

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

**CAROL R. KALIN**

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy*  
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## INTERVIEW

*Q: Today is November 10, 2014, with Carol R. Kalin. What's the "R" stand for?*

KALIN: Renee.

*Q: Renee. Ah ha. Alright. Carol, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?*

KALIN: I was born July 16, 1959 in Kansas City, Missouri.

*Q: Nineteen fifty-nine. Huh, you and my wife were born in the same city.*

KALIN: Well.

*Q: Let's look at the Kalin family first. Where do they come from; what do you know about them? And you can go way back.*

KALIN: OK. Kalin is a Swiss/German name. My grandfather came from Switzerland in 1921. He lost that "umlaut" on the name at Ellis Island. Some of my family in the United

States spell the name K-A-E-L-I-N but most spell it K-A-L-I-N. My grandfather was among the younger members of a family that included a dozen children. Now, Switzerland at the time, unlike today, was a relatively poor country so, you know, grandfather, around his early 20s decided to try his luck in the new country. So he bought a package deal from his village in Kanton Schwyz, from which the name Switzerland derives, and got on a boat in France at Le Havre and came across to New York City. He was given a box lunch that included a banana, something he'd never seen before. And got on a train to Missouri, where some acquaintances had already landed. So he spent his 20s working for other people in kind of a bonded labor situation.

*Q: What do you know about, what were the Kalins doing back in Switzerland?*

KALIN: The Kalins were farmers, mostly, but there is a town called Einsiedeln in Central Switzerland that, where every other person is named Kalin. There's the Kalin bicycle shop, the Kalin butcher shop, the Kalin candle shop, etc., etc., and Einsiedeln is the site of a rather ancient monastery. So it's well known in Switzerland. In fact, some of my relatives went to school at that monastery over the years.

My grandmother also was a new immigrant. She came with her family in about 1903. Her name was Rose Rutschman and I think her family was a bit more prosperous than my grandfather's family. Her father had been the mayor of a small town on the German border and came with his large family of 12 or so. My grandmother was the youngest, she was a twin and the youngest, so they also established themselves in Faucett, Missouri, near St. Joseph.

*Q: Missouri seems so unlikely. Do you know what brought them there?*

KALIN: Agriculture essentially. You know, they were dairy farmers. You know, John Kalin and Rose, his wife, once they had, once my grandfather had worked for others on farms, you know, for many years, he was able to save enough to buy his own farm around the time he was about 30 and he married my grandmother, who was about 20-something at the time. And so they started out and they ultimately ended up with a dairy farm and six children of their own. And there was a fairly significant Swiss community that they integrated in around this area. There was a Swiss lodge, you know, they went on Saturday nights and sang Swiss songs and so on and so forth.

*Q: I assume they were Catholic.*

KALIN: They were but they weren't particularly practicing Catholics. My father said at his father's funeral, my grandfather's funeral that if my grandfather had known there was a rosary wrapped around his hand he might have thrown it across the room. So my father and his four, well they were four brothers and, he had four brothers and one sister; they were raised in the community more so than in the Catholic Church. They attended a Protestant church from time to time, as did my mother's family. But it was a rural environment so there was more community than religion, I think, in their lives, although

religion later played an important part in my own life and the life of my nuclear family. So.

*Q: You say nuclear family. Was it of a particular, was it Republican, Democrat or something like that?*

KALIN: No, but my father, the second of the six children, was the first one in his family, in his immigrant family to attend college. My mother was the second of four children in an all American kind of family. Her name was Eleanor Jean Mears of the Mears family and the Linboldt family. That's my grandmothers name, you know. They had been in America for many, many years, decades, hundreds, if not a hundred years. So they were folks who came from Europe early on, English, Irish and French and gradually worked their way across the country from Virginia to Kentucky out to Missouri as the generations passed and there was a need for more land and so on and so forth. You know, they do had lived in the area for a period of time and had very large families so there was a very big sort of integration there.

Anyway, at any rate my mother, being the second of the four children in her family, my father the second of six, you know, moved to the "big city," right? So my father got his degree in engineering from University of Missouri at Rolla, a school of mines, still a very famous engineering school. They had been sort of high school sweethearts in this small town, you know, Faucett High School. My mother was a cheerleader, my dad was the basketball star. At 5-11, you know, he was well placed for basketball at that time, at any rate -

*Q: Oh, absolutely.*

KALIN: -on a local team. And so, they were high school sweethearts. My mother was very intelligent and could have gone to college but at that time that was not the goal. So she and my father married when she was 18, he was 21. He was finishing his college degree and she worked as a secretary to support him. And, you know, he got an offer with a local Kansas City firm, Black and Veatch, Consulting Engineers. It was a well-established concern by that time, founded, I guess in the '20s. That's where he stayed for 41 years, working his way up to managing partner of that firm and doing international work, building power plants in China and Australia and so on.

*Q: What type of work, basically, was this?*

KALIN: My father was a mechanical engineer. So in the early days of his career I remember him taking me downtown to Kansas City Power and Light and he would show me the boilers and the steam engines and explain how the power plant was constructed and tell me that it would light up the whole city. And in fact at the top of this skyscraper on the Kansas City skyline there was a cap that my father's design helped light every night so it was exciting. And, you know, he lived for a time too in Holland, Michigan, where my father was sent as a young engineer to work on power plants there and expand industry and right on Lake Michigan. And then he was sent to Peoria, Illinois, to work at

the Pabst Brewery power plant for a while. My mother and my sister and brother who came a few years after me, we lived in the same house growing up, a little cottage something like this in a way.

*Q: Was this in Holland?*

KALIN: This was in Kansas City. In Holland, Michigan, we lived in a little house. I don't have memories of this but there were lots of slides taken and so this little pilot house right on the lake. My parents were young people in the '60s, with a good job and a fun family to support.

*Q: Well I take it that they got through the Depression alright.*

KALIN: They did. You know, my grandparents were farmers on both sides and the Depression was very much part of my parents' growing up. So they were very much aware of how lucky they were. They worked hard, they saved money.

*Q: Let's take, as a small kid what was it like then for a small kid in-?*

KALIN: Yes. Well, as I say I was the oldest child so I was born to this young up and coming couple, living in Kansas City. We had all the virtues of the Midwest: lots of space, good schools, nice suburbs and lots of family around. My memories include driving up to the farm two or three times a month and spending time with my grandparents on both sides. You know, when we would go my grandmother on my mother's side would cook fried chicken. I would help her to go out and get the chicken for the lunch. And she would kill the chicken, pull its head off; it would flap around the yard for awhile and then we would work together to actually butcher it and fry it and prepare this big meal. And all the family would come. My mother was one of four and my father one of six, so it was a large group. And then on the other side we'd go to my Kalin grandparents' house and they would be milking the cows and I would go and see the little calf that had just been born and go fishing for catfish in the pond. And so that kind of active childhood.

*Q: Was there, in the city, were you living in the city more or less or suburb?*

KALIN: We lived in a suburb called Shawnee Mission, Kansas, which was at the time on the outskirts of Kansas City, sort of the newer place to be. And I went to a grade school at one of those '50s buildings with the little bomb shelter in the basement called Flint School, which is now a children's museum. It was a mile from our house, which seemed an enormous distance. Sometimes we'd walk to school but most of the time we took the bus. And my parents had only one car, of course, and my father took it to work and he carpooled with the guy down the street and so on and so forth. So it was quite typical in many ways, but a nice childhood.

*Q: Well did you have, I don't use it in a pejorative term, but in, so many use it, sort of a gang you hung around with, neighborhood kids?*

KALIN: Yes, there were neighborhood kids, a lot of neighborhood kids. Next door was a Catholic family whose father was a prosperous plumber, and they were slightly older than we were so that was terrific. There were six of them and they had a swimming pool. That was the most terrific thing, you know, and it had two palm trees next to it, which was very unusual. So I would go swimming every day. My mother would hang out with the lady next door. And then the next house had several kids, I learned from them about the Beatles because they too were slightly older. They had trading cards of the Beatles. So there were lots of kids and lots of things like that.

*Q: Were the movies part of your culture?*

KALIN: They were. The first movie I ever saw -- I went with my cousins from St. Joe -- was "Old Yeller." So, and I was frightened, you know, when Old Yeller got in trouble. I remember, you know, yelling.

*Q: Movie about a dog.*

KALIN: It was a movie about a dog, yes, exactly. So yes, we went to the movies. There was a small theater in downtown Shawnee Mission and we would go from time to time. And also there was a drive-in theater where we would take the 1958 Chevy. My father would put the baby bed mattress in the back seat because it was enormous and the three of us kids would be there. And by the time we got one hour into "Cleopatra" with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor -- it was brand new at the time -- we'd be asleep in the back and my parents would be enjoying the show with that sound pumped in from the microphone attached to the window. So lots of things.

*Q: What was sort of your take on Kansas City and all and the suburbs? Was there much sort of, was ethnicity or race at all sort of a factor?*

KALIN: It became a factor, as it did elsewhere in the United States, in the late '60s. I have a couple of memories of that. My father came home one day from downtown where he'd been working at Kansas City Power and Light. And he told us the story of how he took off his hardhat and put it on the seat next to him while driving home because he was worried that rioters in Kansas City would mistake him for a policeman. There were very few black families in our neighborhood. The bus driver's family, you know, all of the bus drivers came from a family business and they were black. But there were very few. I was not introduced to Jewish people, although there were areas of Kansas City that, where lots of Jewish congregated, until I was in my, probably in my early teens. So it was quite typical of the time, almost an insulated childhood but one that, thanks to my parents' adventurous spirit, I was aware of different things. No Hispanic people at the time in Kansas City.

Another memory, one of the engineers my father worked with was from India, the subcontinent. So he invited our family over one night for Indian food. And we had saffron rice with slivers of silver in it. It was fascinating as a kid to see those kinds of



things. Also, my parents were active in a Protestant Christian church called the Countryside Country Church and we would learn about starving children in Biafra, for example, in Sunday School or vacation Bible School. So definitely while the community we lived in was a little insular, as many were at the time, there was an awareness that there was a much wider and bigger world out there that we should know about.

*Q: OK. Let's take school. First place, were you much of a reader?*

KALIN: Yes, very much so. My mother spent time with all of us kids teaching us, even before we got to school. So when in kindergarten we were presented with the primer "See Spot Run," the Dick and Jane series and so on, I was able to learn some of those things very quickly. In fact, I was able to write my name and read a little bit even as a very young child thanks to my mother's tutelage and the ABC song on records and so on and so forth. I read a lot as a kid. I read a lot of things typical of my generation: the Nancy Drew mysteries, books about Black Beauty, the horse. And then quite early on I discovered Charles Dickens. I was about in fourth grade or so and the school district that I attended, the Shawnee Mission Schools, were quite progressive. By fourth grade, they were giving people individualized instruction so that we were able to read about the planets or science books or Dickens or whatever we wanted. So I came back from fourth to fifth grade, having read two or three Charles Dickens works over the summer. I was using some of my new vocabulary like, I don't know, obsequious and words of that kind, so I earned the nickname "Dictionary" in fifth grade, which was quite a mixed blessing. It was not always a compliment but at any rate it was something.

*Q: Any books that you read sort of really opened your eyes to a country or an area or profession or anything that sticks in your mind?*

KALIN: Well, interestingly I would not say there's any work of literature as such that did that for me. What was most important was, frankly, reading the Bible. My parents were, as I say, active in a mainstream Christian church until I was eight, nine, 10. My father had served as a deacon in that church, my mother on many committees. By this time my father was around 30 and as I say there was the ferment of the late '60s going on. So they decided to join what can only be described as a fundamentalist Christian sect. It was called the Worldwide Church of God, previously known as the Radio Church of God. It was based in Pasadena, California, initially in Oregon. So this was an academic outlet in many ways, an intellectual exercise as well as a spiritual one that required close study of the Bible, lots of concordances, lots of history books, Masters theses on the nations, different nations in prophecy. You know, what are the 12 tribes of David today? Is it Israel, is it somewhere else?

*Q: I would think that somehow this study, concordances and all, and a fundamentalist church seems to be on opposite sides of the street or something.*

KALIN: Yes, you would think so. And yet the serious and almost literal, not almost, literal interpretation of the Bible that came out of this study was described the tenets of the religion. And there was a monthly magazine published by the church, called "The

Plain Truth.” It was a tract, you know, of maybe 20, 30 pages with various articles on different places. You know, how should we regard the modern nation of Israel? Where is the place of safety, which is how I learned about Petra in Jordan, which I later visited. You know, how should we think about France, Great Britain, all of these countries? And “The Plain Truth” was actually published in several languages also, French, German, Dutch, among others. So that stimulated my interest in languages.

Because of the Swiss heritage I had hoped to learn German; German strangely wasn’t offered in the school district. There was a big German speaking community, not only Swiss but German and, you know, others in the Midwest. Of course the Swedish and Finnish and others were a little bit to the north, with lots of Germans to the south, but somehow it wasn’t offered. So I ended up taking French. That kind of study was helpful to me in languages and I actually translated such a piece when I was about 16 from French to English. I strangely found that translation on the internet a few months ago. So, that was a kind of an intellectual outlet. The conclusions of this study on the part of the religion were that one should emphasize the Old Testament rather than the New, for example. So it was quite a harsh and authoritarian approach to life.

