flew to Yerevan in the dead of winter without incident. We had meetings with the prime minister and others. All the Armenian officials apologized for their cold offices. There was no electricity and no coal. The airport had no jet fuel to service our aircraft. So, it flew to a port city in nearby Georgia where jet fuel was available. The plane was

supposed to come back the next day so that Kennedy and the others could return to Moscow. The plane didn't show up. It is 24 hours late and Kennedy is starting to panic. He doesn't know what to do or who to talk to. The senior FSN in the AID mission was a well-connected guy. I asked him, "Do you know where the KGB headquarters is?" He did. I knew that the KGB in Yerevan would most likely have radio telecommunications with their counterpart in Georgia. At that time, the two governments were independent but the KGB was still monolithic. This was still the "Soviet" KGB. When asked, the Armenian Government said they didn't know what to do. The airport authorities didn't know what to do. I told the FSN "Let's go to the KGB headquarters."

We drive to this non-descript building in Yerevan and I knock on the door. After a minute or so someone comes to the door. The FSN spoke Armenian and Russian. I give him my calling card and say, "I need to talk to the chief." He looks at me and the FSN is rapidly translating trying to make this work. Our interlocutor closes the door with a slam but comes back in a couple of minutes and invites us in. We go into the KGB chief's office and sit down. I explain that there is a VIP in Yerevan, a Kennedy. He knew the name. We flew from Moscow here, and the plane went to Georgia for gas and it hasn't come back. Can you radio your counterpart there and see what is going on? He looked at the ceiling, exhaled and told his lieutenant to do that. It took about half an hour because the KGB in Georgia didn't know what was going on with the plane. What they learned was the amount of gas the pilot wanted to buy was more than they were willing to sell at a price the pilot was willing to pay. We all go to the radio room. We get into a complicated negotiation where the two KGB chiefs were talking to each other and they had someone on the phone with the airport. I said, "Can you tell me how much money the pilot has to pay for the gas. It was \$12,000 in American dollars. So the two KGB guys got into the conversation. They finally agreed to up the amount of gas so it would take all \$12,000 but it might not be enough gas to return to Yerevan and on to Moscow. Several hours later the airplane shows up.

Kennedy was generally oblivious to what had happened but he and his party were happy to know they could return to Moscow. At that time there were no commercial flights into or out of Yerevan. Of course, Charlie and I are happy to get out of there too. It was freezing and there was no heat or electricity in any of the homes. At night, I slept in my vested suit, overcoat, hat and gloves with blankets to stay warm. We board the plane the next morning and the pilot tells everybody to button up because this is going to be a "wild ride". We have to hope for good weather because we had thin margin of fuel to get us back to Moscow. The \$12,000 didn't fill the tanks.. There was a big hurrah as we took off..

On the way back, vodka bottles were passed around. I don't like vodka and took a pass. We get close to Moscow and the pilot gets on the intercom and informs us the tanks are near bone dry but the tower knows about the problem. They cleared a runway for us and we land. As soon as the plane stops our pilot gets on the horn again and says, "Our fuel tanks are empty."

That is not an atypical story at that time for travel around the NIS. I have some wonderful

stories about flying on Aeroflot but perhaps that is enough for now.

Q: Did you let Kennedy know the KGB had helped him out?

CRANDALL: I told him I had gone to the KGB. He said, "I didn't think you were an AID guy." I told him he was wrong. It was a common sense thing to do. You go where you think you can get help. For a situation like this there was no other place to go. The alternative was to sit on our hands. That is what I told Kennedy.

Q: How did you decide to staff the program?

CRANDALL: With difficulty. We were able to do some forced placements.. Some people stepped forward out of curiosity but everyone was scratching their heads about what implementation. Over time, we developed contractors who could help us in different ways. It was a chewing gum and bailing wire operation. It seemed like we were always working on staffing issues.. Staffing was never regularized like in long established bureaus..

Q: How many missions were you setting up?

CRANDALL: We knew we had to limit our reach for various reasons. We set up the biggest mission in Moscow. We did others in Kiev in the Ukraine, in Kazakhstan in Almaty and in Yerevan in Armenia. We gave certain technical responsibilities to each one of these missions for other countries, staffed and unstaffed. People in Moscow would travel to other countries as would people in other missions. This approach works better on paper than it did operationally because it was so difficult at times to get from one country to another. I managed to visit all of our missions on multiple occasions and I got to know the operations rather well. I also visited non-mission countries like Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. I was ticketed for the Baltic countries when Haiti hit my desk.

Q: And very few AID people were Russian speakers. They were learning on the job?.

CRANDALL: In general yes, but we had officers who worked hard at Russian. As I mentioned, we had one officer whose parents were from Ukraine but he grew up in a Russian speaking home. He had good kitchen Russian. He was a quick learner and became quite fluent.

Q: And embassies were being set up at the same time in all of these countries.

CRANDALL: Yes.. For example, the Embassy in Ukraine in Kiev was given a political ambassador who like our Russian speaking officer had grown up with Ukrainian parents. He didn't have a lot of knowledge about the place but he had the language and learned on the job. It was hard to find people for our posts outside of Moscow.

Our first person in Almaty what was his name?

Q: Craig Buck.

CRANDALL: Craig Buck, thank you. Greg was our first person there and was a forced placement. I think he was in Peru as mission director at the time

Q: Who was mission director in Moscow?

CRANDALL: The first one was Jim Norris. Jim had an excellent reputation in the Agency, but by his own account at the time, he may not have been the ideal choice for a highly charged working environment like Moscow. There were strong interagency rivalries at work and AID was often at the epicenter because the money was appropriated to AID. Dealing with the Russian Government and dealing with the other US agencies in town was a difficult slog day in and day out. It wasn't the ideal setting for Jim, but he persevered. Malcolm wanted me to replace Jim and I was not unwilling to do that but at the same time the front office and the Latin America Bureau began talking to me about Haiti. I didn't tell Malcolm immediately about Haiti because I wasn't sure it was real. Then, they started sharing the classified planning for invading later in '94. The USG was going to "clean house" as one of the cables put it. This referred to removal of the military regime. I didn't know anything about Haiti and I had never been in the LA bureau so I had misgivings. But more and more pressure came and I went to Haiti. Malcolm wasn't pleased and my family wanted to stay in Washington. But I was able to use my past experience in conflict countries to good effect.

Q: OK, just to put a time frame around this. You had been in the NIS job for how long?

CRANDALL: I was with the NIS from its inception in '91 until March, 1994 when I was posted to Port au Prince. I told Mark Schneider I was reluctant to take the job unless I could spend a week in Port au Prince. I found the Haitians I met to be bright, engaging and politically attuned. The mission was thinly staffed and unhappy. They felt like they were working in a back water hostage to the poor relations the USG had with the regime. The trip provided an opportunity to meet Ambassador Swing as well.

Q: I know him from Liberia.

CRANDALL: Bill said he hoped that I would come down. He had talked to different people about me and what I had previously done. I returned to DC and accepted the assignment.

Q: Did you take your family?

CRANDALL: Technically you could and there were families there. Our daughters were both in college. It was six weeks later in early May that Cathy and all non-essential personnel were evacuated. Our two daughters were there for a brief visit but both left quickly with their mother. The evacuation lasted five months. With all the dependents and non-essential personnel out, the USG imposed a 100 percent embargo on the Country. No planes were allowed in or out save one weekly missionary flight. The embargo was

extended to the sea with the US Navy off shore keeping watch. The gas stations quickly ran out of fuel and traffic was totally dependent on high cost black market gas smuggled from the Dominican Republic. Imported foods quickly disappeared. In essence, we shut down the Country. The Cédras regime, caring little about the populace, acted as if there was no change.

Q: Give a little background on what was going on there.

CRANDALL: In 1991, the first elected President of the Country, Jean Bertrand Aristide, was elected President. He had been a Catholic priest before and a very politically active. From the time Haiti fought for and won its independence from the French in 1804 it had experienced an unbroken series of failed and/or corrupt governments epitomized by the brutish “Papa Doc Duvalier” regime. There was little, some would argue no, tradition of competent government. The Army didn’t like the idea of having a socially active priest as President who frequently insulted the FAHD or Army. The Army chief of Staff was General Cédras., He led the coup that put Aristide on a plane for Venezuela. He stayed there for a period and then moved to DC and took a condo on 7th Street in the District.

Cédras took over the Government, such as it was. It turned out to be a brutal operation. During the evacuation, I recall leaving my house one Sunday morning to attend a meeting at the Embassy. Outside my gate were three bodies all with their throats cut. People were walking to church paying no attention to the dead. I noticed four Cédras goons standing on my corner which explains why the churchgoers paid no attention. They were afraid if they did, they might meet the same fate. I stopped my office car near two of the bodies and grabbed my radio in a fashion that the goons couldn’t miss. We were supposed to call Post One and report all incidents such as this. I made my report and drove slowly by the goons knowing they wouldn’t mess with a “blanc” driving a car with diplomatic plates. All of us experienced things like this over the period of the evacuation. Another incident involved 11 bodies near the Port au Prince public dump, all missing their heads.