It also meant that we celebrated what most people would know as the Jewish holidays, the Day of Atonement, for example, and the Feast of Tabernacles as we called it, equivalent to Rosh Hashanah. So that was a very mixed experience. On the one hand it was broadening in terms of study and awareness of what was happening in the world. My parents watched the news every night. The belief was that Christ would return. It was a millennialist belief. And that Christ would return in our lifetimes. In fact, there was an estimate from one of the scholars of the church that this would happen on January 4, I believe it was either 1972 or 1976. So there was a, for a 10 year old or a 12 year old kind of an odd combination of global awareness, you know, we watched Walter Cronkite or Dan Rather or Peter Jennings every single night, followed world events and at the same time a sense of insecurity that one could be personally threatened by world events.

*Q: Well what about the Soviet Union, nuclear threat and all that; was that a strong element?*

KALIN: No. I don’t think that the Soviet Union as such was a strong element. I don’t recall that. Naturally our school had a bomb shelter so we were all familiar with that yellow and black sign and the drill of going to the basement or crouching under the desk and so on and so forth. But it was more connected to what still are beliefs that one can find in the Bible Belt of the Midwest, that one might be, that life might end, life as we know it might end. And one might be saved or not, kind of a thing. So as I say it was an odd combination in many ways.

*Q: Well in that era you were somewhat later than the former president, Truman, but was he, since he was from Missouri was he a person of discussion and all?*

KALIN: Yes, definitely. We were very proud of national figures from our area, including President Truman. Walter Cronkite was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, where my parents

grew up. I tell people later in life that this is why I have no accent, because I came from the birthplace of Walter Cronkite. Walt Disney was born in our state, Missouri, though my parents actually lived on the Kansas side. So there were lots of, a lot of civic pride about this.

There was no one in my family who had served in the federal government. A few of my uncles had been in military service, which of course was compulsory for men of that generation. My own father had been drafted around the time of the Korean War but his company had gotten him an exemption because of his skills as an engineer and they were contributing in that respect to the war effort.

*Q: Well during this time up through high school, I want to go back to high school, but did something like exotic, like the Foreign Service ever cross your radar?*

KALIN: Actually it didn't until many years later. But I did take my first trip overseas around this time and it was a trip to attend the religious festival I just mentioned, the Feast of Tabernacles. One could select from a dozen sites around the country where meetings were organized so each year in the fall, typically, we would go, take a week, two or three weeks out of school and go to Texas or California or what have you, and around the time I was about 16 we decided we would go to England. So we went to the meetings in, I believe it was Folkestone, England, near the south of England, and we spent a little time in London and then we went to the continent.

We went to Holland; one of my father's friends was an engineer whose family origin was Dutch. So we spent time at the Van Gogh Museum when it was brand new in the '70s, hosted by this Dutch family. And we spent a few days in Paris, where I had to translate for the family because no one spoke English and I spoke a little French. I would have to do things, embarrassing things like ask for catsup in a French restaurant, right? And then we went to Switzerland to see my father's family. And there again that was an eye opening experience. We had never been there. We saw the charming villages and the barns and the cows that looked familiar but we couldn't really speak to them effectively because nobody spoke English. And since I hadn't yet learned German, my parents had bought me the records set, an educational record set, but all I could say was "ist das ihr hund?" in German, meaning, "Is that your dog?" But I knew French so, you know, I would, that was my first experience as an interpreter. I was about 15 or 16 and it was quite an experience.

We came back from that four or five weeks with the idea that something, living and working outside of the United States might be possible but it wasn't until many, many years later that I thought about the Foreign Service; more than a decade. I just wasn't aware that there was such a job. And indeed by the time I got to the end of my high school career I had decided that the religious beliefs were not true, for me. They were too narrow, they were too literal, they were too constraining, they didn't make sense. So I had quite a confrontation over that with my family. At the same time scandals had arisen in the church, the leader spending \$200 on a haircut, the leader having extramarital

affairs, the leader embezzling, this and that. So my parents were also questioning the religion. And I decided that it wasn't for me.

Well, I had wanted to study on the East Coast because I was good academically and enjoyed school and wanted to go to Boston University or maybe one of the small liberal arts colleges. And I remember looking at Grinnell, Iowa, but it was time for me to get out of the house, the need for me to get out of the house. And I instead left school early, left high school and graduated early and went to University of Kansas, which was close enough but far enough, so.

*Q: I want to take you back to high school.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: What sort of things did you do in high school?*

KALIN: I did a lot of things in high school. I loved music as a child. My aunt had given me her clarinet; my Aunt Donna June Calloway on my mother's side, had given me her clarinet when I was about 10. And I loved the clarinet. I worked when I was 14 and 15 as a field hand, a corn de-tasseler, and we would go and meet in a parking lot and buses would take us at dawn to the cornfields. And we would remove the tops of the corn so that they would not pollinate or cross-pollinate in an undesirable way. We got \$2.25 or \$1.85 an hour, something like that. So I saved all my money and I bought myself a new clarinet. I was very active in music. I tried out for the Kansas City Youth Symphony and I was accepted. But I couldn't participate fully because the practice sessions were on Saturday, and the fundamentalist religion celebrated the holy day of the week on Saturday and therefore I could not attend the practices.

But anyway, I would participate as much as I could so I was very active in music in high school. I was also the captain of the quiz team, the "Jeopardy" style college bowl kind of thing. My history professor recruited me for that. We were the brand new high school because the area was growing. We were sort of on the edge of town. The area was growing so there was a brand new high school and we had a very big mix. There were people who were in stable, you know, academically advanced homes and others who were kind of disadvantaged or families had fallen on hard times so we were really quite a mix. And the school was brand new, it hadn't really jelled, so sometimes we couldn't quite get enough people for the quiz team, other times we could. We did OK but we never won a game. That, and of course I continued with my French. I liked art and so on and so forth, just lots of different things.

*Q: Did you run across the pressure that I understand can happen about you didn't want to be too smart or-?*

KALIN: Ah, yes. I would say that I did. You know, my parents weren't particularly interested in sending me to the East Coast for college because they assumed, as was true for them, that I would marry and never use a college education. Certainly the religious

environment they were in reinforced that traditional view of life and I knew that being very successful academically was not likely to get me, would restrict my choices, let's say, of husbands. But I had a high school boyfriend who didn't, who really appreciated my intelligence. And he was quite artistic and starred in school plays and I would play in the orchestra and my mother would help us make costumes and she was supportive in that kind of way so yes, yes.

*Q: What were some of the plays you-?*

KALIN: Oh, I believe we did "The Music Man." We did "The Lost Horizon." There was a movie around that time with the same thing. So we did lots of, you know, typical things like that. And as I say I would be in the orchestra and my boyfriend on stage and it was kind of fun.

*Q: Oh yes. Did you ever, I was just, the clarinet; when I hear the clarinet, I love klezmer music.*

KALIN: Ah, yes.

*Q: Have you ever-?*

KALIN: Yes, well, through another friend, her family was of Polish origin, I believe, and I learned polka music and of course the clarinet is important in Swiss music as well. So we would listen to that. I had a season ticket and would go with my friend, either my mom would take us or her mom would take us to the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra downtown. We'd go down to the music center regularly and attend those concerts and yes, it was very enriching.

*Q: So you went to the University of Kansas?*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: You were there from when to when?*

KALIN: I was there from early 1976; I ended up staying until 1981. I entered at what would have been the mid-point of my sophomore year. I took every advanced placement test possible and applied for a number of scholarships because my thinking was that I would get the credential that I needed as soon as possible and then seek my fortune elsewhere, pretty much was my thinking. Or at least I wanted to achieve independence because I was more than ready for it. So I entered and I started out studying accounting and I was thinking about engineering but I didn't have the patience for math or science particularly. I was very good at language, on the other hand, so I continued with my French and that's the degree I ended up getting.

I also took a number of courses in economics and business because that was a possibility. I had a hundred dollar scholarship from the Kansas Society of Certified Public

Accountants. I was the General Mills Family Leader of Tomorrow, honorable mention for the state of Kansas. That made the front page of my high school newspaper, to my surprise. And I also found something that was quite nice for me at the time and later became important. I worked part-time at the University of Kansas libraries. I worked in inter-library loan, I worked in circulation, and later got a more formal position in cataloging.

I also, through the French department, in the summer of 1979 I went to Paris with the Princeton University summer work abroad program and that was a terrific experience. I was very happy to get a well paying job. I was a salesgirl at a department store in France called Galeries Lafayette, which is roughly the equivalent of Macy's or Bloomingdales. And it paid very well, which was important to me because by that time I had a strong desire to be independent. Also, I had a college boyfriend and we were planning to move in together, which I knew would result in my parents cutting me off, which indeed happened. But not to any tragic result because I had enough money.

*Q: Well you were, we're not talking about the '60s; we're talking about the '70s.*

KALIN: We're talking about the '70s now, yes, the late '70s.

*Q: Well what was sort of the social environment like?*

KALIN: Well, you know, I think that by the '70s the wave of social change on university campuses had passed so that classes were held regularly and demonstrations were rare or small. There was a lot of variety of political and social opinion but it was more directed towards protests of nuclear energy, protests of environmentalism, peace and so on, but Vietnam was over essentially by the time I got to school. It was 1975 of course when all of the work the U.S. had been doing in Vietnam kind of unraveled. So that in the late '70s there was a fair amount of social change following from that. But it was more the end of the wave as opposed to the beginning, I would say.

*Q: What was sex like? I have to talk to you about, no but I'm just trying to, you know, the general atmosphere?*

KALIN: You know, the general atmosphere was that the dormitories were still segregated at least by floor. There were still rules that you could not have an overnight guest in your dorm room, although sometimes that happened. I stayed in an all-women's dorm the first semester, which was probably helpful to me, frankly, because it was, there was not the pressure to deal with those kinds of issues then that there might have been. And the next year I got an apartment close to campus. That was great. There was a lot of experimentation going on as well and some pressure to be free and open.

*Q: What about marijuana and that sort of stuff?*

KALIN: Yes, there was a lot of that on campus, of course, and most of us experimented with it. I found that it put me to sleep, so it wasn't a very successful experiment for me.

But my friends were into that. My friends were into music as well, they played guitars. My college boyfriend was a guitarist and singer and so on.

*Q: Well were you working on finding the meaning of life, too sitting around, and when you fell asleep?*

KALIN: Yes, yes we were. Yes, we were. Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, you know. We took a road trip to University of Nebraska to hear Jackson Brown and so lots of, you know, Neil Young's music and all of that was very important. Most people in my circle had read "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy more than once. I could never make my way through it somehow. It just seemed too, maybe I was, had had enough of living in an ideal world or studying an ideal world through the religious studies that I had done by that time, I don't know. But I never did make it through all of that material. I've enjoyed the movies since but somehow I never did get into the original.

*Q: Well did anything approaching communism attract you? This is a thing that I found so interesting. In the United States sort of left wing ideology never really gained much of a foothold.*

KALIN: No.

*Q: And very radicals did and we were trying everything else.*

KALIN: No, it's true. I mean, there was never a communist movement in my hometown. I mean, there was a liberal train of thought in Lawrence, Kansas, where the University of Kansas is. Some called it the "Berkeley of the Midwest," so there was some of that in the environment, but it was not highly influential, frankly.

*Q: Yes. And it's just one of those things that one can study and why.*

KALIN: Yes. There were more by the time I was there. I knew people who were, as I say, back to nature types. At one point I went to a communally run sort of farm, thinking that I might rent a room there. That farm had no electricity and it was heated with wood stoves and it was almost that kind of more back to the land, back to nature kind of thing that was more important in that era. There was sort of a natural food store down the street that was important in our lives and it later became a record store called "Exile Records." So you could watch the shift of mood on the campus as you spent more time. And that shift from the '70s to the '80s was real.

*Q: How about the faculty? I mean, were there some sort of challenging professors, avant garde or more rather down to earth or what?*

KALIN: I remember a variety of professors. It was a very large university; 25,000 people, the primary land grant university. Not the only one in Kansas, but the big one. My French professors were lovely, some of them. There was a woman in her 80s who was so precise with the language, who knew so much about the literature, who could

make the medieval French poetry come alive. It was lovely. And then there was a very young woman who taught a course, psycholinguistics, who was so nervous she could barely speak in front of a class. And then there were economics professors who would challenge you to think about marketing, is marketing legitimate and useful or is it a form of propaganda? How should we organize industry. Industrial organization was an interesting course I remember taking. So it was a very, it turned out to be a very sort of fruitful college experience. Not the one I had expected perhaps or hoped for, but it was a good experience.

*Q: Well what about the government? You've already gone through the Vietnam experience, which was sort of, those are, work for the government's kind of a bummer. But I mean, how did you and your colleagues or at least people you ran around with feel about working for the government?*

KALIN: I don't think any of us really ever thought about working for the government, honestly. I mean among the people I was close to several did become academics. Most of my circle stayed in the Midwest or went to the West; California was a popular destination for several of my friends. You know, there were local political leaders and that was well and good, but the idea of working for the federal government was not really in our minds at the time. I certainly hadn't really thought about that. I expected to work in business somehow or just find a place, an independent and secure place was what I was really looking for.

*Q: Well were there any vets there and how were they, would you say they were received?*

KALIN: Well, Fort Leavenworth is not far from Lawrence, Kansas, but I think that in my circles there was more, let's say, as much understanding for the young men of the generation just above us, our older brothers who had gone to Canada as there were for those who had served, honestly. Because the effects of Vietnam were just so poisonous, even in a patriotic Midwestern environment. The draft was abolished around the time that my generation went to college so that changed things. It was no longer urgent for us to consider what might happen to us personally. My college boyfriend did not face the possibility of military service, for example, in the way that the generation just above us had faced it. So there was no hostility that I recall ever towards military veterans, but there was not much understanding either.

*Q: As you're going through college what were you looking at? Well, in the first place let me ask a question; did you feel the problem of being a woman? You know what, I, because this is so overly \_\_\_\_ thing. But you understand what I mean.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: I mean, from a profession or something like that.*

KALIN: Yes. Yes, I think I did. I wasn't sure what I was going to do after college but I was always working. After my first job in corn de-tasseling I had gotten a job at a



restaurant and worked as many as 20 or 30 hours a week all through high school to preserve some independence and because my family was hard working. In college, I took on closer and closer to full-time work at the university libraries. And in fact the last two years in Kansas I was part of a team that was cataloging a vast collection of works in economics from 1850 to 1930 that a professor had collected from libraries all over the United States and in Europe, all over the world, in fact. And that was a wonderful experience for me and I enjoyed that experience.

*Q: Did you have to catalog it and that sort of thing?*

KALIN: Yes. I was a para-professional librarian. My job was to prepare the books for professional librarians to catalog, to describe, to put in the proper place in the universe of books. This was a terrific collection and it was a government grant that funded the cataloging project. This collection rivaled that of Harvard for an earlier period so that was quite a nice job. I was the Germanic language specialist; I did the German and French books. I had a colleague who did those from Latin America. And then there were professional counterparts for each of us. The director was a librarian who really became a mentor of mine. She was maybe 10 years older than I was, so maybe around 30 at the time I was in my early 20s. She was ultimately the person who inspired me to move to New York City after that project completed. And when I got to New York City I took secretarial work and so on and so forth and still wasn't quite sure what I was going to do, but I knew I didn't want to live in Kansas anymore. I wanted to be in a more international environment.

*Q: Did you feel like Kansas was sort of isolated or not appreciative of your abilities or what?*

KALIN: I felt that there was far less scope in that environment as a woman, OK? I felt that the expectation was that I would get married and have children and stop working and that just didn't seem the path for me. I didn't have that kind of goal in life.

*Q: Was it the fact of working or was it the fact that more growth in working, I mean learning, doing more than just earning money?*

KALIN: Yes. I felt that perhaps I could become an accountant somewhere but I was starting to realize that the safety that I had sought through accounting was kind of, you know, came with too much boredom attached, if you will. So I just wasn't quite sure what to do but I felt that the environment in the Midwest was just not, it just didn't offer what New York City might offer. I would have happily gone back abroad at that point but I didn't know how to get from Lawrence, Kansas, back to Paris, France. I did know how to get from Lawrence, Kansas, to New York City. And in fact how I did that was I bought myself a Greyhound bus pass and for about three months I traveled all over the United States. I went first to the West Coast because that's what one did. I had a cousin in Wyoming and I had my father's best childhood friend who was a professor of social work in Fort Collins, Colorado. Uncle Doc, much loved. His name was Lowell Jenkins. He's now living in Canada, sadly lost to us through Alzheimer's. But I remember him visiting

my parents and bringing us little beanies from Switzerland and little flags from ski trips he had taken. So this was another childhood sort of memory.

So I visited Uncle Doc and my cousins in Colorado and Wyoming and then I went out to California where my college boyfriend was then living. I went to see my professional counterpart on the University of Kansas history of economics library project. He was then at Brigham Young in Utah with his family. And then I dropped back in Kansas City, repacked my one little bag and got on the bus again and went east. And I ended up, I had another cousin in Ohio working in nuclear power plants, I went to see him and a library friend in Washington, DC and she was at the Library of Congress by then so I went to see her. Then my friend, my former boss, actually, at University of Kansas Libraries, a woman named Ann Hagedorn, gave me the names of some friends of hers in New York City and met me in New York City on October 10, 1981, I think it was. And so I spent the first probably six, eight, 10 weeks, 12 weeks in New York City on people's couches, borrowing rooms at the YMCA, etc., doing temp work. It was terrific and I decided I wanted to move there.

*Q: When did you sort of establish yourself in New York?*

KALIN: I came back to New York in early 1982 and I found more temp work and then eventually a permanent job with a small law firm that was founded by a former partner of Mudge Rose, the big New York law firm and some of his foreign friends, right. So there was the Belgian lawyer who founded this place and his friend the French fashion executive and then a guy from New Jersey and two or three other guys. My French language ability got me that job. I was the assistant to the economic consultant and their work was to defend the French steel companies from charges of dumping steel products into the United States, anti-dumping cases. So I worked there and I got a roommate. First I lived on the Upper West Side with a French woman who was working for a bank and then I moved in with a native New Yorker who eventually moved out and married someone in the fashion industry, which was terrific because that meant I had the sublet all to myself.

Shortly, however, I realized that my French degree was not going to pay the bills so I thought about a couple of other things. My friend Ann Hagedorn had suggested I look into the New School for Social Research and I thought about that. I actually did that but many years later. So I got myself together and I went to New York University and I got a certificate in computer programming like lots of musicians and humanities majors at the time. Even in the early '80s it was tough to find a job in those professions. I had interviewed at, I think it was New York Public Library and Museum of Modern Art, but they were paying about half what I could make as a temporary secretary and I just couldn't live on that money. So I got my computer certificate at New York University.

*Q: Well up to this point would you, I mean you moved around a lot; were you at all, were you sort of a quasi-hippie or, I mean or were you; how would you describe yourself?*

KALIN: I wasn't really a hippie. It's funny; I was the normal one in my circle of hippies, if you will. I was the one who always had money so I would pay for the gas on our road trips. I was the one who had a steady job so I could pay the utility bill if a roommate was short, this kind of thing. But I really enjoyed-

*Q: You were kind of the anchor of this.*

KALIN: I was the anchor in a way. Yes, it's true. So that was the situation.

*Q: Were you leaving, you mentioned a number of boyfriends, were you leaving them behind you? I mean, were you, was this if not deliberate almost deliberate, making sure you weren't going to get trapped?*

KALIN: Well, maybe. I did, I had essentially two long-term relationships, like my high school boyfriend and my college boyfriend. And they were three, four, five year relationships.

*Q: That's long, very long-term.*

KALIN: But they were not to be for life. I thought they were, I really did. I was really, I would have liked to make a lifelong commitment, but it just wasn't to be. My high school boyfriend did have a lifelong and does have a lifelong relationship, but with a man. He is gay.

*Q: Was that apparent at the time?*

KALIN: It was something we talked about through high school as we were going through adolescence as everybody does. But it wasn't something that was clear for him until, let's say, 17 or 18. So that was the reason we didn't stay together.

In the case of my college boyfriend, he simply wanted a different kind of life. I wanted to live in the big city essentially and he ended up in Northern California, became a geologist and is now a professor of geology. But that's a different, entirely different environment than I wanted to be in. I never really liked California. I've been to California several times but I never really liked it somehow. It didn't take with me. On the other hand I loved New York.

*Q: Oh yes.*

KALIN: So it's that kind of thing.

*Q: I try to capture the period of time. During this time when you were, I won't say footloose and fancy free but pretty loose, how about sort of homosexuality, gayness, both male, female.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: I mean, now we're going through lots of drama about same sex marriage and all, but I was wondering whether the young people were as aware of it and discussed who was what and why so they could-?*

KALIN: Yes, I think people were aware of it in a different way than young people are now. For young people now it's just a question, it's not a significant question. You know, what's your deal?, my students ask. That was not the way it was handled at the time I was in college. Gay men were still quite reluctant to let you know that that's who they were. My own brother came out later. He's six years younger than I am and it was excruciating for him. And of course it was excruciating to my parents, given their background.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: I will say that my parents have stood by all of us. I went to New York City and I eventually found an apartment. My parents drove out and helped me move, for example; my brother the same way, my sister the same way. My sister went to medical school in the University of Kansas system and remained in Kansas and married and has three children, the only one of the three of us to marry and have children. So her situation has involved support in a little different way, more day to day. Whereas my brother and I have generated these different kinds of demands on the family. At any rate it was painful to be a gay person in those days or to be different really in any way. And the change that we have today did not come easily. Not at all.

*Q: There are so many things. I mean, my wife is a strong Episcopalian and really had trouble with Episcopalian priests.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And now, you know, all these things, what's the big deal, you know?*

KALIN: Yes, now it's routine but at the time far from it. In fact, one of my memories of my early days in the Foreign Service was one of my classmates in A-100 was a gay man who had a stable partner and he wanted to include the partner. And he was not apologetic about being gay but this was something that we were not to discuss. In the early '90s in the Foreign Service we were not to discuss that somehow.

*Q: Well life has changed a lot for a lot of-.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Our society, at least in the United States, things get out into the open pretty quickly.*

KALIN: They do.

*Q: I mean, when the time is right.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And things have basically kind of settled.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Not completely but it's-*

KALIN: It's a lot, it's a lot-

*Q: -even the racial thing, you know, is no longer quite what it was.*

KALIN: No, no, definitely not.

*Q: And these are tremendous divisions.*

KALIN: They are.

*Q: But anyway, speaking of other divisions, how did you find yourself politically? Did you take much of an interest in American politics or not?*

KALIN: I can't say that I ever took a lot of strong interest in politics until later in life. I was in New York City in the '80s, I had my computer science degree in '83, around that time, and I was reading "The Wall Street Journal". Why? Because my computer degree led me to Wall Street. When I finished my computer certificate or as I was finishing I was looking for a job because I needed to support myself. Even though I had been lucky enough to find a tiny walkup apartment at the top of an old building on the Upper West Side for \$300 a month at the time, I still needed to support myself. So I started asking around. The finance industry, being quite important in New York City, needed computer programmers on Wall Street. And I interviewed at two places. My father had some contact with New York bankers. By then he was working on big power plant building projects in Australia and starting to look into Hong Kong and China and so he gave me a couple of names. Sure enough, I was on the subway one morning and the person he had referred me to was carrying a folder with her name on it. I went oh, hi, how are you? I'm Carol. I had called these people and I was trying hard and sure enough I got a job at what was then called the First Boston Corporation. And my job was to run computer tapes containing the lists of and characteristics of home mortgages right on the trading floor. This was in the very, very early days of the structured finance products that caused the 2008 stock market crash, a great crisis. But at the time it was a cutting edge innovation.

So I worked at First Boston for about a year and a half. At first I came in sort of with the same attitude I'd had at the law firm, with the law firm. Because it was cosmopolitan and I was in a support position I could wear purple jeans and high heeled boots and it was no problem. So at first I did that on Wall Street and I soon realized that no, I would have to wear low heels and bow ties. I couldn't bring myself to wear bow ties very often but I did

manage to do that. And it was a time of explosive growth on the trading floor at First Boston. There were a couple of other people in related work who were what we called “quant jocks,” and they were mathematics, could have been mathematics professors, very advanced research types. I got to know them and we would be there all night working on creating the securities that were innovative. I would do, obviously, the more basic work because that was the training I had but it was really, really, really very interesting and very lucky for me to be there.

*Q: Eighty-four, '85, and you're working on Wall Street.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Alright. Today is the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, 2014, with Carol Kalin. And Carol, we were talking about your banking. But I'd like to go back to something you just mentioned about the role of women in the workforce in your family.*

KALIN: Yes. I was thinking about that and realized that there were a couple of role models for me in my family. I wouldn't say that any of my close relatives, female relatives, had careers necessarily but there were several teachers and nurses among them. There was my favorite aunt, Donna June Calloway, who I mentioned before, who gave me my clarinet when I was a kid. She had a job for years and years and years at what was then called the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. She had begun that out in California where her husband was a Marine and continued it throughout her life. She went from being a telephone operator to being a supervisor and then learning how to fix telephone equipment. So that was a model for me of a woman who could work outside the home and make that connection. In fact, one summer she got me a job, a temporary job as a directory operator.

The other model were a couple of women in my family who worked at a big Kansas City enterprise, Hallmark Cards. One of my aunts was an artist for Hallmark Cards, literally painted the beautiful puppies and flowers and other images that you see on Hallmark greeting cards, based in Kansas City. And another was in management there, as a career. So as I say, most of the women that I saw growing up were workers as opposed to career professionals, but there was some precedent, let's say, in my family history for women having careers.

*Q: Well you found yourself as sort of a, on the leading edge of the digitized banking business-*

KALIN: Yes, indeed.

*Q: -something which we, the American public and other countries too had a great deal of trouble.*

KALIN: Very true.

*Q: Too quick a response to the market.*

KALIN: Very, very true.

*Q: Anyway, let's, where should we pick it up? I think we were in Boston by this time?*

KALIN: Yes. I was at the First Boston Corporation from 1983 to 1985, working on the trading floor in the mortgage backed securities unit, as we called it. I worked for someone who later became quite famous, at least in banking circles, Larry Fink. Larry Fink was then 28 years old and he was the head of this brand new, as you say cutting edge, unit that was creating brand new types of financial instruments. And that was an exciting time to be on Wall Street.