The fact that it was the one and only slave rebellion in the world that led to an independent country was a point of pride for the Congressional Black Caucus. The caucus was at the head of the political effort to convince President Clinton to send in the army to fix things and bring Aristide back from exile. Clinton was coming up for re-election and he needed their support. I can talk more about that later if you like. The invasion began on September 21, 1994. The 10th Mountain Division and a several Special Forces units plus odds and ends components showed up. Cédras and a few others were quickly apprehended and put on a plane for Panama. A few weeks before that, President Carter, Colin Powell, former Senator Nunn and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Hugh Sheldon visited Port au Prince for a few hours to meet Cédras to convince him to step down

Sheldon made quite an impression as he displayed his numerous ribbons on his chest on a 6’6” frame. There were several hours of discussions with Cédras, Carter and the others were firm but diplomatic talk with him took little effect.. At this point, Sheldon enters the conversation and says, “Look, all this nice talk is fine, but if you don’t agree to step

aside, my folks are going to come down here and kill you. We are primed and ready to go.” Cédras was now engaged and the conversation turned to his two houses and would the U.S. government rent them if he went into exile. How much a month would the USG pay for renting his houses? A sum of \$500 a month was reached but no funding source was identified. After the invasion and departure of Cédras, the Ambassador asked me if AID could pay the rent on the two houses. I replied that there is no language in the AID legislation that allows rent payment for houses belonging to an ousted general. I don’t know how or even if the rent was paid.

The invasion itself went fairly smooth because the FAHD was nearly a spent force and our military presence was so overwhelming that it probably scared the FADH. There were almost no casualties or fire fights but there were some standoff moments when recalcitrant soldiers were reluctant to surrender their weapons. Essentially, we took over the Country and ran all essential services for nearly a year. For example, the US Army staffed the key positions in the airport and seaport. During the first year, we did our best to bring not only Aristide back but also elements of his former government.

Q: Why don't you talk about the Aristide return.

CRANDALL: Before doing that, let me say a few more words about the months just before the invasion. While Aristide was in exile, his Prime Minister was Robert Malval. He stayed behind and was kept under virtual house arrest for the entire time. The Ambassador and I visited him together on a regular basis though there was little business to be done given his isolation. During one of the visits, he said his phone service had been cut and he feared his assassination was coming soon. His Minister of Justice, Guy Malary, had been assassinated outside a Catholic church only recently. I told him I would try to get a satellite phone with a big dish into the Country and install it in his house. I made no promises given the total embargo that we had imposed. With some difficulty, the phone was delivered to my office and I immediately went to Malval’s home to inform him. We agreed to install it the next day. I informed my GSO staff to make a big production of the installation with more personnel than was needed and to do as much on Malval’s front porch as possible.

His home was under constant watch by the regime and it was important to register the satellite phone installation with the watchers. At any rate, the phone worked fine and the ruthless though generally ignorant regime probably thought a US trick was afoot or some such. In the event, he used the phone daily to talk to his family in exile in the US and never for an emergency. We kept up the visits so the goons would know we were watching them and Malval survived. After the invasion, he wrote a book in French “L’annee de toutes les Duperies” or Year of all the Deceptions in which he describes the satphone ruse and says some nice things about me. He was a book printer in his private life and displayed obvious political skills. However, his years of house arrest took all the political fight out of him and he returned to his business making it necessary for Aristide to find a replacement. I talked to him at a reception the Ambassador gave for the President and he thanked me again for the phone and told me he didn’t need it any longer. We could pick it up.

President Aristide returned on a U.S. supplied airplane on October 15, 1994 with a small “entourage.” There were a few members of the Congressional Black Caucus as well as Brian Atwood the AID Administrator. I was at the airport with Ambassador Swing. I went to the front of the plane with the Ambassador. I was shaking hands with President Aristide when Brian tapped me on the shoulder and scared me. He had exited from the rear.

Before the return, the Ambassador called and said we have go to the Palace and make sure it is presentable by the time the President returned. I went with my GSO officer, Harvey Brown. This was right after the invasion and before Aristide’s return. It was controlled completely by US soldiers. I went into the President’s office that had been used by the Cédras stooge president, and sitting on the president’s desk was a picture of Vice President Dan Quayle. Go figure. To this day I cannot understand why the Cédras regime would put his picture on the President’s desk. In the adjoining conference room, there were human figure shooting targets. There were no holes in them. I went into the President’s personal bathroom and there was blood splattered on one wall. I didn’t know what that was about but obviously something bad had happened there. It could have been from an animal sacrificed for a voodoo ceremony. I don’t know.

The Palace was a filthy mess. I told Harvey to get our entire GSO operation over here and clean this place up as quickly as possible.” It looked pretty good by the time the President came back. It wasn’t perfect but it was pretty good.

Q: What was AIDS’ role at that point in terms of programming?

CRANDALL: There were some legacy projects without much political content in them.. It became obvious that we needed to change the program. While a humanitarian component remained, AID couldn’t ignore the demanding political objectives of the Clinton Administration. Essentially, we had to restore democracy and its key institutions under the Aristide Government. To the dismay of some people in AID we started making those changes. We started a project to help reconstitute the Parliament. We created another to develop the Ministry of Justice. We had an elections project that through the Elections Commission conducted five elections while I was there. For the most part, AID made the important calls on program content. There was little or no meddling of by other actors.

The Aristide Government had no money in its coffers and no way of raising any to pay salaries and basic services like trash collection. We drafted a balance-of-payments grant to help kick start the Ministry of Finance and Central Bank. We provided three tranches of \$15 million each with policy changes required.

In November after Aristide returned, Hurricane Gordon hit Haiti. An estimated 1200 people were killed and there was physical damage over much of the Country. The storm came during the night, and the next morning I called Prime Minister Smarck Michel and said, “Mr. Prime Minister we just had a big weather event. Your Government must show

the people you can help.” He said, “I don’t know what to do. I was a grocery store owner before I became prime minister. What do I do?” I replied, “Stay put for a few minutes and I will get back to you.” I called the Ambassador and said, “We need a chopper to get the Prime Minister and President out for an aerial assessment and then we will come back and determine next steps.” The helicopter was quickly provided by the 10th Mountain Division. We (the Ambassador and I) put the President and Smarck aboard and flew over damaged areas. Smarck asked many questions because he was an intelligent man. The President sat dumbstruck and didn’t say a word for the whole ride.

We were up for about an hour and a half. We returned and landed in front of the Palace which later was pancaked by the earthquake. The president descended and broke into tears and did a fast walk to the Palace front door and never said a word. I turned to the Prime Minister and asked him to call a cabinet meeting that afternoon and told him I would be there to talk about what the Government and donors could do. He called a cabinet meeting and I showed up at 2:00 that afternoon. We went around the table and I asked each minister who might be involved what they thought they could do. None of them thought they could do anything because their ministries were so weak and poorly staffed and without budgets. I told the Prime Minister I would contact as many donors as possible and ask them to give credit for their inputs to the Government.

Several bilaterals and UN agencies pitched in. At the cabinet meeting I realized Smarck didn’t know how to run a meeting. I talked to him later and asked questions about his experience. He said, “Larry, I am Smarck Michel the grocery store owner. This is all I have ever done. I sold gas for a while but that didn’t work too well. I am friends with the President and he asked me to take this job. I am out of my depth.” I told him that if he wanted I would attend any cabinet or other meetings he desired and help him with organization.. I did that for three months and was the de facto chair for the cabinet meetings during that period. It quickly became apparent to me that this was going to become a political problem if Haitians found out an American was doing this. We agreed that I had to make a graceful exit. And I did. This story should give a sense of how pathetic that Government was. Smarck was a good man and he recently passed away.

Q: How long were you in Haiti?

CRANDALL: Three years.

Q: Who replaced you? Do you remember?

CRANDALL: I do remember but the person who replaced me inserted herself and AID into a scandal for misrepresenting the progress of AID programs to 60 Minutes. Her misleading interview was part of the 60 Minutes story. By this point, I was retired and working as a VP for a consulting company. I was called by the AA/LAC who asked me to remedy the situation and help the Bureau get out of the jam. I reminded him that while I didn’t know the replacement personally, several Directors strongly objected to the assignment when announced at a mission director’s conference. I also told him that I could see no way I could be helpful in or out of the government. I also reminded him that

several of the senior FSN staff who had worked with her in Port au Prince some years earlier also objected to the assignment. The political leadership stuck to the assignment and it did not turn out well.

Q: You will have a chance to edit this.

CRANDALL: All right.

Q: So anyway three years. Your family is back. Your wife is back in Washington.

CRANDALL: Cathy was on evacuation orders for five months and then they let the families come back.

Q: Then it became a fairly big mission?

CRANDALL: Yes, we got more staff and more money. I remember my first LAC mission director's conference in Guatemala. Mark said before we started "Larry, please keep the lowest possible profile while you are here." I looked at him and said, "Why?" "Every one of these guys hates me because I have taken money from their budgets and put it in Haiti. So just be humble." That is pretty much what I did. We had our beers and we had our talks but I got good advice from Mark.

Q: Did you speak French?

CRANDALL: Yes, I had good French from my Peace Corps days in Guinea but it was rusty when I got to Port au Prince some twenty odd years after I left the Peace Corps.

Q: Creole?.

CRANDALL: I had no Creole. Creole is bastardized French with lots of African words from different tribes mixed into it. No, I didn't speak Creole, but after a while I quickly got back to where I could work in French again. For the first few months I was there we had no relationship with the Cédras Government so I wasn't pushed to improve my French immediately. After the invasion, I was on the hot burner and I really had to push myself to get it together. I never allowed myself to use an interpreter. I stumbled through a few meetings but over time it worked out fine.

Q: Who was your senior staff? Who was helping you run the mission?

CRANDALL: My first deputy was Sarah Clark from the Africa Bureau whom I was encouraged to make deputy because she was a woman and it was those days and those times.

Q: She was a health planning specialist?

CRANDALL: She was a health officer.

Q: She later worked at the Packard foundation.

CRANDALL: I don't know about that. She was the AID rep in Sierra Leone before Haiti. Because I didn't know her I had no objections to her assignment. More to the point, I interviewed her when I was still burdened with the NIS and taking a crash course on all things Haiti. She had a young daughter. Sarah was not considered an essential person to avoid the evacuation because her daughter was not allowed to stay. Sarah had to leave for five months soon after she arrived.. By the time she got back the confusing politics of the place and the hectic mission had largely left her behind. It was a wild-west scenario by the time she returned. She was uncomfortable with it to some degree. She left and Joe Goodwin, the Mission Director in Cambodia at that time, became the new Deputy. I had some good people in the democracy office. I had good people in each office but because it was a French speaking country in the Latin America Bureau it was always the LAC outlier

Q: So the programs were mostly rebuilding education, agriculture systems.

CRANDALL: As I indicated earlier, we shifted a large part of the program to projects with political impact. We had a big justice project owing to the wide spread human rights abuses. The country couldn't feed itself so we had a PL-480 program which was very difficult to manage because when the trucks came out of the port with the PL-480 they were often attacked along the road by people who thought they would not get an allocation. We often put American soldiers on those convoys to protect them. The soldiers never shot anybody but they did fire warning shots to scare off would be looters.

We had a very important elections project. The Ambassador and I several discussions with President Aristide about the importance of constitutional elections to provide for his successor and to restock the Parliament. He was in exile for the three years and thought that time should be added to his term starting from the date of his return from exile. We told him they would have to change the constitution to allow this and that could only be done through the Parliament and it wasn't sitting. With the inept and often corrupt elections commission appointed by Aristide we organized five different elections while I was there.

By cable, I was instructed by State and AID to lead the election project myself. We stood up an elections commission. I brought in a couple of really first-rate elections people to help. The UN brought in some good people. One of them was a former North Vietnamese Communist official turned UN employee and election expert. He was a good guy and knew a lot about elections and I came to like him. His name was Nguyen van Dong. He visited us here in Mc Lean twice and I visited him once in Mexico City where he retired with his French wife. We got along because I had been in Vietnam for three years fighting his side. He was in Hanoi at that time. We worked well together even when US legal charges were brought against the head of the Elections Commission for smuggling guns from Miami and creating false vouchers for elections materials. Our joint efforts eventually brought US charges against him.

He was generally reviled by nearly everyone. At that time, Bob Oakley was retired and serving on the National War College staff. He visited Port au Prince and I offered to take him to a meeting with the head commissioner. It was after nightfall, and most of the commission staff had left the building. We sat down and suddenly there was a big commotion at the front gate. The gate guards deserted their posts and the gate was broken down. A large crowd descended on the building shouting that they had come to kill the head commissioner. He pulled a gun out of his desk drawer. I said let me talk to them. They won't harm a "blanc." I went to the top of the stairs and told them I had called the US Army and soldiers would arrive soon. They should go away while they could. I made this up but it seemed like a good idea. They continued to yell and scream and ransacked a few offices on the lower floors. Eventually, they left. The commissioner was so shaken that he insisted we follow him home. We did. I encouraged him to resign after this event knowing he was corrupt to the core but he stayed on. Bob enjoyed the event.

AID and the UN made all those elections happen--each and every one of them. Aristide did his best to turn the election commission into a rubber stamp to elect people of his choosing so that he could control Parliament and continue to serve as President. I was determined that was not going to happen and we fought him at every step. We managed to best him most of the time.

Q: Have you been back to Haiti?

CRANDALL: I have not. Two years after I left, I was invited to a UN organized meeting on "failing Haiti" in Mexico City to discuss away ways to improve conditions there. The new Préval Government was not invited because it was a large part of the problem. The French, British and Canadian Governments were represented. While retired, the UN considered me the USG representative. We found no panaceas and made few recommendations. Préval was seen by all as a weak chief executive and an Aristide puppet. I did make a report to AID on the meeting.

The Haitian who was in charge of their side of the hurricane recovery worked for me in the mission. His name is Gabriel Verette. He was a naturalized U.S. citizen and lived in upstate New York for many years working for the State of New York. He had a master's degree in economics. Gabrielle spoke fluent Creole, French and English. He was well connected. If I couldn't figure out how to meet someone, Gabriel could and would make it happen. And if he couldn't, my Haitian secretary Evelyne Perpignand would figure it out. Soon after the invasion, Gabrielle drafted a well-researched cable titled "Lost Opportunities" which chronicled numerous political mistakes made by Aristide, Cédras and the US Government. It was a warning that policies toward Haiti must be carefully crafted to avoid mistakes of the past. Written in 1993, it seems clear that the warning was not heeded in the coming years. If that cable could be found, it would easily serve as the nucleus for a book titled "Lost Opportunities in Haiti".

I saw Gabriel here soon after he left his hurricane job. The dinner was at the former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia's house, Mike Lemmon. Mike was the Pol Mil Counselor when I

was in Pakistan and we became friends there. His wife Michelle worked for me as a contractor in the NIS. Michelle met Gabriel through an NGO that she had worked for in Haiti. Gabriel was in town and the Lemmons invited everyone for dinner. While Gabriel was the chief overseer of the earthquake relief effort, he told many stories of corruption and wrongdoing by many actors. It was only the corruption that made him resign his position.

Let me share one more story and then I will stop on Haiti. In some ways, it illustrates the tragic nature of the place. One afternoon I got a phone call from the President's chief of staff. He wanted to meet right away. I told him I would come to the Palace but he insisted on my office. Fifteen minutes later he was there and tells me the President wanted my help. He reminded me that I had visited Aristide's private home on the edge of town and revealed there was a ten-acre property next door that he wanted to acquire. He said, "He wants you to buy it and give it to him. He wants the U.S. Government to give it to him." I told him we are not in the business of buying properties for heads of state. He replied, "This is very important to him." I explained that he could go to the Ambassador, to the Secretary of State or whomever and the answer would be the same.

He explained there is a fellow living on the property who is not Haitian. He came from the Dominican Republic so he shouldn't be here and he shouldn't have the land anyway. That is why the president should have it. I explained that is a problem for the Ministry of Interior. He went away upset. The next time I saw the President, he raised the same thing and I gave him the same answer. A few weeks later I am reading one of the local French language newspapers. There was a story that said Mr. Gonzales Fernandes of a certain location had been shot in the head in his driveway while backing out with his ten-year-old daughter sitting beside him. He had been assassinated. So, I did some checking to make sure that this was the same guy that they were talking to me about. It was the same man. I wrote a one page memo about the conversations and the killing sending it to the Ambassador and the chief of station with no other copies. I didn't draw any conclusions but everyone knew there were uncivil tendencies in the Government. The CoS sent his back to Langley. The Ambassador claimed he never got his, and it became a big deal in the State Department when the Langley copy surfaced in Washington. In fact, State sent investigators to find out why the Embassy's copy was not forwarded.. They never found out what happened to the Embassy copy. Some months after the assassination the property came into dispute and the understanding I gained after I left Haiti was that the President actually took possession of it. That is subject to verification. There are many stories like that in in this very troubled Country. As a footnote, our granddaughters Madeleine and Ava sold cupcakes on the street in Menlo Park California to raise money for earthquake relief. One buyer gave them \$50.00 for one cupcake.

Q: So let's see. You are ready to depart Haiti? What is the plan?

CRANDALL: Brian Atwood called and said, he wanted me to do something I had never done before. I am looking up at the ceiling in my office. I said, "What is that?" He termed it a relatively new operation run out of Washington called the U.S. Asia Environmental Partnership or USAEP. He intimated he did not know how much of the program was real

and how much smoke and mirrors. I reminded Brian, I was no environmental expert. He explained that environmental expertise was not critical. He wanted to know if the claims of success were real and was there experience that could be transferred to other bureaus. Even though I didn't want the job I agreed. It turned out there were a few ideas that might be transferred but the other regional bureaus weren't interested because there was no budgetary increase involved.

Q: Where was the job going to be? In Bangkok?

CRANDALL: No, the main office was here in DC at AID, but there were field offices in Bangkok, Hong Kong, Taipei, Seoul and New Delhi. They were three person operations using all local hires. I visited each field office and found dedicated staff and claims of success. There were four major contractors in DC. I became somewhat suspect about certain elements of the program the first time I traveled. There were three or four people who felt that they were obliged to go with me on every trip and to check me into hotels and carry my bags and whatever. I said, this was unnecessary and declined the companions. In the process, I learned my predecessor had set the thing up so that every time he travelled he would go with an entourage. We reduced the number to one on the first trip and zero afterwards. When we got back I made it very clear that the next time I would go alone.

While I was only at USAEP for three months before I retired, I found out there were some activities that were useful and some not AEP was a new activity that was still gaining its feet. It was not a roaring success right out of the chute. Still, Brian pressured other bureaus to do something like AEP but the other bureaus already were already facing numerous unfunded Administration priorities. At that time, I had received a three year "limited career extension" or LCE I don't know whether that is still in vogue. I filed my retirement papers soon after.