I left First Boston as a result, in fact, of being head hunted to another even more familiar name in the financial world and that's Prudential Bache Securities, as it was then called. And there I worked initially in mortgage finance as well, but I later got a chance to do some international work in interest rates and currency swaps, another precursor of the so-called financial derivatives that have caused so much trouble. So that was an interesting job. Both of those jobs were interesting because they sort of gave me a look into big business, things that affect the global market, and I had my small part to play, either as a technician or an analyst or a trader in those things.

*Q: Did you have any disquiet or whatever it is, in that these huge sums were flowing around the world and with ability to cause terrible damage? I mean, was this at all a subject of conversation or concern or was everybody having so much fun?*

KALIN: Well, there was some concern but it emerged too late even then. The people I worked with at Prudential Bache had been at CitiGroup, CitiBank, before and there they had done some of the, let's say, invention of these kinds of securities, interest rates and currency swaps. And their contention was that all else being equal these things did no harm and might do much good, that separating the cash flow that corporations would pay anyway to a bank like CitiBank would do no harm, again, and might do much good. We did begin to think about that in terms of the credit risk that we were actually taking on. The contention early on was that there was virtually no issue there because after all someone was making the main loan to these corporations, so skimming a little bit off the top and redirecting it into a security couldn't hurt. In fact it could. So later in the '80s, I was at Pru Bache for about two years as well, '85 to '87; things began to get a little bit dubious. I had represented Prudential Bache along with some colleagues at the very first meeting of the International Swap Dealers Association. Again, the feeling at the time was no harm, but that became a little doubtful. Prudential Insurance, here in the United States, like most insurance companies worldwide traditionally was quite conservative, and it began to question the business that my unit was involved in.

Meanwhile, I myself was a little bit restless, let's say, and again thinking about going overseas, so I started to interview with other banks, international banks both in New York and London. When my firm found out I was dissatisfied enough to look elsewhere they

suggested I simply leave, which I did in spring of 1987. Well. So I took the summer off and I remember distinctly being at the home of my best friend who joined the Foreign Service herself about five years ago baking cookies when the 1987 stock market crash happened. That was a huge event at the time. Simultaneously problems began to emerge in the mortgage markets and it turns out in the late '80s that we spent three percent, I believe it was, of gross domestic product here in the United States to bail out the savings and loans. This was of course some 30 years before the 2008 great recession, and it was handled differently but was still extremely costly.

And in fact that indirectly led to my next job on Wall Street. By late 1987, after the crash, I realized that it was going to be difficult if not impossible to get the kind of job I had had at Prudential Bache. So I decided two things. I decided I would go back to graduate school, which I did at the New School for Social Research. I started taking courses with someone I admired very, very much, a guy named Robert Heilbroner, who had long been a professor there. And he had written a wonderful book called "The Worldly Philosophers," talking about great economists of the ages and how they saw their work, what insights they had into big events in the economy like we had just experienced. So I was very interested in that.

I continued to look for a job and in fact I found one that was related to my background. I interviewed with the Federal Farm Credit System financial office in New York. Now, the Federal Farm Credit System is a Depression-era creation that raised money on Wall Street to provide to cooperative farm banks across the country. There were twelve of them at the time and those banks had gotten in big trouble because before the housing bubble of the late '80s there had been a farmland bubble in the early '80s. People may remember that in terms of all the foreclosures and the original Farm Aid concerts of the '80s. So I interviewed in the course of things with the financial arm of this quasi-government agency. It was called a government sponsored enterprise. The charter of the enterprise had been established by an act of Congress but it operated independently, much like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the federal mortgage lending consortia that, again, caused trouble, certainly in the last financial crisis and even before in some respects.

The nice thing for me about working at the Farm Credit System financial operation was that they valued where I had come from. It was an advantage to me to have been around farming, to be a native of Kansas City, and they also had an interesting mix of people. My direct boss, who I am still in touch with, was a guy named Fred Havel and he had been an expatriate with CitiBank for many years before landing back in New York so that his teenage kids could experience life in the United States. He had been at the Hong Kong/Shanghai Bank Corporation in Hong Kong for a long time, for example. So he was someone who appreciated my interest in international affairs.

It was a very good tenure there. They had tuition assistance, their work ethic was, unlike Wall Street where you were on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week and often there until 3:00 in the morning, working enormous hours, there was time to do my studies and there was interest in the job as well. So not only did we work to raise money in the usual



way with Wall Street firms, for the banks, but we were also tasked with raising money and helping structure the financing for a special purpose entity that the government had created. The idea was to bailout the Farm Credit System from its problems of the mid '80s and to create yet another organization that would parallel what Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were doing. That's significant because during that process I met a number of people from Washington. They came to New York to get our opinion on what was happening and we had communication with regulators as to what our recommendations were, how to finance the bailout of those Farm Credit banks among the 12 that were still having difficulties at the time.

So that was a great time. I realized after about a year and a half, however, that I would never finish my graduate degree if I didn't do it full-time. I had saved a little bit of money. I drastically reduced my expenditures. I bought an apartment in New York while working on Wall Street. I can't say I ever made it big on Wall Street but I did make, let's put it this way: it took me about 10 years, once I entered government, to come back to the salary I had had on Wall Street in those early years, in the '80s. So I had expenses of an apartment. I had tuition breaks, but I was still trying to live. I asked my parents for a little bit of help to go back to graduate school full-time and they gave it to me so I did that.

*Q: Where'd you go to grad school?*

KALIN: I was at the New School for Social Research. I had, as I mentioned, begun there because I admired one of the professors very much and in fact I had read some of his work and learned about him years before at the University of Kansas Libraries through my colleagues at the project to catalogue the historical books on economics.

Now, I also thought about going a couple of other places. I went, for example, to visit Yale University; they had a terrific program and combining sort of public policy and business, sort of an MPA or an MBA with a public slant. But frankly I didn't have the money or patience or confidence in myself that I could succeed there, and didn't really want to make the lifestyle change that it would have entailed. I really loved my New York apartment, I loved being in New York. My professor, Robert Heilbroner, had suggested I apply to the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and for the same reasons I didn't pursue that. So there I was at the New School; not only had the financial markets experienced Black Monday, the crash of 1987 but the Berlin Wall was about to fall in the late '80s. So at the New School, being one of the most liberal in the country, I was by far the most conservative student in any of my classes, having worked on Wall Street. But I enjoyed those debates with the people who were reading Marx as a scholar, not as a figure of, you know, not as a figure to be reviled or an enemy whose tactics we had to learn, but people who really thought that Marx was on to something, like Freud was on to something. So it was quite an interesting time to be there.

I can't say that I found much explanation for the final collapse of the Soviet Union at the New School while I was there. People were just absorbing it, just as the bankers had kind of been shocked by the crash of 1987. The academics were surprised, let's say, many of

them, by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union in that period. But I made some good friends and had a terrific experience there.

I also started to think about moving to Washington because I realized that it would be, even after a pause for graduate school, extremely difficult to get a job again in New York. Banking had not recovered and that industry is very central to life in New York. And as I said, I had met a number of regulators and people in Washington and I began to realize that not only could I get much more affordable housing and have, in many ways, an easier lifestyle with some fair amount of international contact and stimulating conversation. But that I hadn't had a proper date in years and the chances of my getting one while working 60 to 80 hours a week in New York were not very high, even though I had met someone in graduate school that I very much thought there might be a future with.

We used to say in New York that you can only have two out of three; this is single women in New York in the '80s. We used to say that you could have either the job, the apartment or the man but not all three at the same time. So that was somewhat my experience. I realized that balancing all that was getting a bit tiresome. Plus, during my unemployment I saw the 1987 movie "Wall Street" being filmed. I was planning to treat myself to a facial one day, so I was walking along. It wasn't uncommon in New York to see this, but they had blocked off part of a street and there was Michael Douglas and Daryl Hannah walking down the street together filming a scene from the movie. So I realized that things had really changed in the industry and that it might be time to look at something else. It probably took me about 18 months to transition, to really make up my mind that I was going to leave New York and try Washington. I didn't give up my apartment because I couldn't have sold it at the time; literally, I couldn't get the money. I paid \$150,000 approximately for it, the same, in 1986, at the top of the market, about the same as my sister paid for a three bedroom house in Kansas City. But at that time it was impossible to sell. So I rented it out, sublet it and went to Washington.

I had gotten a job at the U.S. General Accounting Office, as it was then known or today's Government Accountability Office, GAO, and I took that job because it offered security. Wall Street was fascinating and, as I say, I never struck it rich but I made a very significant salary compared to what I might have elsewhere, but there was no security. From one day to the next you might be unemployed. And I was tired of that. So I decided to take a two year appointment at GAO that hopefully would be permanent and that's what I did.

*Q: So you did that from when to when?*

KALIN: Well, first of all I took the summer off. I mentioned I had, my graduate school boyfriend, if you will, he was French and so I spent part of the summer with him in Paris and that was terrific. GAO was quite willing to give me the summer off and have me start in the fall so I started on 9/9/90, September 9, 1990, at GAO in Washington. I was working with financial markets. I was in what we called the resources community and environment division, the people who dealt with the agriculture side of agricultural credit.

And they had been asked by Congress to do a series of studies on the farm crisis and its after effects, the Farm Credit System and the cooperative banks that comprised it and so on. So I knew something about that and I was able to fit right in there as a senior evaluator, working on a small team, and it was fascinating.

*Q: Were you concentrating on any particular aspect of business?*

KALIN: I did three projects, three or four projects actually, at GAO in the three years I was there. One of them was related to both of my previous experiences on Wall Street. It was something called the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation and it was designed to create a program for farm mortgages similar to that for home mortgages. It was known as Farmer Mac to parallel the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac familiar from the housing industry. So the question was whether this idea would work in agriculture. And, you know, we didn't really think it would for technical reasons. The characteristics of farm mortgages are very different than home mortgages and it's very difficult to combine packages or pools of such mortgages and sell them as securities. They're just not very predictable. Home mortgages are more predictable; not perfectly as we've seen but somewhat predictable. And we didn't think Farmer Mac would be very effective. I will say that that entity has lasted for 30 years nevertheless and continues to have a top credit but we were skeptical. So we put out a couple of reports on that. I also looked directly at my former employer after enough time had passed where that was permissible for another project. And then we considered the whole idea of whether there even should be government sponsored enterprises such as the ones I had worked for. And again we were skeptical. I think that it took, in that instance it's taken 30 years to come to a similar conclusion that perhaps having huge entities that enjoyed all the benefits and privileges of being sponsored by the full faith and credit of the United States but none of the regulations might not be such a good idea.

*Q: Well then, so did you feel you were topping off? And did you want to get something else?*

KALIN: Well, through my friends at graduate school when I moved to Washington I met kind of a peer group. In fact, I met my husband through this peer group. I ended up moving because GAO was located at 4<sup>th</sup> and G Street over near Capitol Hill I moved to Capitol Hill. I loved the charm of the place as well.

*Q: Oh yes.*

KALIN: So I rented an apartment in an older building on Capitol Hill. I met a group of friends who every weekend would go to the Heartland Café, as it existed then, on Capitol Hill. Or Eastern Market or something. And there were six or seven of us who had brunch. And among them were a couple of people who were planning to take the Foreign Service exam. And so they told me about it and I said well, that's a great idea. I did take the exam in November of 1991 and to my surprise I passed.

The instructions were if you don't hear from the Foreign Service by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1992, I believe it was, you can give us a call and we'll tell you whether you passed.

Well, I had heard nothing but I thought I'd follow up anyway so I gave a call and, as I said, to my surprise they said well yes, you did pass. I was surprised in part because the people I took it with, a couple of my other friends, had failed the written exam. So that was great news. You know, by then I had gotten together with my husband; he had moved in with me. He wasn't my husband yet but we were the only two single people in this brunch group so we ended up together. And, you know, while everyone else in the group split, now we've been married more than 20 years, so I guess something went right for us.

In any case my husband encouraged me to take the exam. He thought it would be a great idea. I, as I say, I was kind of surprised that I passed but I did pass, and in those days it took about two years to complete the whole process. I guess it still takes some time, but people are working on it.

*Q: Do you recall any of the questions?*

KALIN: Yes, I do recall some of the questions. We sat in a group, five or six of us, in one of the exercises, one of three or four exercises. And we were all given a part to play. We were to advocate that a limited amount of money be spent on our project and we were told pretty much what to say about our project. So the purpose of the exercise, of course, was to figure out if we could work together. Well, my project was kind of a medium priority in my own opinion but I gave it a good spin and won concurrence pretty easily. Then I endorsed other people's projects and in fact endorsed the ones that I thought were more interesting than mine more strongly. So that apparently marked me as a good diplomat, that I could compromise and work in a group.

Otherwise the questions were, frankly, a little unfamiliar to me. There were questions about consular issues that, looking back, were clearly designed to test your knowledge. But I had no knowledge at the time. I didn't know that Americans who violate laws overseas can expect to be jailed immediately under the country's laws, for example. But I intuited enough of that and was realistic enough, I guess, in my comments to the examiners that I passed the oral exam as well. That was a memorable day because the examiner talked to me about my career up to then and asked me whether I was prepared to start over again at the bottom as a Foreign Service officer. I had a GS-13-14 job at GAO, which of course is equivalent to about an FS-2. And I said well, yes, I guess I could think about that, but of course if there was another option I'd be even more enthusiastic.

So at the time there was another option. The Foreign Service at the time had a mid-level entrant program and there was a need for female economists. So, I kept my name on the register and I went to a second interview, where I remember the questions very well.

There was one about Japan because of course in the '80s Japan was as of much concern to America in terms of international competition as China is today, right?

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: At the time, in the '80s, we thought Japan was going to take over the world, overtake the United States and our economy would be ruined. We were worried that Japanese buyers were purchasing Rockefeller Center and other historic buildings. So I remember a question about Japan and the currency of Japan. And luckily I had prepared for the interview by reading several back issues of "The Economist" magazine and so I was able to explain the phenomenon with the Japanese currency to the satisfaction of the examiners and once again was lucky enough to get an offer to come in as an FS-02 economist, economic officer.

Then the process of medical clearance and security clearance began. Well, the security clearance didn't present any real problems, but the medical clearance I remember almost feeling as if I were in a World War II movie about being drafted. I remember going into the main State Department where the medical offices still were at the time and standing in endless lines and talking with endless numbers of medical professionals about every detail of my medical history. And the psychological profile and questions left me with the impression that this was a really big deal. And indeed it was test after test, follow up after follow up for months and months, which I guess accounts for that 27 month lag between the time I took and passed the written exam in November of 1991 until I entered on duty August 8, 1993.

*Q: So you came in in August of '93?*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: What was your A-100 course like?*

KALIN: Well, we were one of the last A-100s before a five year pause in the hiring of Foreign Service officers. So we were quite small. There were 20 of us as I recall. We were the 67<sup>th</sup> A-100 class and we didn't actually meet in A-100, the room A-100 from which the name derives but this facility that we're sitting at today, the National Foreign Affairs Training Center or FSI (Foreign Service Institute). And the 20 of us were quite diverse. There was a man in his very early 20s and there was a former military officer in his late 40s or early 50s. But most of us were between 30 and 35, as I was at the time. It was memorable also because John Limbert was the director of our program. John Limbert had been taken hostage in Tehran in 1979 so he was able to relate to us through that experience what an awesome responsibility we were taking on and how much risk we could be exposing ourselves to. But he was kind and generous and wise. So we all enjoyed working with him.

There was another very solid and helpful officer whose name I don't recall. He was a member of the so-called German Club in the Foreign Service. He had been posted in

German-speaking countries, Germany itself and elsewhere in Europe but also in South Africa, which was fascinating. And then we had another support person who I've known for many years now, who was an economist so that was terrific. And the mid-level coordinator, Janice Clemmons, was also really very supportive of me.

But being mid-level had its upside and downside. On the one hand I was able to basically transfer from GAO to the State Department with my rank and salary intact. Naturally it took the State Department four to six weeks to pay me any salary and get my papers in order, which surprised me because, as one might expect, at the General Accounting Office those things were well taken care of, probably better than anywhere else in government. But anyway, it did work out. And yet, you know, I was not quite in the same position as some of, as my colleagues.

*Q: How did you find your colleagues?*

KALIN: I enjoyed them very much. As I say, they were a very diverse group. We did a lot, as everyone does in A-100, of group exercises, we had a lot of time to get to know each other, we had a lot of lectures, of course, and briefings. I believe it was Anthony Quainton who came in and talked to us. I remember that quite well. I believe it was in the session with spouses too and I remember the words "welcome to the club," which was kind of fascinating for me to hear.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: That's not something I think that would be said today because it not only implied, but it was explicit, that we were the elite, we were the chosen few, we had great responsibilities. I actually still think that's true of organizations like the Foreign Service. But to put it in those terms, to be emphasizing the exclusive nature of it would not be done today. And it struck me even then; it struck me even then.

So, what else was different about being a mid-level entrant? Well, my colleagues were expecting a flag on their desk at the end of A-100, representing their country of assignment that would be selected for them by the management, which is still more or less true today. You're given the list, you indicate your preferences but you will be placed. The mid-level program was not quite as clear as all that. In fact, I got into a little bit of trouble for treating it as if it were a job search in the private sector. There was a lot of confusion, resistance, uncertainty around the mid-level program. I actually went to talk to several office directors in the State Department about different jobs because there was no bid list, per se. There was a bid list but it was for me, if you will, and it was a gray area as to whether I could, how I might find out more about these jobs. So I went and talked to a number of people and I actually got in trouble for doing so because apparently the prejudice against mid-level officers was that they were all political; it was only political, they weren't qualified, they were just political. That was the impression one had. Or they were minorities and underqualified and therefore couldn't succeed and the Service was being forced to take them. Or they were privileged, unduly so and they would be-

*Q: And they knew somebody that-*

KALIN: -and they knew somebody who knew somebody so they would be sent to Paris, whereas hardworking people who came in the normal track would not be sent to Paris. In fact I was told that I would absolutely not be sent to Paris. I asked about Paris because I spoke French, I had studied there, I knew finance and the treasury attaché was located in Paris, etc., but I was told in no uncertain terms that there had just been too many mid-levels in Europe so there was no way. Well, OK. So I was open to other things.

And the assignment that was first offered to me was in Islamabad because the South Asia bureau needed people. I believe it had split from the Near East Asia bureau at the time, although I'm not certain of that. But at any rate they were very interested in my services.

*Q: I would imagine they would be because of-*

KALIN: Simply because I was available in some respects. And they wanted me to spend some time working in Washington before going to Islamabad. Well, I was not altogether interested in Islamabad; in fact, my husband and I had decided that we would try not to go to Islamabad. So I volunteered to go to Africa instead.

There was a job open in Senegal. I admit I had to look Senegal up on the map. But I had been impressed by the presenter from the Africa bureau who talked about how one could really make a difference in Africa; how the Africa bureau recognized that its members were going to be in hardship situations and therefore took care of each other; that they recognized that housing was important and so on.

So I went to, I remember going to see the desk officer who was in charge of Senegal and Mauritania at the time and I didn't really realize how important both of those countries would be. Senegal was my first assignment and Mauritania was my last assignment. And the desk officer was a woman named Gayleatha Brown. She was an African-American from West Virginia, had worked her way through school and graduate studies and the Foreign Service and she was determined to make it. And she asked me, I can't remember how she put it but I didn't understand her question. Basically her question was, are you racially prejudiced? She didn't put it that way and I didn't understand, so I asked again, I said I don't understand what you mean. And she repeated the question in a way that I did understand her drift and I said well, there's just no room for such things. This tells me and my experience later confirmed that there was a lot of racial prejudice in the Department at that time. There was a great deal of it. So she had to ask.

I learned a great deal from Gayleatha. I went to the office of West African Affairs. I ended up indeed working in Washington before going overseas because that's how the timing worked out and I'm glad I did because without that chance to understand the culture of the State Department I would have been far less prepared for overseas work.

I was also sent back to FSI. I think it was one of those things of, you know, the embassy wrote back at a certain point and said well, you know, we see that Carol's score is only three plus on the five point scale and we want to make sure she can communicate with the French speaking interlocutors here. So please, is she willing to go to FSI for a few weeks? And of course I was willing. Why not?

When I got to FSI they reduced my score to three because they said they wanted to show progress, literally. That was one of those funny things. But after a few weeks of French I did improve and went to post.

My husband meanwhile got an offer to learn French so we were both in FSI. We had actually gotten married at that point. There were two or three of us in my A-100 class who were in a similar situation. At the time there was absolutely no way to bring a partner to post unless you were duly married so two or three couples got married at the end of A-100. We were one of them: October 16, 1993.

*Q: What was the background of your husband?*

KALIN: My husband is from Royersford, Pennsylvania. He is a Welshman by ethnic origin. His family were coalminers in Pennsylvania, upper Pennsylvania when there was such a thing as coalmining in that part of the world. He had grown up in the Church of the Brethren, which is related to the Mennonite and Amish traditions. And he had been an activist in environmental work and had a degree in environment and peace studies from a small college called Manchester College, now Manchester University, affiliated with the Church.

He was working for a contractor at the Department of Justice and was a manager at the Department of Justice National Criminal Research Institute. But he was up for adventure too so he had, as I say, supported my application to the Foreign Service, and was prepared to quit working as a contractor. In fact, he had quit earlier from the contractor for other reasons and was working sort of temporary jobs around Capitol Hill at the time so it was easy for him to take the French courses.

He too took the Foreign Service exam, by the way, and he passed the written exam. But when he got to the oral exam he didn't take the same approach I had taken in that group exercise. I guess that's why I remember it. He had a medium to low priority project in the scenario and he did a good job of advocating for it, won his position and then said nothing the rest of the meeting. So the interviewer looked at him and said, I bet you think you're something. And my husband is the most modest, meek. He is passionate about some things as an advocate or an activist but he is not an arrogant person by any means so it's rather ironic. He never did take the exam again.

During that five year hiatus in hiring he decided that one Foreign Service officer in the family was enough. But a couple of my A-100 colleagues who, as I said, married at the same time I did actually did get their husbands eventually into the Service. I remember distinctly one of them talking about her husband being lower on the register and the



roster because he was “pale, male and Yale.” So maybe some of that racial and gender prejudice that I detected was a fact of life or at least impacted others as well. I really think it did.

*Q: Well then, so you're off to where, Senegal?*

KALIN: Yes, I'm off to Senegal.

*Q: You were there from when to when?*

KALIN: We arrived in May of 1994 and left in June or July of 1996. That was a terrific job.

*Q: OK, well let's talk a bit about Senegal per se at that time and then what you were doing and what you were dealing with.*

KALIN: Senegal is of course the former capital of French West Africa. It was a stable place. It was a little worn around the edges, let's say, but still had quite a lot of charm and importance. I enjoyed it a lot for the art and music. The country had just gone through, as had others in the region, the devaluation of the currency. The currency was essentially backed by Paris, very unusual, it's one of the few such arrangements in the world so the economy was in a very interesting state. And being an economist and the Econ officer at post I was, I had an interesting tour. It's as if the dollar was worth half as much today as it was yesterday. That's what people had just gone through when we arrived. So the question was, how would they adapt? Would they stop importing all this cheese and bread from France and start again eating locally grown maize, rice and other goods? And in fact that did happen. It happened in Senegal and throughout West Africa. But what that devaluation also did was sort of unblock the economy. It unlocked some growth that was there. We used to take walks. We lived in an older suburb called Pointe E, or Point E, that again was a bit shabby around the edges, but had been very nice in, let's say, the '60s or '70s. We would go walking along the cliff and see closed shops and not much activity at first, but by the time we left the local economy was picking up quite a bit. It was a great time to be there in many ways.

*Q: How did you find the economic cadre there in the government?*

KALIN: Pretty good, you know. The great thing about working for the American embassy as opposed, let's say, to any other diplomatic mission, the Europeans or others, is that we have locally employed staff, as they're now called, or Foreign Service nationals, as they were known when I arrived in the Service, who can introduce you to just about everybody, good, bad and indifferent. So the Senegalese government was under President Abdou Diouf at the time and was operating pretty well, doing OK, not too bad and they had some really sound figures. I remember going to the head of the national electric company, for example, Senelec, and I was talking to him and gathering information about the prices of fuel and how the country was going to provide for growth and make sure there was enough electricity and so on and so forth. And I was interested

in doing that because my father had introduced me as a kid to power plants and such. And that official gave me really good answers plus some statuettes when I left, so I made friends that way in the local economy. Essentially they responded well to what was happening around them at the time, economically.

*Q: Was there a rather strong French approach to the economy there?*

KALIN: Yes. The French had far more business interests than we did. The American business interests came in one of two varieties, more or less, I'm sorry to say:

- either people with very good intentions but little awareness of the situation in Africa, or I remember talking to some American businesspeople, African-American businesspeople, as it happened, who wanted to bring financial engineering of the kind I had worked on in the '80s to Africa. And I had to explain to them that this would not work because even the basic functions of banking and formal institutions were available only to a very small minority of people and therefore it was almost like, well, before we have the icing we need the cake. So that was, I often had to say things like that, which was too bad because there was potential there.
- people who were up to no good, frankly, people who were corrupt or looking to exploit Africans.

*Q: What was Senegal producing?*

KALIN: Senegal was well known for its peanut industry and its rice industry, believe it or not, in the desert. There is fertile land along the Senegal River that historically had been used for rice. In fact, we now understand that the kind of rice that came to America was not rice from China but rather rice from Africa, and it was brought with the slaves. There was also a sugar refinery that was quite important to the Senegalese because they drink a lot, as do all throughout West Africa, drink a lot of tea with sugar. So that was interesting.

But, as I say, frankly other than consumer goods there wasn't a tremendous opportunity for trade with the United States. Not that Africans didn't appreciate American icons and products. We adopted a Peace Corps couple who were stationed about an hour and a half into the interior. That was a program that the embassy had, to connect, introduce Peace Corps volunteers to younger diplomats so that the Peace Corps volunteer would have a nice place to take a bath and eat a good meal and get a good night's sleep when they came into the capital. So we saw that kind of relationship firsthand. That was fascinating.

*Q: Was there any oil there?*

KALIN: They were looking for it but they never found any, as I recall. So there wasn't that kind of corrupting influence of big mineral deposits. I mean, there were phosphates

in Senegal, too. The French had developed those minerals but there was nothing dramatic going on in that respect at the time.