Q: Yes.

CRANDALL: Brian was upset saying LCEs were few and far between. I retired and took one of the outside offers.

Q: So when you decided to leave what was your rank at that point?

CRANDALL: Minister counselor. I couldn't make more money at career minister. The rank had become a bit hollow. I don't know if that has changed. I hope so. At this time, I received two unsolicited offers to join a consulting company as a Vice President and another to head an NGO. Cathy and I met with our financial planner who said I would be wise to take one of the offers. The combination of retirement and a new salary for a few years would make full retirement more comfortable. That is what I did though I was called back to service in 1994 for an assignment in Baghdad seconded to DoD. I won't talk about that here because I did another living history interview for State a few years ago that will be appended to this upon your advice.

I missed the retirement course. Cathy and I have long had a financial planner who had gotten us into pretty good financial shape. I didn't think missing the retirement course would be a great loss even though I heard good things about it. I had excess leave. I left the building in October 1997 but I did not go off the books until January of '98. I used my leave to start building the rock wall you see in the back yard. We call it the "Great Wall."

Q: Had you decided what you were going to do with the rest of your professional life?

CRANDALL: Once you make the decision to retire word starts to float around and things begin to happen. I took the offer as Vice President of a consulting company and turned down the presidency of the NGO. Other offers came too late to consider. The company was RONCO which had worked for me on two occasions—Pakistan and Haiti. They learned demining and battle field clearance in our cross border program and turned it into a lucrative business with State, DoD, the World Bank and the UN. Because I understood these subjects, RONCO thought I could be useful.

Q: Was that Larry Saiers?

CRANDALL: Larry was also a vice president but my conversations were with the President of the company, Steve Edelman. I got RONCO into the Demining business in Afghanistan. They parlayed that experience into contracts with State, DOD and the World Bank for both demining and battle field clearance.. The deal was that I would stay for five years. I stayed six years and they sold the company to a British firm soon after. I travelled to many countries on company business and learned a good bit about the value of bottom lines.

At the point I left RONCO, Fred Schieck the Deputy AID Administrator called and asked me to come back into the fold. AID had a mission in Iraq but DoD had the lion's share of the money with an \$18.2 billion appropriation to do reconstruction. Of course, there was no back stop for such an undertaking at the Pentagon. DOD put a retired rear admiral at the head of the office. It was called PMO or the Project Management Office. He had been a deputy office head elsewhere in the Palace when the head of the CPA, Jerry Bremer was looking for volunteers to head PMO. As explained to me, DoD realized very quickly that the admiral was at sea. At any rate, AID was tasked with getting him a deputy who knew reconstruction. Fred called me. I told Fred and Andrew Natsios that it didn't look like a healthy working environment working for someone who will resent my presence from the first day I. They pressured me even and though I equivocated for a while I did say yes. I had to get my security clearances freshened up and all that. I went to Baghdad paid by AID but working for the DoD. I visited the DoD backstop and found it to be weakly staffed for an \$18 billion budget. Refreshingly, the office director knew it. As an aside, I had been to Iraq a few months before on a DOD contract. This was to make recommendations for a program to demilitarize Saddam Hussein's security services. For this, I headed a team of former military officers with relevant experience. Our recommendations were well received by our DOD handlers.

I show up on the very first day and the Admiral was very resentful of my presence even though he didn't know me. There was a second part time deputy who was a two-star Corps of Engineers general. The Admiral was equally resentful of him. The Admiral apparently felt like we were both there to spy on him. This was not true for either one of us. The two deputies became buddies and the Admiral became our nemesis. It was a difficult time.

After one year at post, Bremer was leaving and was being replaced by John Negroponte who would be Chief of Mission and not head of the CPA. State was to take over PMO from DoD. At that time Rich Armitage was the Deputy Secretary of State. He visits on a TDY and comes to see the PMO. We knew each other from previous encounters and we were friendly though not friends. The Admiral took that as a bad sign for him. It became clear that State was not going to be a good agency to oversee PMO. It was no better equipped than DoD from a backstopping point of view. My six months tour was coming to an end so I informed the next visitor, Robin Raphel, that I would be leaving. Robin was on the State Iraq desk at the time. I had worked for her previous and now deceased ex-husband Arnie Raphel in Pakistan. He was killed there with President Zia.

I told Robin what I thought of the transition between DOD and State, hoping to make a few useful suggestions. But I emphasized it didn't look like a healthy atmosphere because of the current top management. I emphasized that PMO had awarded "no compete" billion-dollar contracts to firms that were under no pressure to field strong teams. I won't mention the contractors because they are still in the business of seeking government favors. At any rate, none of those contractors put their best foot forward in terms of personnel or field efforts. Of course, there were severe security problems in some places that impeded progress. I left at the end of my six months tour and then learned that the contract that I had done at the beginning of the war for DOD had made me a hot commodity for independent consulting on Iraq. I had no idea that was going to happen. I was the team leader ably assisted by retired Army colonel Mike Bailey and some special forces guys. Our task was to design a DDR program for Saddam's security forces.

Q: DDR?

CRANDALL: DDR is Demilitarization, Demobilization and Re-integration of armed forces into civil society. DoD wanted to neutralize Saddam's security forces and build a new Iraqi army under USG tutelage. DoD wanted to neutralize them politically. There are a lot of different ways of doing this of which I was familiar because of previous DDR planning experience in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Haiti. For the latter, AID funded a DDR program to retrain Haitian army officers who were demobilized. One DoD officer was aware of the successful Haiti program and asked me and Mike to formulate a program for Iraq. We made a solid set of suggestions that were well received. Unfortunately, politics reared its unattractive head.

Jerry Bremer became the new head of the CPA at the exact time we made our report. His part time civilian military advisor was Walt Slocombe, a onetime DoD official and DC tax lawyer by trade. The two decided that giving assistance to Saddam's former security

forces for DDR purposes was not going to happen. Their thinking was that Saddam's military lost and we weren't going to do anything for them. Our DoD handlers were shocked but Bremer had White House backing. Our handlers argued that Bremer and Slocombe needed to look at experience elsewhere and listen to the guys with experience. They were not interested in a briefing from us.

A contract was in front of the DoD contract officer for \$120 million to get the program started. Twenty minutes from signature, Bremer and Slocombe ordered the contract null and void. Everybody was rolling eyes and saying unrepeatable things. The White House endorsed Bremer and that was the end of it. Everything we and our handlers predicted would happen did happen and more. The Iraqi Army was abandoned and started to rebel violently. Everybody knows that story. The Army still had unit integrity. They still had weapons. They still had leadership. They still had transportation and they could do a lot of damage and they did. They created havoc for the U.S. Government.

If we would have subjected the Army to DDR along with other security units we would have been able to mitigate a good bit of that damage.

But, there were DoD people who knew our work and thought a major mistake was made. In 2006, one of those officers was working for State in Iraq and convinced his bosses that the USG should try to resuscitate our recommendations. By then, Jerry Bremer and Walt Slocombe were gone. I told them it was too late. The horses (the Iraqi Army) are out of the barn now bolstered by various unfriendly militias plus al Qaeda. The insurgents were running wild. I argued that we only had one chance at DDR and that was at the very beginning. State insisted and by this time, the US Army had set up a DDR study office in the Palace. I went out for a few weeks with AID officer Sharon Isralow who had DDR experience in several settings. Zalmay Khalilzad was the Ambassador.

Q: Khalilzad?

CRANDALL: Yes. Zal was the ambassador and I knew him a bit from his time in State Policy Planning Office. He visited Pakistan and I briefed him on the War. He was skeptical of a renewed DDR effort. I was skeptical like him. I thought it was way too late. At that point security was so bad that it was impossible for Sharon and I to go anywhere outside the green zone. That is how bad it was in 2006.

Sharon and I worked closely with the Army DDR unit. At the end of our stay, we were asked to brief General Casey, the resident four star. He later became the Army Chief of Staff after he was head of operations in Iraq. Our one star handler comes to me and says he has read our recommendations but here is what the general wants to hear. I said, "Excuse me?" Handing me a memo he said this is what the general wants to hear from you because this is what he has already told the Pentagon he wants to do. "I replied that we are more than happy to brief him on our report but we are not interested in briefing him on his report. He said that is not the way things work to which I replied then there is no briefing from us. I am going to re-do my travel arrangements and I am leaving as soon as possible. He said it would be a disaster if you don't brief him. Casey can send the

Pentagon anything he wants. But I will not brief him on his recommendations which would allow him to say we agree. “No, that is not going to happen.”

We worked it out with one more difficulty. The General did not want Sharon (whom he had not met) to attend the briefing. Again, I said the briefing is off. Sharon said Casey is not worth her time and gave me license to go alone. Surrounded by his senior officers Casey said well that is not my understanding to several recommendations to which I replied that is what experience in several different countries suggests are best practices. That is how I answered most of Casey’s dislikes. He said, but that is not what I want. “General, it is not about what any specific individual wants,” which is never what a four star wants to hear. It is about what experience says is reasonable to do under given circumstances.” He wasn’t having any of that. We kept the meeting short and all shook hands. We returned to DC and briefed our State handlers. They were so insistent that I keep the DDR idea alive that they extended my contract and gave me an office in the State Department. We told them the politics on the ground were all wrong with a complicated insurgency we barely understood and a 4 Star who has untutored DDR ideas. I went to my office once or twice a week.

Q: For that you had to wear a suit and tie.

CRANDALL: Yes, and I was wasting my time and taxpayer’s money. I suggested we shut my contract down. I was told there was plenty of money, and they needed to keep it going. I suspect State was trying to stick it to DoD and I was at least one of their instruments for doing that. I went to a number of DDR meetings with State and others. These were inter-agency meetings, DOD-State, Langley folks. Somebody from NSC was usually there but as best I could tell, Casey’s interests were not represented. We debated the feasibility of DDR from different angles but it wasn’t going to happen. The field situation was too bad. It was a chaotic Country at that time and there was no way we could cut into that with a political program like DDR.

Q: That was your last trip to Iraq.

CRANDALL: That was my last trip to Iraq. I had offers from contractors to work there as a chief of party but I said no.

Q: And some of this was covered in the interview you did with State.

CRANDALL: It is and will be added to the end of this interview Because of my three deployments to Iraq, I was known to a number of involved people in Washington. On one occasion I was called by a friend working at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank. He was a Rhodes scholar and very capable guy.. He explained AEI had been asked by the White House to draft the political and military rationale for the coming military surge in Iraq. President Bush wanted to deploy more troops. Apparently, he didn’t have full confidence in his own White House staff to put this together because his own people were too involved. AEI thought at least one non-conservative was needed on the drafting team. They asked me to help even though I told

them I was not one of them. I was told they needed somebody like me to make it look legit because everybody who participates would have their name on the report. There were many meetings at AEI to debate what might or might not go into the rationale. Different pieces were drafted by different people. Through different iterations it came together in a form that seemed acceptable to the Bush administration. The AEI document was used as a source document for talking points, briefings and the like. It was interesting to participate in the intersection of Administration and AEI thinking on Iraq. I didn't buy all the thinking but I benefitted from the experience.

A final thought on Iraq. Secretary of State Tillerson is asking the donor community and private sector to join the US in rebuilding Iraq. I wonder if he is aware that this tried once before by the USG starting in earnest in 2004. For a short while, I was a part of the \$18 billion effort and sad to say it didn't work. By 2006 for a number of reasons the Country was in turmoil. I wonder if the Secretary has looked at that experience and asked for lessons learned. I suspect I know the answer.

Q: Interesting. What kind of things did you do for the RAND Corporation?

CRANDALL: The first significant effort was called "Counterinsurgency: the challenge for NATO Strategy and Operations." I was one of three contributors to chapter eleven on "Fixing Foreign Assistance for Counterinsurgency." There was no breakthrough thinking here primarily because of Congressional lack of interest and/or Administration involvement. Still, it was useful to NATO and later involved phone calls from NATO seeking to recruit me. For a number of reasons, that didn't happen.

I also participated in several RAND organized seminars on Afghanistan and Iraq. I contributed to a RAND political strategy for SOCOM though I told my colleagues I didn't think the Special Forces needed a political strategy separate from others. While I did not accept the field job offer from the First Infantry Division initiated by RAND, I did counsel the G-2 and staff on politics in Afghanistan. Because of their intel mission, they were more focused on specific Taliban operatives for obvious reasons—to eliminate them. More recently, I was contacted by RAND to help them with a long-term hurricane reconstruction study for Puerto Rico. This is still in its infancy. I think I have left something out but you get the idea. RAND does a lot of brainstorming for different clients. On one occasion, we did something for the ODNI that crashed because of a head strong former RAND fellow behind the effort.

Q: Would you tell the audience what ODNI is?

CRANDALL: Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Q: Have you stopped consulting?.

CRANDALL: As I mentioned, I have been asked to help on Puerto Rico. I haven't called anybody and I am not going to call anybody. I recently, turned down an offer by the Center for Strategic and International Studies to participate in a forum on the CORDS

program in Vietnam. I didn't like some of the faulty suppositions coming from certain participants. I declined the offer.

Q: Dare I ask you what your age is right now?

CRANDALL: 75. Don't you think that is a good time to shut it down?

Q: I think that is just fine. I am really glad you did this. Any sort of looking back in terms of the AID side, I don't know if you run into young people when you are speaking or doing research. What do you say when they tell you I am interested in maybe joining the foreign service or AID or some other organization. What would you tell them these days.

CRANDALL: Can I illustrate it with an example?

Q: That is the best way to do it.

CRANDALL: Maybe 18 months ago Cathy and I were in a shop in Falls Church called Bedazzled. They sell beads. We had some very old beads we had bought in Pakistan. They had not been properly strung. We wanted to make them presentable and give one each to our daughters. While there our wait staffer was a young woman who overheard a snippet between Cathy and I about Pakistan. She could tell we were overseas people. She asked if we travel a lot? We explained that I was retired foreign service, She had applied to both AID and State but her applications were new. I answered a few questions and told her the bureaucracy is not always as responsive as it should be. She hinted that she had a slight preference for State. I told her I know a guy who knows a lot about the State personnel system. He is the former President of the American Foreign Service Association and current AFSA Board member. He is Tex Harris an old friend. She gave me her contact information and they ended up chatting on the phone at some length. I have done similar things for friends of our daughters and the husband of one of Cathy's nieces who just returned from living in Shanghai for two years. Others who have contacted me on their PhD dissertations and book writing have asked about the foreign service and I have counseled them all to give it a go.

Q: It sounds like you say that you love doing it and it is a good business. That you are positive about it.

CRANDALL: I have always felt that counseling young folks is something I should do.

Q: Well thank you very much Larry, and we are going to cut off this interview.

CRANDALL: Six hours is probably too much for most folks to stand. I have given most if not all subjects a cursory treatment. If anyone is interested I can expand separately.

ADDENDUM

IRAQ REVISITED—US INSTITUTE FOR PEACE INTERVIEW

Interviewer: Former Ambassador Robin Raphel and Larry Plotkin

“Retired USAID officer Larry Crandall pulled three tours in Iraq. Crandall experienced a foreign-service career in which he garnered extensive expertise on war and civil conflict. His experience includes work in Vietnam, Haiti, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries. For the first assignment (two months in 2003) encompassing the more kinetic part of the war, he and a colleague prepared plans for the demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration (“DDR”) of Saddam’s security forces and those of the anti-Saddam militias. This work was done under a CENTCOM (DoD Central Command) contract. He stated that the occupation led by Ambassador Jerry Bremer essentially ignored the DDR plan until it was too late for effective implementation. Bremer lacked the experience to understand the political aspects of demilitarization, though “he was not without hubris.” Also, Bremer had no knowledge of DDR and its uses in other conflicts. This resulted in none of the essential recommendations being undertaken at the same time it was decided to isolate and abandon the security forces as well as members of the Baath Party. The security forces were simply fired while the Baathists were both fired (when they worked for the Government) or isolated by forbidding them to work for the new Government.

In 2006, when the State Department replaced the Department of Defense as the lead agency, Crandall was asked to return to Iraq for the third time to reprise the earlier DDR plan and make recommendations for immediate implementation. Unfortunately, by this time the insulted security forces and Baathists were in armed revolt. For the second tour, he was called back into the foreign-service for six months in 2004 and was seconded to the Department of Defense. The comments which follow focus on the second tour.

Mr. Crandall expressed several reservations with the reconstruction effort. He notes a lack of proper planning and inadequate implementation of existing plans. The latter was largely due to wide spread inexperience with the Coalition Provisional Authority staff. Crandall also witnessed planning problems as the prime deputy involved with the \$18 billion reconstruction program. He found that there was no policy directing the use of the funds and that those political appointees responsible lacked the experience necessary for effective policy making and implementation. This combination led to disconnects between appropriate quick- start projects and longer-term projects. Crandall raised other issues, including the level of corruption among the Iraqis, the error of the total exclusion of Baathists from the reform process, the reactive (rather than proactive) operational mode of the public affairs (StratCom) office, and the difficulty of recruiting the best officers to serve in Iraq due to security and career concerns. Security concerns have also damaged the ability to use development funds to carry out projects in Iraq”.

This quote is from the summary of a “living history” interview with me conducted by the United States Institute for Peace, Iraq Experience Project. It was held on September 20, 2004 at our Mc Lean home and lasted a full afternoon. Larry Plotkin

and Ambassador Robin Raphel took the inter- view for USIP. Robin is the former wife of Ambassador Arnie Raphel who was killed in Pakistan along with President Zia and others in a mysterious plane crash while I served there. Please see Book Three.

As noted earlier, I will extensively draw from the interview with appropriate edits rather than describe in detail my three stints there. The interview adequately sums up my thoughts in 2004 which haven't changed much over the years.

Q: . . . September 20th, 2004. My name is Larry Plotkin, and I'm interviewing Larry Crandall as part of the United States Institute of Peace Iraq Experience Project being conducted by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Good morning, Mr. Crandall. First, let me ask you the basic information: your name, area of specialty, age, education, employer, professional background, Iraq assignment, those kinds of things, just a few minutes of how you got here.