*Q: How were the peanuts? I mean, were these large monopolies, small farms or what were they?*

KALIN: They were large farms. So again, there was a big sort of colonial overhang. There were some small growers, too, but the small growers, the subsistence farmers if you will, were growing things like millet and rosehips and other more local crops, mangos. We would drive into the countryside and at certain times of the year the roads would literally be piled beyond the height of the car with mangos that people were trying to sell or watermelons in season. We would often drive out just to go and get out of the city and go into the famous Baobab Forest, the West African trees that look like they're upside down. They have tiny, tiny leaves that can be served as a sauce with meat, which we've eaten.

*Q: Did American firms, were they there or was it pretty much just buying?*

KALIN: There were some American firms there but I think the most memorable contact that I had with the American business community was the African/African-American Summit, organized by Reverend Leon Sullivan in those years. He had been a very famous figure in the civil rights movement and led boycotts against South Africa under apartheid. So he was a revered figure and he organized conferences, trips, for African-Americans of two, three, four thousand people at various places in West Africa so that they could experience their heritage and look for business opportunities and so on. And while we were there there was an African/African-American summit. We were a mid-sized embassy, and all of us were involved with that many Americans coming to post. So it was incredible to watch all of those figures at work and to see how much meaning people really did find, coming to see their heritage. There's a place called Gorée Island right off the coast of Senegal near Dakar which is an entrepot of slavery, a very famous place. We visited it many times with delegations from the United States, but seeing that group of people relate to that area was fascinating.

You know, there's all kinds of diplomat stories too about the famous figures who came. We got a phone call about two weeks after the event. There was a couple of French dentists in town who we all used because they were very high quality and Western medicine. So we got a call saying a very, very famous African-American leader had not paid their bill, had a couple thousand dollars worth of dental work done and didn't pay. Well, things like that happen and that's what you work with as diplomats, so. Very interesting.

*Q: Who was your ambassador?*

KALIN: Mark Johnson was his name and he was from Montana, an Economic officer. And I enjoyed working with him very, very much. In fact, one of the arguments I had put forward to assign me to Senegal was that both the ambassador and the DCM (deputy

chief of mission) who of course I had the most contact with as my direct supervisor and as someone who was mentoring new officers, Bob Kott, were Economic officers. And then there was the AID (United States Agency for International Development) director, Ann Williams, really a colorful figure, had been working for USAID for many, many years, knew a lot about Africa. She would dress in the incredibly wonderful Senegalese clothing, which we all tried to do. Not all of us could pull it off equally well but the Senegalese are known for their beauty and their sense of style and grace, and so combine that with the French community and it's really a pleasure to see.

*Q: How was the economy of the neighboring area?*

KALIN: If I said the region was in some period of adjustment due to the CFA (*Coopération financière en Afrique*) franc. At the time, in the mid '90s the Ivory Coast or Cote d'Ivoire had a much stronger economy than Senegal. Ivory Coast unfortunately got itself into political turmoil in the mid '90s and fell apart, essentially, so that Senegal benefited. Many companies moved their operations from Ivory Coast to Senegal and that sort of cultural and transit regional hub function became increasingly important in Senegal.

Things happen in fits and starts, right? I was talking a minute ago about business opportunities; there was a company called U.S. Africa Airways that launched around the time we were stationed in Africa and it was terrific service. It went from New York to Senegal to South Africa and sadly it didn't last very long. There just wasn't enough demand for that trip to make it work. But we certainly welcomed them and tried to help them in every way we could. In fact, we left Senegal on U.S. Africa Airways and flew back to New York. It's really unfortunate that that project just did not hold together. Transport in Africa has always been a problem. Lots of stories one could tell about Air Afrique, the colonial carrier that was nicknamed "Air Tragique" at the time. But it's still the best way to get around Africa.

*Q: Was it a democracy or-?*

KALIN: Yes. Senegal was quite stable. They were democratic. We lived down the street from the major opposition figure, a man named Abdoulaye Wade, who was free to operate more or less. In fact, he was elected president just a few years ago, peacefully, which is rare, sadly, in that part of the world. I think maybe a good way to give the flavor of the time and the context is there's a book that we all read when we were in Africa. If you were in Africa in the '90s this is what you read. There was a book called "The Ends of the Earth," by Robert D. Kaplan and it talks about how hard it is to overcome the negatives of geography, the isolation of the forest, the deprivation of the desert. It is quite a pessimistic book, predicting that Africa would go in decline, indeed that civilization was headed for decline. But we debated that book a lot. In fact, Africa did go through terrible turmoil. Fortunately Senegal escaped much of that but it did go through terrible turmoil in the '90s as is well known, but it has recovered to a fair extent in recent years.

*Q: Did you get any high level visits from the States or not?*

KALIN: Nothing remarkable during those two years. The secretary of state didn't come during our tenure, for example. Secretaries have come through since but not during the time we were there, nor the president nor the vice president. But there was the occasional congressman and as I said that very large meeting of the African/African-American summit was very good preparation for later, later visits.

*Q: Well how did the African-Americans behave? I mean, I always think of groups from the United States of any ethnic group or something else can sometimes be pretty arrogant or pretty frivolous or something like this.*

KALIN: Well, as I say, they behaved pretty well, actually. You know, Senegal is a tourist destination for Europeans so they were used to accepting large groups of people from a different culture. That helped a lot because a lot of these kinds of misunderstandings happen in places that are not used to handling large groups of people. So Senegal had the infrastructure that could handle it pretty well. We didn't have any major problems with that group. As I say, we did get phone calls that people had, some of the VIPs (very important person) had taken advantage of local services and not paid.

There was one controversy where the tourism infrastructure was offensive to the visitors. In one of the large hotels the staff, Europeans, were going to put on some entertainment one night. And they did so in black face makeup. You can imagine how offensive this was to the African-Americans who were there.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: So that was a bit of a problem. But apologies were made, quickly, and it was sorted out.

*Q: Did the French expatriates sort of dominate the place in a way or not?*

KALIN: No, I would not say they did by the time of the '90s. They certainly did in the '70s, as late as the '70s, even the '60s, certainly in the '60s. But I think that there's another group that I probably should talk about that exists all over West Africa and that is the Lebanese.

You know, the Lebanese are everywhere and we learned this in a couple of ways. One is, as being the economic officer I would often go downtown and meet with traders or commercante, as we called them, and I found quickly that many of them were Lebanese, second, third generation, fourth even, you know, living in West Africa.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: So that was fascinating. That was kind of a look at that culture.

The other, sadder way that we learned about it was we all spent about a month working on the evacuation from Liberia and their civil war was happening at that time. And Lebanese were among the evacuees along with Italians, British, French, of course Liberians themselves, but we were, many of them came out literally with a plastic bag and a couple of items and they said, this is all we have to show for a generation of work in Africa. It was quite eye opening. That was the first time I had worked with the military in this kind of operational capacity so my role, as with other mid-level junior officers, was to be at the airport and manage the intake and the groups of Americans who were coming through, American citizens. They would land on the helicopters or the planes. I guess they had been helicoptered to Guinea or another neighboring country and then were flying into Dakar. And we would try to help them get back to the United States; maybe they didn't have money, maybe they didn't have food, maybe they didn't have many ties left in the United States. As well as the Europeans. So that was a very efficient operation and one that was quite successful but very eye opening for somebody who was doing it for the first time. You know, just to see how to manage people in a crisis situation was fascinating.

*Q: How was health?*

KALIN: Ah, well. We had been warned and rightly so that we would experience a lot of annoying health problems. And we had food poisoning, I think, three or four times in the first six months when we were posted in Africa. We learned several lessons from that. One is never eat the hors d'oeuvres at a summer reception because you can't tell if they've been refrigerated or properly handled and neither can your host. So we quickly kind of experienced that. We also understood but had to put into practice the idea that Africa is a very warm and welcoming culture with the tradition of shaking hands multiple times a day, literally at every meeting. So if you saw someone in the morning on your way into the embassy you would shake their hand and say "good morning." If you saw them as you were taking a coffee break at 10:00 a.m. and they happened to be there you would again shake their hands and say "good morning." If you ran into them after lunch, likewise. So we had to learn to wash our hands very, very frequently. Not because people were particularly slovenly, no. It's simply that our bodies weren't used to the environment. After about six months, once we had learned what to do and what not to do, things were pretty much OK.

We also had to adjust to the fact that there was a malaria risk. We took the mefloquine tablets for the first few weeks but we soon discovered that they produced incredibly vivid dreams. So, as my husband said, it was very entertaining but not very restful to sleep at night. So we went and instead took the older medications, Chloroquine and Paludrine. This was at a time when there was a great deal of skepticism as to whether diplomats and particularly soldiers taking those particular medications were just fabricating these stories about poor sleep and such, but the Foreign Service was very good about making those kinds of adjustments. We were lucky to have terrific doctors working with us.

So was the Peace Corps. Our Peace Corps volunteer friend, a woman named Cynthia Johnson, is now a sociologist at the University of Washington. Anyway, she was our

volunteer, the one we had adopted. And toward the end of her term she was staying at our house before and after she made a bus trip through West Africa. She went all the way into Mali to see Dogon country and then down to the Ivory Coast and Ghana to see the sights and come on back, local transportation. But she had forgotten to take her malarial medicine. So one night at dinner she started to get chills and feel ill and we quickly suspected malaria. That was confirmed and she spent two or three days with us, wearing my husband's pajamas and we were nursing her along. We finally concluded that she needed to go to the hospital so my husband and I picked her up and put her in the white Jeep we had bought to use in Senegal. We'd bought that Jeep because at the time you could only ship American cars. You couldn't buy a foreign car and have it shipped; you had to have one made in America. Well, fortunately for us Jeeps were still made in the U.S. so we had our Jeep. Anyway, we took Cynthia to the Peace Corps medical hut and she recovered and everything was fine. But we saw that serious illnesses can happen and do.

Some of our African friends weren't so lucky. People we knew in villages who got an infection or couldn't get medication or what have you, we heard of several deaths of that kind because we actually went to the village where Cynthia and her then-husband were working several times. In fact, my husband's mother and brother came. My mother-in-law was in her early 70s at the time and had never been outside Pennsylvania, never been on an airplane. And she felt as if she were in the pages of "National Geographic," she told us when we took her to the village. And the villagers welcomed her very graciously. You know, their culture respects older people and it was a terrific visit.

*Q: How did you feel about the Foreign Service after your tour there?*

KALIN: Well, you know, we had told ourselves that we would give it a try because tenuring did apply for mid-level officers as well as people who had entered through the traditional path. So it was like OK, let's see if we like this, we'll give it a try. We had a great experience in Senegal. And my husband had a job in the embassy with the facilities maintenance operation. He had supervised lots of warehouse workers in his previous job and so he was working on the motor pool and housing and everything else with Senegalese staff and had a great time. I had a great time. I had asked if I could extend in Senegal and was told no, you don't have tenure, you need to get an onward assignment. So I did, but we were sorry to leave Senegal. We really felt that both outside the embassy we were welcome and people were interested in learning about the United States and sharing what they were doing. Inside the embassy it was about 45 officers, mid-size so there were a lot of people to do things with, get together, have dinner. Movie nights at the Marine House were terrific. And yet the embassy was large enough that you didn't feel that if there were people you didn't get along with you had to spend all your time with them. So it was great; it was a great first tour. And they say if you like your first tour you'll stay in and that was true for us.

*Q: So where'd you go?*

KALIN: Well, there were three posts on the bid list that I was interested in and I ended up ordering my bid list number one Cairo, number two Paris and number three Berlin. My husband said to me, you know, you're very independent, you like adventure and you like to make a difference. So maybe you'd be better off in Cairo than in Paris or Berlin where the work is more technical almost.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: And he was right. Although we'd had a wonderful time in Africa, we decided not to stay in the Africa bureau because we were concerned about his career, what could he do other than work at an embassy. He liked working at the embassy but he wanted to do other things. So we decided Cairo would be a perfect post for us because it's large, it's fascinating. We had grown up, both of us, learning about the pyramids and watching shows about King Tut's tombs and all of this stuff. In fact, I had been to Egypt a couple of times. We had gone there for a commercial officers' conference together, my husband and I, while stationed in Senegal, so we were delighted to get the posting in Egypt. I guess you might say, I wouldn't say that about Cairo, but maybe our decision to stay in the Middle East was an instance of fools rush in where angels fear to tread, but at the time when we got our posting to Cairo we were delighted with it. And that was a time of relative peace and stability in Egypt, too, so there were a lot of possibilities and it ended up working out well.

*Q: Well then you went to Cairo?*

KALIN: We did. We went after a short home leave back in the U.S. We went to Cairo and arrived in August of 1996 and stayed until summer of 1998, another two year tour which had planned to be three but I got a good opportunity at the end of 1998 to work for the undersecretary for economics.

*Q: So what was your job in Cairo?*

KALIN: Well, I again had a job as an Economic officer but the job that I thought I was signing up for based on my conversations with post and the bid list and so on and so forth actually turned out to be quite a bit different when I got there. And the reason for that was Ambassador Ned Walker had concluded that we needed to not just reorganize but approach our work at large embassies very differently. Around the time I came in, in the early '90s, I believe even before I got to the field in Senegal, in the early '90s the annual reports or the scheduled annual reports that Economic officers had been doing for years were suspended. It was thought that there was plenty of information available on the oil industry, the financial markets, the government budgets and so on from other sources and that there was no need any more for Foreign Service officers to collect that kind of data, which I think is quite unfortunate.