CRANDALL: I'm Larry Crandall. My last assignment in Iraq was as the number two in the \$18,000,000,000 reconstruction program then called the Program Management Office. After the CPA left the scene and the Embassy was set up under the State Department, (it later became] the Army Contracting Office, but anyway, it was the reconstruction program for Iraq. Prior to that I was the vice president of a consulting company for six years, and prior to that I was the mission director in Haiti during the turmoil of '94 to '97. Other overseas assignments include Pakistan. During the period that the Soviets were in Afghanistan, I managed a program to help defeat the Soviets. I've served in other conflict areas as well including Afghanistan. So in a sense that's who I am. I've focused throughout much of my Foreign Service career on wars and civil conflicts so that's why I was asked by the Administration to go to Iraq on two occasions: once by the Army to do a study at the outset of the war on how to demobilize and demilitarize the former Saddam forces and spent two months out there. Subsequent to that, I was asked to help manage the reconstruction program, so I did that for nearly six months. At any rate, that in a condensed form is who I am and what I've done.

Q: The two months you spent working with the Army were immediately after the end of the initial conflict?

CRANDALL: It was before, during and after. You might recall the conflict lasted about six weeks, the actual heated or kinetic part of it. I went out there before the first shots were fired. I was based out of Kuwait City but moved back and forth across the border under heavily armed guard. I did that with a retired Army colleague who was also experienced in what the academics call DDR or demilitarization, demobilization and the reintegration of armed forces. We went out there for a two-month period to make a series of recommendations on how the U.S. government might go about neutralizing the armed forces in a political sense. The invasion was to take care of the kinetics.

Q: When you left, what was the status of that project?

CRANDALL: When we left Kuwait City after two months, we departed thinking the U.S. Army was going to spend a large amount of money in a contracted sense to implement many of the recommendations that we had made. At that same time, Jay Garner, the first head of the reconstruction program, retired three-star general, Jay Garner, was relieved of his duties by the White House. A new [head] was brought in, Jerry Bremer. While Garner had a good appreciation for all the recommendations in the report and why they should be undertaken, it was something that Bremer was not familiar with. He balked at it and, therefore, the White House balked at it. So, none of our recommendations were undertaken. Mind you, those recommendations related not only to the formal security forces under Saddam, but also to the militias like the Badr Brigade, SCIRI and what not. Some months later, the Administration realized that a very serious mistake had been made, and that's why the Rand Corporation was invited to go back over the same ground to try to fix the whole thing. I was asked by RAND to head the effort—unfortunately, at a very late date. By this time, the militias and other forces were getting increasingly well-organized against the U.S. Our recommendations were not undertaken even after six additional months of trying to find a path. Basically, it was too late at that point.

Q: What were the dates of your subsequent assignment on reconstruction?

CRANDALL: On the reconstruction side from January to June of this year.

Q: I can see you've just been back for a couple of months. Well, let me get on to the first of the programmed questions then, and we'll see where that takes us. Describe the nature and status of the economy in the area where you worked.

CRANDALL: The \$18,000,000,000 reconstruction program was meant to help revitalize the entire country. What I found when I first got there was obviously a state of enormously widespread decay. It was obvious to me and just about everybody else that Saddam had neglected the infrastructure of the Country, and what he had not neglected we had helped either run down or destroy during our two events out there, Desert Storm and more recently. So the Country was running on nearly empty economic fumes. What I saw was essentially a Country with great potential wealth but with all the earmarks of a Third World country. That's what I saw, and that's what people continue to see out there every day.

Q: You mentioned the reconstruction fund. What mechanisms did you have to tap into those funds and use those funds?

CRANDALL: The Pentagon established the Program Management Office (PMO) to manage that \$18,000,000,000. They staffed it at the senior level initially with only active duty or former military officers, and none of these individuals had any experience anywhere with reconstruction. After some months, it was realized that there was little or no experience with the office, so they looked around for a former senior officer, who happened to be me. I was asked to go out and lend a hand helping

PMO understand the complexities of what they were getting into. It wasn't just a matter of fixing a road or fixing an electric plant, refilling stores or fixing schools; it was a matter of turning the sort of political connective tissue that was offered by the Iraqis to make those many activities politically meaningful. That's what I was asked to do.

Q: What kind of Iraqi participation was there, and how did it develop?

CRANDALL: Weak to poor, the Coalition Provisional Authority, weak to poor and many missing links.

Q: Do you want to define weak to poor?

CRANDALL: The contacts we had with the Iraqi government were ones that were pre-determined by the Administration before the conflict began—that is, they were friends of the Administration who were representatives of various political groups, Chalabi being the most well known in an American public sense. It's not as though there was any specific criteria, except, perhaps, for the ability to speak English. But many of these people were not well connected with either regional or local communities in Iraq. They were Baghdadis who, in a majority of the cases, couldn't speak authoritatively to what was going on around the Country. They were cosmopolitan in some cases, not all, but not well informed in an Iraqi street sense. It is in that sense that it was weak to poor to nonexistent. It was hard to find in the interim government, at least in my experience, highly informed, politically sensitive folks.

They just basically did not exist. The Administration obviously painted a very different picture than what I'm painting, but these people were—and I think this is now increasingly better understood—not highly representative of the street.

Q: In the course of your time there, was there significant change in the people from the Iraq side who were participating in the process?

CRANDALL: Well, there were changes, but if you mean significant in the sense that they were better, that is, they were better informed, better connected, better representative of general Iraqi interests around the Country, the answer would have to be “generally no.” There was a new slate that was brought in to represent Allawi and his government, which is the group in power now, but that's not to say that they were terribly different from the first group. I think the increased violence, the lack of ability of Allawi and his government to really connect other than with Baghdad is quite evident by what is occurring now.

Q: When you arrived, did you arrive to find a coherent development plan of any kind?

CRANDALL: There was no plan. The first time I became aware that there was no plan was in January of this year when I went over to the Pentagon for discussions about my first assignment for the DDR study. I went into Jay Garner's office—this was before

he actually left for Kuwait—and on one wall of a large meeting room in Garner’s suite of offices was maybe 20 or 25 eight-by-11 pieces of paper pasted to the wall with economics 101 representations of what you would have to do to address each and every economic concern, around the Country. I looked at my colleague and said, “Hmmm,” and started asking questions of the staff who were responsible for those pieces of paper on the wall.

Then we began to think these people really didn’t get it. That was a small representation of the whole staff, to be sure. Then, when we went out to Kuwait (by this time Garner’s staff had been deployed to the Kuwait Hilton) I had a chance to meet many of them. By then, we were convinced that these people did not possess anything like a plan. So after the kinetic part of the war was over, Garner and his staff moved to Baghdad to the Republican Palace where the Embassy is now located. In the absence of a plan everybody was running around doing what they felt was the right without any tactical or strategic connective tissue. It just wasn’t there.

Q: Which pretty much answers the next question I was going to ask, which is how the quick-start projects meshed with the longer-term issues, and what you say is that there was no mesh.

CRANDALL: They didn’t. To the extent that there was a mesh, it was created in the minds of the speech writers, that is, the people who wrote the speeches for Jerry Bremer, or in his own mind if he wrote his own speeches. Other senior members of the staff made representations about what was going on out there. But in my own view, those representations did not, for the most part, represent reality; they represented make-believe. You couldn’t find a strategy document worthy of the name. You couldn’t find a policy statement that connected all of these things. You could not find a single individual in the senior CPA staff who could articulate what the vision was all about, because it did not exist. Like me, there were people who complained about this shortcoming.

Q: Some of the elements, I think, at least in the United States that were talked about a lot in terms of the process were presumably part of some of the quick-start if not meshed. Let me ask you about a couple of those, for example, de-Baathification. Was that something that was going on in any significant way and in a successful way?

CRANDALL: In the eyes of the Iraqi who was initially put in charge of it, Ahmad Chalabi, I’m sure he felt that he was having some success keeping former or current members of the Baath Party from participating in any way, shape or form in current government affairs. But we all have to remember that the Baath Party represented a large part of the intelligentsia of the Country, a large part of the technocrats of the Country. For over a generation, if you did not participate in some fashion in that party, you could not do anything successful to support yourself and your family. So by undertaking the policy that the Administration did at the outset in putting someone like Chalabi in charge of de-Baathification, we basically removed any real capabilities for managing the economy. By keeping all the Baathists out as a matter of USG policy, we

alienated the vast majority of them, perhaps forever. Now, mind you, there was a great deal of controversy about de-Baathification within the CPA. The Brits, with a lot more colonial experience than we have, understood the folly of that policy and argued vociferously, though privately, that it ought to be changed. It took months of effort on the part of their diplomats and their senior military officers, to get Bremer to change his mind, but eventually he did and then some Baathists were allowed to participate. I can't think of very many successes; in fact, none come to mind as successful undertakings. There may be some, but I can't think of them.

Q: It's interesting because, having served in Central Europe, there were a lot of us on the American side who understood the necessity of not eliminating everybody who had been a Communist Party member from participation in the new governments, and for the very reasons that you mentioned—an analogy that obviously people weren't tuned in to. What about the subject of sabotage and corruption?

CRANDALL: Corruption was the life-blood of Iraq and has been what has always made things work. That hasn't changed very much in my observation, and I don't think it will anytime soon. There are so few economic opportunities in the Country, even since the fall of Saddam, that if you don't participate in the old ways of doing business, that is, what we would term the corrupt ways of doing business, then basically you're disallowing yourself any significant opportunity at supporting yourself and your family. So, you have to do these things. Everybody of my acquaintance out there—not to say everybody, but everybody of my acquaintance—was either known to be participating in some form of corruption or was suspected of doing so even if the evidence was not immediately at hand.

Q: Should I clarify that and say “every Iraqi bureaucrat”?

CRANDALL: Of course, there are other stories in the newspaper about others, but, yes, let's just say Iraqis.

Q: If we go back to the pre-war period, one of the [programs] of interest to this survey of people who served there has to do with the UN Oil For Food Program. I don't know how much you may be familiar with it other than what's in the public domain.

CRANDALL: I did not participate operationally or in a supervisory sense in that program, so I claim no specific insights nor personal insights. I did have the opportunity to talk to people who did participate, however, be they UN or others, and I can assure you that everybody that I spoke with felt that there was extraordinary corruption in that program. As I was leaving, there was some concern expressed by a couple of people that the Administration was sort of dragging its heels on allowing an inspector general view of that program to go forth at a pace that would allow any outcome before our national election. Whether that was just self-serving or not, I don't know. I just offer that for what it's worth. I don't know whether it's accurate or not.

Q: Were you able to determine the impact of the end of that program, the economy in

Iraq?

CRANDALL: Well, it created an extraordinary amount of dependency on the part of Iraqis for “welfarism”, and that is so this day. When you have an extraordinary amount of welfare induced from the outside, in this case by the Oil For Food Program, it’s not something you do away with overnight, as we have learned in our own Country when we try to do away with various forms of welfare. If you do it overnight, you create a lot of political headaches for yourself. You have to do it slowly and gradually and with a great deal of care and close supervision. So that’s basically what’s going to have happen in Iraq There still is—I can’t say “we” anymore because I’m not directly involved—a great deal of need to provide for the basic needs of large segments of the population. They can’t do it for themselves.

Q: I assume that the major source of income for the Country in terms of what it generates itself is oil. What has been the impact, at least in the time that you were there, of the various attempts to sabotage the oil production delivery system?

CRANDALL: Two things were going on simultaneously in the first half of the year that I was out there. There were attempts on the part of both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to either repair or upgrade various parts of the oil infrastructure and, of course, there were constant attempts on the part of various insurgent groups to either destroy what the Coalition was doing or destroy what it wasn’t doing, that is, other parts of the infrastructure not being focused on by the Administration or the Coalition but which represented easy targets. The pipelines, long pipelines, were notoriously hard to police and secure. We see evidence of that difficulty almost every day in the newspapers when somebody decides to blow something up.

Q: You mentioned the welfarism, the welfare state that was created under the Oil For Food Program. Was there any program by the Coalition and the Iraqi part of the government to try to change the attitude, the passivity, of the people into more sort of aggressive economic activity?

CRANDALL: The \$18,000,000,000 reconstruction program, which I was involved with, meant to do that. Under that program there were some 2,300 hoped-for projects, which would create enormous amounts of employment opportunities and economic stimulation around the country. Unfortunately, because of the very poor security conditions around the Country, it was very difficult, in many cases impossible, to initiate those projects because they were just too dangerous. You read something perhaps in the last few days in the newspapers where the Administration, under recommendations from Ambassador Negroponte, has redirected, three and a half billion to basic security matters in order to help create an improved environment whereby the remainder of the reconstruction money could successfully operate. My own view is that that three and a half billion is a day late and a billion short, that it’s probably not going to be very successful. I sincerely hope that I’m wrong. So much of the money in the security programs goes towards the care and feeding of the contractors who are meant to implement and or operate them. We’ve seen in the case

of the new Iraqi army, that they really aren't capable of functioning effectively if they're put up against any kind of even half-trained, half motivated insurgent force. They tend to cut tail and run; they're just not engaged at all. That's still the case. I see no change in that coming any time soon. There was an article in a newspaper just this morning, either the Washington Post or the New York Times, whichever, saying that the Administration is way behind in staffing the administrative structure of the new Iraqi army. While no mention was made of it, they're also many months behind the initial schedules for training.

Q: You, of course, obviously saw—it's been seen in the papers—the upswing in the kidnapping and taking of hostages in Iraq, which was obviously going on while you were there as well, and most recently the taking of these two Americans and one Brit from their home. What did you see while you were there, the impact of these kinds of events with the willingness and the ability of contractors in the reconstruction program to accomplish any of their goals?

CRANDALL: When I was in grade school in Denver, Colorado, I remember going through some exercises that were created by our fear of nuclear holocaust and they were referred to as “duck and cover,” when children were taught how to duck under their desks and then cover their heads. I went through that many, many times as a young boy in Denver, and I think that is the impact that we have seen of the rapidly deteriorating security situation and the kidnappings, beheadings and killings as well. Many contractors will find on an hourly, daily, weekly basis any excuse whatsoever to keep from leaving a secure zone, be it in the Green Zone or wherever, and in many cases these are legitimate reasons. In other cases they're not; they are afraid. They're not quite sure what they're afraid of on that given day or week or whatever, but they're afraid, so they just don't do it. They don't go out and make things happen. There are some exceptions. As I was leaving, what I saw was a rapid degradation of contractor ability to implement. One contractor, which was considered one of the Administration's most effective contractors in bringing local governance capabilities around the Country, had to reduce its personnel from the onset of the Fallujah fighting in March from 180 down to 90. Most of these people went to Kuwait, where they cooled their heels for about a month and then they were let go. The rest of them were concentrated in the four or five centers around the country, where in many cases they were in garrison and couldn't move around and do very much unless they were in the company of an American military unit that provided overwhelming fire support. So that contract is now close to being moribund. It just can't function very well.

Q: Is that typical of other analogous contracts?

CRANDALL: This is one of the earliest contracts. These people were out there at the beginning of the conflict. Other contractors were slow to follow, but, of course, there are many out there now. So there are different stages of maturation or degradation, depending upon the contract and the part of the country that that outfit is working in. In the Kurdish-controlled areas it tends to be relatively easier. In the Sunni Triangle, of course, it's highly problematic. In the south, in the Shiite-dominated parts of the

country, it's not as easy as working in the north, but it's easier than working in the Sunni Triangle depending on the day of the week and the place you happen to be.

Q: How to follow up on that one? The next question has to do again with the U.S. supplemental appropriations money, and we've talked a lot about that overall. What is the relative percentage of U.S. contractors being brought in, and what is the relative impact of U.S. contractors against others?

CRANDALL: The Administration decided early on in a memo signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, that all of the prime contracts would be awarded to only American firms—I should say the Coalition, the direct members of the Coalition. We all know that the only meaningful members of the Coalition are the U.S. and the Brits,

So that meant that only British and American companies could successfully bid on contracts. What we have out there now are 17 prime contractors. Two of them are British and the rest are Americans. The size of the contracts—in most cases they're \$1,000,000,000 or \$2,000,000,000 apiece. The size means that only large American business interests would be in a position to bid. This greatly concerned people who thought this was—and this was vocalized in many meetings—simply feeding the interests of the Republican Party. I have no evidence to support that. I can tell you that while I was there, I heard some contractors describe their own relationships to the Administration, and in some cases that bothered me a great deal. I thought those individuals were naive in expressing their contacts, but most of them were, shall we say, quite cheerful about describing their relationships to the Administration. I think that was due to the concern, justifiable concern, there may be about Halliburton and its subsidiary KBR.

Q: All of the contractors have the option of subcontracting to all of the others who were excluded by that memo. Was very much of that going on at the time?

CRANDALL: All of them were strongly encouraged to bring as many Coalition subcontractor partners into their bids as possible. We did see some of this, not very much, but we did see some. There was one instance where a UAE, United Arab Emirates, company was included as a sub. There was, I believe, a Jordanian, I believe a Dutch company—I'm trying to think of others. Those are the ones that come to mind. But I think their participation, at least at the time I left in June, was going to be relatively small. Obviously a large American company, like Fluor, for example....

Q: I'm sorry. Which one?

CRANDALL: Fluor, Fluor Daniels felt that it was very much in their interests, at least at the time I left, to maintain as much of the business for themselves as possible. All of the primes were also encouraged to bring into their bids, if not initially, at least subsequently, as many Iraqi subs as possible. The difficulty there, of course, is that there were very few genuine Iraqi firms who could bring much to the table for one of

these large American contracts. So what you got then were instances where the interim government players who saw these opportunities for themselves or their family or their friends or their cronies were very rapidly standing up various companies almost overnight. Then, they paraded them to the Coalition and/or the prime contractors as legitimate potential players for these prime contracts. So, again, I left in June and I can't be absolutely sure what has happened to each and every one of these, but we were quite concerned about the legitimacy of some Iraqi "firms" at the time I left.

Q: A lot of them were just front organizations?

CRANDALL: They seemed like front organizations, if not front organization for one of the political parties, then front organizations for single individuals or a specific family or whatever. I'm not aware of any case—which is not to say it didn't and doesn't exist. I'm not aware of any case where there was a front organization stood up to benefit, say, someone like Moqtada al-Sadr. I don't think that happened, but who knows. It could have.

Q: A person that just comes to mind: Was there any attempt in terms of the reconstruction effort to identify people within the religious institutions of Iraq with whom to cooperate?

CRANDALL: We had very little capability to understand what was going on within either Sunni or Shia religious institutions. We could identify personalities. I just mentioned one. Sistani (a religious leader) would be another. But that's not to say we understood the institution itself. I don't think we did understand the institutions very well. We might have had good bio-data on somebody like Sistani, but I don't think we really understood his organizational make-up very well. Certainly in the meetings that I attended and the discussions that I participated in, there was very little evidence of that. That's not to say there wasn't an individual here or there who may have had that understanding, but it never came to my attention.