*Q: Well because you don't get, there's a different feel.*



KALIN: You don't, unless you write about it, you don't know about it in some respects. Unless you prepare, focus on it you don't understand it. So I think that was kind of a mistake. I guess that was the beginning of the internet age. You talked about me being on Wall Street at the beginning of that change in diplomacy in the early '90s. The question was, well, do we even need diplomats anymore? now that we have the internet? Of course it is, in many ways, a naïve question at best.

We got to Cairo. There we did have a lot of big visits; the Undersecretary for Economic Affairs came in the first few weeks of my time there, Joan Spiro was her name, to a big conference. So that was one of my first experiences as a control officer for a senior official. It worked great. Her staff assistant or special assistant rather, chief of staff, was someone who became important in my Foreign Service career. Philo Dibble was his name and I followed him into that job ultimately. I remember vividly sitting there with him at 11:00 p.m. one night or whatever it was, saying you know, remind me never to bid on a job like yours. And two years later I left Cairo because I had that job with a different undersecretary.

But Cairo was, you know, we came to see it as Washington on the Nile. It too taught us a great deal, but different things. My husband worked again at the embassy. He got a good job with a project to work with science and technology exchanges between Egypt and the United States, kind of a grant making job because he had some experience with that.

My work, well, I was saying that my work was not what I expected, not only because the reporting was de-emphasized both institutionally and at post but because Ambassador Ned Walker had decided that we needed to work inter-agency. So we had weekly working groups, very large working groups that brought together all of the various components of our mission in Cairo. USAID, for example, had 1,000 people. Cairo at the time was one of the largest embassies in the world, if not "the" largest embassy in the world. So USAID had 1,000 people. His idea was to bring USAID into contact with us in the State Department; the two were still separate at the time and USAID was completely independent. As well as there were working groups for the military, for the FBI which was just establishing an office in Cairo at the time. So the inter-agency approach kind of ruled and that made all of us sort of coordinators as much as we were reporting officers. That experiment had mixed results in my mind. In some respects I do think that we were able, by virtue of the fact that we, Foreign Service officers, had been recruited for our ability to see the big picture, to put things in perspective, to ferret out information that was relevant, to make distinctions about what was important and what wasn't. More so in some respects than USAID officers who'd been trained to look at a whole different set of criteria or military officers who saw things from a totally different professional perspective. I do think that policy was better as a result of those coordinating meetings. Whether we as Foreign Service officers or as the State Department had enough time left over, played enough of a role in actually getting to know Egyptian counterparts is a different question.

Having said that, we did get to know a lot of people in Egypt. I just remember one weekend trip that we went on with a new friend called Mahmoud Mohieldin, who is now

a managing director at the World Bank. He and his wife lived not too far from us in Cairo and their son was about a year or two old. One day we decided we would go to the desert, to a place called Ain Sukhna, which is kind of a spa-like place. So we drove over to Mahmoud's place in our Jeep and then we got in his car with his wife and baby and he drove us out to Ain Sukhna, which was about an hour or so away. And we had a great lunch and then we thought about going swimming. And so we did. And about 10 or 15 minutes into that swim I realized I was the only woman in the pool at all. I recognized that Mahmoud was having to explain that to people because he had taken us to a local place that was not a tourist facility. In Egypt as in Senegal there was, of course, an enormous tourist industry but that doesn't mean every place was for tourists. So that was remarkable to me, the fact of not having that kind of freedom to engage in as simple an activity as swimming was interesting to me. A little disturbing, honestly.

*Q: Well was the Muslim Brotherhood influence apparent in those days?*

KALIN: It was apparent in that around that time was when we began to remark that more and more women were veiled. There were a lot of bombings, killings, etc., going on, the fight against terrorism as the precursor to it, so to speak. Or let's say there was precursor to what we know today. There had been terrorists in the Middle East, obviously, for many years before that. In fact, I remember hearing about it in the '80s. But the Mubarak government had it under control pretty much. So we weren't exposed to it every day in Cairo. We were exposed to ideas or manifestations of Islam that, again, were shocking to me. I saw for the first time, for example, women from the Gulf, the Arabian Gulf, who were not only wearing a head scarf but also a niqab-

*Q: A face mask.*

KALIN: -face mask as well as gloves as well as socks with their sandals so that you could see no part of them. And yet they were moving in society. This to me was shocking when I saw it for the first time. We lived in downtown Cairo, in a place called the World Trade Center, believe it or not, al-markaz it-tuggari, right. We had to learn that in Arabic because unlike in Senegal, where we were both comfortable with the language, in Egypt we had no language training. It was not considered necessary for Economic officers to have any language training since, after all, business was done with people who were English speaking internationalists, for the most part. At least that was the thinking. In fact, it was a budget issue as much as anything else.

So we arrived, we had no Arabic, we had to learn the name of our building and our building was a high-rise that was along the Nile and accommodated people from the Arabian Gulf and others and that's how we picked up on these trends in the Middle East. But also it was right next to an area that essentially was a slum, a place called Beaulac. And so my husband and I took a walk a couple of times back through that and it was like going back to medieval times. The name "Beaulac" comes from the French who, when Cairo was much, much smaller than it is today, built a lake there and a couple of, I don't know, circa Victorian era or thereabouts, nice apartment buildings. But this area had been filled in essentially with tiny, handmade dwellings. Once you entered that part of the city

you could only see the sky. You didn't know where you were. It was easy to get disoriented. Women were invisible. Men were drinking tea by the side of the road and boys were boys, maybe some girls too, playing in the streets. So the contrasts that we saw were fascinating to us.

*Q: What was your impression of working in the embassy?*

KALIN: Washington on the Nile, you know. It was big, it was a relatively recently built, high-rise needle stuck in the middle of what once had been a pleasant courtyard complex. For security reasons it was an Inman building so one had to wait for the elevator, go upstairs behind the bulletproof glass, so on and so forth, to work. There was a fair amount of competition in the political and economic section. In fact, that merger happened as part of Ambassador Walker's reorientation, if you will, reinvention, if you will, of our work. People would look at your reports and give you comments as a colleague but there was a terrible dispute, for example, among two political officers over whose business card should say "political internal," right, or "political external." There was enormous conflict over such things. Because the sections were being merged and reorganized perhaps that exaggerated it. At the same time those same people, we would all go to the pyramids on the weekends, we would all ride camels. I used to go ride horseback around the pyramids every weekend with the Pol-Mil officer, for example. My husband, who dislikes horses, would sit at the Mena House, a beautiful hotel, and wait for us. The Pol-Mil officer was a woman, by the way. The other Political officers who dealt with wholly different things, you know, would invite us all over for dinner and we'd have, I don't know, Scrabble contests or something. So it was quite, quite good. I will also say that we stayed in touch with many people that we met in Cairo over the years.

*Q: Well was there any concern about the Mubarak regime at the time?*

KALIN: There was. We knew that Mubarak was probably going to run for a third term, for example, and we all thought that was a shame because the third time, we were all convinced, would not be the charm. The state of emergency was in place and it didn't seem to affect everyday life but it nevertheless was something that we were aware of through human rights reporting contacts: the occasional harsh repression of a demonstration, jokes our Egyptian colleagues told us. So yes, there were concerns. We saw that change was needed and that it wasn't coming.

On the economic side of things or let's say the relationship side of things the dominance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Egypt's role in that was very clear to us. When I was there the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Camp David Peace Accords was coming up. And it was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary also of our providing \$3 billion to Israel and \$2 billion to Egypt annually as part of that accord. So what were we to do? We worked with the Egyptians on that. Congress was getting restive. They wanted to cut aid to Egypt. USAID was frustrated because Egypt was not cooperating with the policies that they suggested, or the programs. So what were we to do?

Well, by then Dan Kurtzer was coming onboard as the ambassador. He was an interesting choice for the job because he was not just Jewish but observant so that the embassy, the ambassador's residence within the embassy had to be cleaned in a particular way and kept kosher. And the Egyptians knew that. So that was interesting. But anyway, that's sort of a sidelight.

We did try, and the Egyptians were quite pragmatic. They were quite willing to take a reduction in economic aid but they wanted to preserve their military proportions with the Israelis. So I think that there is some truth to the analysis that because of our interest in the state of Israel a lot of our relationships with surrounding countries were distorted.

*Q: Well, I think this is probably a good place to stop. Where did you go from there?*

KALIN: In Egypt, we left Egypt a year early because I got an offer to work for Stu Eizenstat, the undersecretary for economics. And that took us back to Washington right around the time of the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

*Q: OK. Today is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, 2014, with Carol Kalin. And Carol, we left off; you're off to go to work with Stu Eizenstat.*

KALIN: Yes, we did. But I think some news this week has prompted me to tell one more story about Egypt if I may.

*Q: Oh please do.*

KALIN: The news story I'm thinking about of course is Chuck Hagel's resignation as Secretary of Defense. I first met Chuck Hagel in Egypt in 1997. It was one of his first trips abroad as a senator and since he was from Nebraska and I was from Kansas, as was customary in the diplomatic corps I was asked to be his control officer. So it was my first time, in fact, to be a CODEL control officer and it was quite a visit. It occurred during August, not a time that government officials are particularly accessible anywhere in the world, and that was also true in Egypt. So our task was to organize the meetings with the senator and his then staff. Interestingly he was with just a couple of staff, not with a large entourage as many congressional members' travel, this time. So we got together the group in Embassy Cairo and we sent our GSO up to Alexandria, where Mubarak had a summer home, of course on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. And we spent many wonderful hours in the van traveling between Cairo and Alexandria out to the residence of President Mubarak and had lots of very interesting conversations about the Middle East and what was happening at that time. So it was quite a good visit. I think what impressed me about Chuck Hagel was how hardworking he was. He had no particular desire or need to go shopping or find partners for squash, as famously had been the case with the late Arlen Specter of my new home state of Pennsylvania. So it was quite an interesting and productive visit. Moreover, the staff stayed in touch with us as we went forward and transitioned; I transitioned personally to work for Stu Eizenstat in Washington. So I just wanted to mention that and compliment, as many others have complimented Chuck Hagel from my personal standpoint.

*Q: I'm glad you did. Alright well, you would work with Stu Eizenstat from when to when?*

KALIN: I came out of Egypt, my husband and I had thought about going back to Washington. His mother had been diagnosed with what was to be a terminal illness in 1997 and so we had been back and forth several times. We were hoping to get back to Washington to take care of her. In the event, she passed away before we transferred back. We were going back in September of 1998 just as the Monica Lewinsky scandal was breaking. And I remained on E-Staff, as it was known, for an academic year, essentially, until the summer of 1999.

*Q: What were you doing on the staff?*

KALIN: Being in Egypt had made me what we call an NEA hand. If not an "Arabist" then someone who was a part of this group of maybe 150 people who specialized in what was called the "mother bureau" by insiders. So my job on E-Staff was to represent the interests of NEA and also to work with all issues involving NEA, the bureau, the Middle East as well as now South Asia. So it was a terrific opportunity. I had been the control officer not only for Stu Eizenstat's predecessor, Joan Spiro, but for him as well. And so I had an interview with him one night at 9:00 p.m. and he accepted my nomination and took me onboard. So I left Cairo a bit early.

Well, we were a little bit reluctant to leave because we had enjoyed Cairo and by then my husband was the editor of "PC World Egypt Magazine". But it was too good an opportunity to pass up for me.

*Q: What were you hearing about Stu Eizenstat before? What were people saying? I mean, you know, sort of corridor gossip or whatever?*

KALIN: That's a very interesting part of the story. Well, there were a couple of things I looked at before I took the job. One was a memorable cartoon in "The Economist" magazine. It depicted Stu Eizenstat and a staff member behind a computer terminal and papers flying around him. So he was known to be somewhat in the classic mode of a hard driving, hardworking official. Stu of course was a lawyer rather than an economist by training. One thing he said, and that others said about him even before I met him, was that a good process leads to good outcomes. And that is, I think, what made people respect Stu Eizenstat so much.

On the other side there were people who were concerned about Stu's position, being such an important leader in the American Jewish community. He often took what you might call a very partisan position, supporting the state of Israel. Some of his earlier writings before coming back into government in this role were not in line with American policy at the time. For example, he had written an article in support of Israel's military arsenal. NEA was glad to see Stu in the position he was in because at that time a lot of U.S. policy on the Middle East was designed to achieve peace among the Israelis and Palestinians and others in the Middle East through economics. He tried to build those relationships.

The Oslo Accords were still more or less being observed and there were many, many projects to build a free trade zone for Palestine and other kinds of exchanges between the parties to this awful dispute. And so it was in that sense a big advantage to have someone of Stu's prominence in the undersecretary's office for economic affairs.

*Q: Well you say he seemed to be somewhat at odds with our general policy towards the Middle East. So often the problem is if you're not 100 percent for everything for Israel you're not on the team. Was this the problem or was it something else?*

KALIN: It was something different because certainly, as I just said, Stu was unquestionably a very strong supporter of Israel.