Q: Which brings to mind another question. You mentioned at the beginning of our discussion the lack of appropriate expertise among the Pentagon people who were involved in reconstruction.

CRANDALL: Well motivated, but not highly experienced or not experienced at all. It would be like me trying to take over command of a tank division or something. I know something about management and supervision, but I don't know anything about tanks. In this case, the military people, retired or active duty, couldn't really understand the basics of reconstruction or economic development. They didn't know what to do.

Q: As the military backed off from that and as there was an increase in civilian personnel, either U.S. government or contract, did you see, however late in the day, a marked improvement in levels of appropriate expertise?

CRANDALL: No, what I saw in my months out there was great disdain evidenced by

the Pentagon, the Pentagon managers of the reconstruction money, for people who did have this kind of expertise. I was seconded to the Pentagon, so I was, in a sense, one of theirs even though I was not of their experience, if you will. Other organizations like AID, with good contractors (though certainly not all) were disdained if they started talking about these kinds of subjects in mixed civilian/DoD meetings. More often than not, these sessions were chaired by either active or retired military personnel. There was a lot of lip service for months and months and months which created a lot of disillusionment on the part of the individuals who were taking reconstruction seriously.

Q: When I talked to Terry (a RAND employee) about the DDR project, one of the things he felt was lacking in terms of the effectiveness of the work and goals being sought was the public diplomacy aspect of it. Why don't you take it from there?

CRANDALL: This was not my particular field of responsibility, but I did have the opportunity to witness public diplomacy such as it was. The office that had the primary responsibility for it in Baghdad within the CPA was the so-called StratCom, or the Strategic Communications Office. There were some 100 people assigned to that office including a number of extraordinarily junior members of the Administration who were political appointees. In my experience with those particular individuals, I could find no expertise, useful expertise, of any kind evidenced by anyone. That's not to say that there wasn't an individual I didn't meet and an expertise I did not uncover. However, that is my experience. There were a number of military people assigned to the office with, in most cases, good intentions. In some cases they were failed military officers or noncoms who had basically not done well in other assignments. But, perhaps most importantly, we have to remember—and this is borne out by facts and history—is that that office was always in a reactive mode. For example, they were always trying to explain why things weren't going well in Fallujah, or why things weren't going well in Najaf, or how it was that Sistani was so difficult for the Administration and unwilling to meet with Americans. They never had a plan of any substance. That office didn't have the vision, probably because it didn't have the right people in it, to fully undertake their responsibilities. I recall when it came time me to go I participated in a number of transition planning meetings to move from the CPA to the chief-of-mission operation. In this way, I had a chance to get better acquainted, with some of the StratCom leadership. I was awestruck by “insights” that they brought to the table, absolutely awestruck.

Q: Larry, you were just saying that you went out there with the best of intentions and highest of hopes.

CRANDALL: I went out there early last year at the outset of the war to do the DDR study for the Army. At that time, while I was concerned that the Administration had not shared much of the evidence about WMD (weapons of mass destruction) that it could use as its bedrock of legitimacy for taking on Saddam Hussein, I thought, well, they must know what they're talking about, and so I will do my best to be helpful. So I went and then I began to see how poorly staffed the civilian effort was, and how many

internal inconsistencies there were in that staff, and then I began to express mild concerns at the time. I had an opportunity to go back in the first part of this year for several months and sit in on a lot of meetings and read an awful lot of documents and travel around the country extensively, talk to Iraqis and participants in just about every member of our Coalition and hear their concerns. Obviously, I came to a very different point of view. I no longer support what the Administration used as its bedrock, and I no longer believe that we're doing the right thing, but that's another matter.

Q: There's a set of final follow-up questions, if you like, and one, I think, you've largely answered. What are the successes and failures of your mission out there?

CRANDALL: I would say that, in terms of successes, I was able to sensitize some members of the PMO (Project Management Office) staff, now called the ACO staff, in charge of the \$18,000,000,000 reconstruction, to the need to combine that political connective tissue between Iraqi concerns, wherever they may be around the country, and the activity that we meant to undertake. However, I was unsuccessful at convincing higher leadership that there was something important in what I had to say. So, I guess overall I was a failure in trying to bring my concerns to the table. I know it is still true that the reconstruction program has very little Iraqi participation. You hardly ever hear members of the Iraqi government talk about it in terms of their support for it, or their participation. They simply don't understand it very well. Therefore, they don't know what to say about it and they have very little opportunity to participate in it, because it's basically implemented through American contractors who have little, if any, contact with significant members of the Allawi administration or the previous interim government. So it is like an island unto itself, if you will, this program, and you don't hear any of the politicians complimenting, in anything other than the most general terms, the U.S. government or the Coalition for its provision of these projects. It's just a total separation of interests.

Q: There are, of course, still people packing their bags to go out to Iraq following the path that you took, more or less, and I guess the next question is: Who should they be, what should they anticipate, and what are their chances of having any success or impact on the situation?

CRANDALL: Who should they be in . . . ?

Q: In terms of their expertise, all of that sort of thing—not individual names, in other words.

CRANDALL: The State Department, for example, has very good intentions in trying to bring experienced, competent officers to a number of positions, but I am also aware that they're having difficulty attracting people to a number of these jobs, if only because of concern for their personal safety. I had an opportunity, of course, to talk to a lot of State officers and other U.S. government officers while I was out there, and every one of them told me either their own personal stories or other stories that they were doing everything possible to avoid assignments like this. Again, it has a lot to do

with security. In some cases individuals don't want to be involved with something they consider to be a failing, if not failed, policy, which rarely does anybody's career prospects any good, and so they avoid it. In my case, I was already retired and I was asked to come back to service, which I did, and I have no interest in efficiency reports and told them I would not read or sign any efficiency report. So, in my case it would be enough to go out, but for people who have many years ahead of them it can be quite a different matter. So I think recruiting has become rather problematic. As reported in the papers for the case of the CIA, when they had to relieve the first chief of station they had grave, grave difficulty finding a competent individual willing to go. It was finally resolved with somebody not from the DO (Directorate of Operations) but from the DI (Directorate of Intelligence) who had very little field experience and was essentially an analyst not an operative. That's not to say anything about this individual, but it says something about the experience in general of the USG effort in general. There are many other cases of that as well. Negroponte had not come by the time I left and, of course, he was widely experienced. The DCM had arrived before I departed. He was the former ambassador to Albania. I believe that was his first ambassadorial assignment, and you have to ask is it that the State Department made the ambassador to Albania the DCM in Iraq, our largest post, and they took the ambassador in one of our smaller, if not smallest, posts to become the DCM in one of our largest posts. I think it had something to do with recruitment, the difficulty of recruitment.

Q: Looking ahead, what do you see down the road? I know it's in some respects unfair to ask people to predict, but just in terms of your own view.

CRANDALL: My own personal view is a synthesis of my 30 years of overseas experience in the Foreign Service and eight months' direct field involvement in Iraq. It's also influenced by people I have spoken to since I've come back who both represent the reconstruction and economic development community, but also the political community including friends in the State Department, intelligence community and DoD. I've attended seminars here, most recently over at the War College at Fort McNair. I've done seminars where I've had a chance to listen to a lot of other people with different experiences. I guess where I come from today is that the war is lost. The Administration is not in a political position to say that the way I have said that, and won't say that because this is a national election year. It seems they will continue to have, since the NIE (National Intelligence Estimate) came out in July with three potential scenarios for Iraq, none of them very wholesome scenarios, all of them very worrisome ones, but when we compare those scenarios to the public statements of senior Administration officials about how things are going, you begin to wonder what's going on here. When I compare the NIE scenarios, to conversations I have had with knowledgeable people, be they in our Administration or the British administration or whatever, I find their statements, their concern about where we are today more in keeping with the NIE without exception. That's not to say there aren't other people I don't know about, but their concerns are more like the NIE than the Administration's. I cannot reconcile Administration statements about how things are going with anything that I experienced. I simply can't do it. It's almost as though the Administration is talking about a country that I've never visited. It's just that simple.

Q: Any other final wrap-up thoughts? I don't suppose there's anything that you can really follow that with.

CRANDALL: Well, I'm not sure how your study is going to be used, and I certainly have no knowledge at all of what other people may have said whom you're interviewing, but I hope that the information you glean from people like me, hopefully others with greater insights than me, can all be sort of wrapped up in a way that can be useful, if not influential with respect to policymaking. These things have no real value unless they can find their way into policy thinking, and that's always a bit of a trick and an art form, I know, but it's something that needs to be done. In my own case, what I've tried to do is talk to friends and neighbors and colleagues at every opportunity about my experience and to try to influence them not to think as I do but at least to open their horizons beyond the ideologies that are represented by the Democratic or Republican candidates when they make their speeches. So that's what I'm doing and will continue to do. A lot of it has been on the Internet, some on the phone, some in the living room, at cocktail parties, the usual stuff.

Q: We hope this will have some impact, if not on the immediate problems in Iraq, at least in some future way. You never know with these kinds of things.

CRANDALL: I would add that, while I may have seemed negative, I'm not normally not seen as such. Obviously, I have some very deep concerns about our policy in Iraq. I would go back there and serve again, either in a public or a private way, if I thought the policy was going to be permissive, that is, if I thought we were going to make some adjustments, some significant ones, not apologies or excuses or delay tactics. I would only go if I thought there was going to be significant changes. But in the absence of that, I prefer to stay uninvolved but try to inform and influence people.

End of interview