Stu at the time was also the president's special envoy for Holocaust recovery, for example. And so he not only had the responsibilities of the undersecretary for economic affairs but also this special responsibility and it was a big part of his work. He had a wonderful attorney, actually, on his staff who was primarily responsible for that effort. But I guess what NEA sometimes was hesitant about was the fact that Stu himself was willing to meet with all comers. There were people who were quite extreme in their views from the American Jewish community. He was happy to meet with them regardless. So in some respects I think NEA felt that some of the meetings that Stu was willing to take should not take place. He traveled regularly to Israel even during the time I was on staff. We went together to Israel and actually met Ariel Sharon who was at that time minister of industry. So these kinds of high and low profile encounters were not always to the bureau's liking. Moreover at the time, the special envoy's office, led by Dennis Ross and Aaron Miller, was quite active. Sometimes including who would take what role with respect to all of the players in this very complicated process. We worked it out. For my own part I truly respected Stu's approach, which was to represent the institution's point of view, to represent the policy of the United States whether or not he agreed 100 percent with it.

For example, I personally saw him read all the talking points that the bureau had prepared during meetings whether or not, again, he agreed with them. I think his training as an attorney enabled him to do that successfully and again to me that was quite noteworthy and even admirable. For my own part, I felt no pressure, for example, to get involved in the Holocaust recovery matters. I did handle a couple of those cases, but on a backup basis. With my Swiss-American background I felt that I could not particularly be objective on those matters and that was no problem in the office. So all in all an interesting, profitable year. We were able to get NEA support, for example, for an initiative that Stu wanted to do and which has survived in one form or another for a long time for good or bad called the U.S.-North Africa Economic Partnership. So a lot got done. It was a very, very successful, very, very eventful year.

*Q: Well how did he use you specifically?*

KALIN: As I said, I was the point person for all issues regarding the NEA or South Asia. So I, for example, cleared on all of the annual reports regarding our free trade agreement

with Israel. Again, I had his confidence and support as a member of his staff which he extended to all of us; there were about a half a dozen of us working in E at the time to question information or numbers that people got from the bureau and to really give an honest opinion. So that was one way.

I also went to meetings about Pakistan. Our relationship with Pakistan has been long and complicated and I was able to report back on internal meetings on that subject, attend the morning meetings related to all of these issues. As well as staff the undersecretary directly, do the classic function of carrying bags and more, advising him on what to say and coordinating the preparation of his remarks and joining him generally to provide my advice.

*Q: What was your impression of the NEA bureau as far as giving information, working with you and all?*

KALIN: Well, the bureau was fairly close knit in that era. The undersecretary, as I said, had a close but at the same time distant relationship with many of the personalities within the bureau. Martin Indyk had come in as assistant secretary. Beth Jones, an incredibly professional PDAS, was in place. There was, at the time, I believe three or four deputy assistant secretaries only. Things have expanded now beyond that but at the time there was one political appointee, the deputy assistant secretary of Near Eastern Affairs who was a woman named Toni Verstandig. And she and Stu sometimes clashed in terms of, again, as I say, who we should be meeting with, what position we should be taking, exactly how we should approach our work, but generally things moved smoothly.

Not that there weren't challenges externally to our positions as well. I remember being in some meetings later questioning whether our assistance to either Israel or Egypt really mattered in terms of influencing their behavior, for example. The question of whether we were going to succeed was an interesting one. That was a goal at the time rather than to, as now, advance any kind of peace process. At the time there was thinking that we ought to somehow solidify friendships and in particular with the Egyptians, warm them to the regional leadership position, if you will, or certainly regional partnership ideas with Israel.

So NEA was an interesting place at the time, lots of communication with the White House. There were two or three officers in key roles on the White House staff who were on rotation. I think those rotations from State are now, frankly and unfortunately, less common than they once were. But the bureau very much felt that they were a part of a special group at the time. Having been in Cairo helped enormously in all of this because I had met so many of these people coming in and out of Cairo and was to meet many, many more in Washington, not only through E-Staff but also in my follow-on assignment as deputy director of NEA.

*Q: Did you find any of the people you were meeting, I mean, that you thought were really, I won't say cracking the whip but really seemed to be quite influential?*

KALIN: I think that Stu Eizenstat himself had some influence, of course, on our policy. I think that certainly the peace process office had a lot of influence on how people felt towards the region. But I would also cite figures like Frank Wisner, who were already retired were still very much in touch with the Department and in touch with NEA at the time. I think that the reality was that things were far less, ironically, personality-driven than they are today. I sadly became a little cynical anytime I heard the words “special envoy” or “initiative.” I would say that my skepticism began at this moment in Washington because many times the deliverables or action forcing event or, you know, this kind of committee or initiative work was not successful, was in fact a response to failure in your basic policy approach. It was almost as if we were trying to negotiate with ourselves within this large bureaucracy in Washington. Still, it was less personality driven than it is today. People were intellectual individually but they weren’t quite as brand driven as people are today.

*Q: Did you feel the hot breath of the Israeli lobby in what you were doing and all?*

KALIN: We did. At the time, I remember getting material every other day from one or the other of the think tanks in Washington or lobbying organizations for Israel. So a lot of that came across. And there were relatively few think tanks or similar organizations devoted to let’s make a Palestinian cause or Arab cause, and they were far less active. So certainly there was a very big influence on policy from that quarter. At the same time, there were a number of Jewish-American officers who were very vocal in their opinions internally about what should be done with respect to this part of the world. And their voices were given a lot of weight, frankly. Certainly I felt that there were times, as I say, when I was able to question, for example, the economic value of our free trade arrangements like with Israel or other initiatives that we had going at the time, free trade zones for Jordan and the other players near Israel to try to, again, encourage business ties. To me as an economist, they weren’t working necessarily very well, or at all. They were political entirely. So it was one of those things that cut mostly one way. I mentioned that there was a report that came a bit later from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. And several of us gathered with the researchers from that group to talk about whether our, the money we were giving under the Camp David Accord to both Israel and Egypt and later money that we gave to Jordan really made any difference. And the study concluded that the donations made a very limited amount of difference. Honestly, OK? So while, analysis went on, politics was tremendously important in what point of view ultimately prevailed.

*Q: You were saying that you had, or maybe I misunderstood you, Jewish officers, I mean people with Jewish origin in the Foreign Service who weighed in.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: I mean, did you feel that they were in a way stepping beyond American interests or were they interpreted this and did we have the equipment to, people who, espouse you might say the Arab cause?*



KALIN: I think the whole question of whether U.S. interests are coterminous or the same as Israel's interests was something we had to constantly focus on. Publicly, we were very much and are very much supporters of Israel. And I think we were in somewhat of a transition generationally even back then. So for example, we talked about why if, you know, one person said to me, at the political level, well, if little Jordan can successfully enter into free trade or goods agreements with Israel and get its act together and cooperate why can't Egypt? Well, to me that's like saying well, if Delaware can have no taxes on corporations well why can't New York?

So there was that kind of discussion going on frequently and it was very difficult, frankly, even on fairly routine matters to take a dissenting position, let's say, if one of the parties to any initiative was Israel. And frankly, those people who were disposed to take the Arab side, and there were many, were at a disadvantage inside the bureaucracy. So I think that just as is true in any case where an officer or an official has a personal tie to a particular part of the world but especially in Israel, there has to be some balance and some countervailing forces and frankly that is not always easy. That's just not always easy.

The idea, for example, that our alignment with Israel is a strategic asset, many would say that in fact it's a strategic liability if you look at the population, if you look at the economic ties and so on. But that view was quite disparaged or at any rate politics mattered more than that kind of analysis.

*Q: Well I did, for example, on that particular analysis, which I happen to subscribe myself, but was that given much weight or is it just sort of a shrug of the shoulders and say well politics are politics and let's get on with it?*

KALIN: I think that often it was the latter. You know, often it was the case that simply the traffic would bear only so much defense. So that certain kinds of questions were just not worth the political capital, if you will, or the bureaucratic capital to change course, for example. The free trade agreement comes to mind as an area I happen to know about and it just was, one might get a sentence or two of questioning into a memo but the bottom line was that the report to Congress was going to say everything was fine. There you have it.

*Q: Well did, you say you went on one trip and met Ariel Sharon.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: What was the impression of Sharon in the bureau and all when you were there?*

KALIN: For all of what I just said about being influenced by politics and lobbying, people in the bureau knew the players personally so there was, again, a pretty realistic sense that Sharon was a very hardline politician. People knew his history. I remember that meeting quite clearly and he, at the time his wife was quite ill, terminally ill, in fact, as it would turn out, so that he was, even then, rather a lonely figure. He was almost a

combative one in our meeting, which again was about matters of industrial policy and so on. But he was not yet prime minister and had somewhat limited influence in the mid '90s. As I say, the bureau knew the players. We knew Netanyahu's, Bibi Netanyahu's history. People would express frustration with Bibi Netanyahu saying it's over, etc., etc., as well as to Abu Mazen on the Palestinian side. But that again didn't always translate into stopping when we should have stopped or going when we should have gone.

*Q: Did you find the president weighing in much or was he a figure that you were concerned with?*

KALIN: That particular year I don't recall anything that got the president's attention per se. Again, our White House connections were quite good because we had NEA hands in the White House on rotation. So I think we felt pretty comfortable communicating.

One thing that happened during my time in Eizenstat's office that struck me as I remember was the creation of the International Religious Freedom Act. I recall the discussion between Stu Eizenstat and Wendy Chamberlain was focused almost entirely on the domestic politics. And a couple of us on the back bench raised our hands and said well, the Arab countries are likely to react in such and such a way or other countries are likely to feel constrained. And that was put in and we moved on. So I think that U.S. foreign policy has never been free of compromises, let's say, nor should it be a purely domestic consideration. But I think the, again, even the Monica Lewinsky case, as sordid and silly as it was, kind of illustrated that we were in the process of losing generationally the idea that politics stopped at the water's edge.

*Q: Well tell me, I mean just to get a feel for, you're obviously very far removed from the thing, but how did the Monica Lewinsky business affect you personally? I mean, as far as your feeling about things?*

KALIN: You know, we had started to read about it overseas in Egypt and we basically avoided talking about it. There was no need or desire to talk about it whatsoever. Overseas the impression there was either that it was too sordid to discuss or not necessary to discuss, that there was not such an enormous, you know, that the personal issues of a leader did not necessarily and usually did not, in fact, affect their professional or leadership, even leadership contributions. That attitude is much different today.

When we got back to Washington I remember reading transcripts in "The Washington Post" the first day we got back and thinking to myself that this was embarrassing and silly, that it did not rise to the level of impeachment in any way. It was most disturbing to me personally as an abuse of power, if you will, in the sense of someone in a powerful position getting involved with someone who was far subordinate to themselves. It did bother me at that level. But I did not think it merited what happened. I mean, I remember watching the impeachment in the office with others of E-staff and Stu Eizenstat and just thinking this is not what we need to be doing. This is an enormous distraction from what we were talking about. I mean certainly it was a great abuse and unfortunate event. Personally, I felt sorry for Monica Lewinsky, frankly, and unhappy that the president

would do such a thing. But I did not feel it merited anything like the response it generated.

*Q: It did strike me that, the whole business, I mean, you look at it. Supposedly an investigation of supposedly the illegal, something illegal, the Whitewater thing where the president and his wife lost money, for God's sakes. You know, I mean, the old saying, who benefits? But I mean, everything led off from there but it was a sampling of the intensity of the partisanship that has increased over the years.*

KALIN: Sadly, yes, I think that's right: partisanship is out of control. And I also think that this has to do with, again, even the passage of all of these acts of Congress, even the Religious Freedom Act which I support those principles. Religious freedom, given the moneyed background is a very important concept. I definitely support that. But putting it in the form of a law with sanctions and so on; sanctions are an important part of foreign policy but they are not as effective as one might hope. And proportionality is important. All of this to say that we have not only partisanship but litigiousness had started to arise at that time and it affected our foreign policy as well as our domestic policy and institutions in kind of negative ways.

*Q: Well there is, you know, there is this, so much of it is posturing but it screws up our foreign policy.*

KALIN: Right.

*Q: What about Egypt? Not Egypt but Israel in religious freedom. How did it stand?*

KALIN: Well those were, you know, countries that both had some religious freedom issues and both, as did other countries that I began to work with. Certainly Saudi Arabia, where I later served, had enormous issues with this report. But I think, anyway, that all of the countries that I next worked with had some flaw or another as regards to that topic. But in the grand scheme of things I think people recognized that. And there were a lot of exemptions from that law. We not only produced the report, but we produced requests for exemptions from the sanctions every year.

*Q: Do you recall any of that? Do you recall any of the exemptions that we were concerned about at the time?*

KALIN: You know, I think that this was, it was not only the religious freedom report but several others that, several other similar congressional reports and initiatives and laws that we frankly had to ask for exemptions simply because we otherwise would be, would have no continuity. Otherwise we would be conducting a foreign policy in this kind of legalistic or litigious or mechanical way. That simply wouldn't work. As regrettable as it is you have so little religious freedom in Saudi Arabia. As regrettable as it is from our perspective that Arab citizens are not treated the same as Jewish citizens of Israel and so on and so forth. But I would place myself more in the realism camp than the idealism

camp of foreign policy. Realistically we can't stop programs or stop connecting relations with key countries simply on that basis.

*Q: I know. I mean this is, unfortunately we get holier than thou and we're not that great ourselves on things.*

KALIN: Yes, well, that was a continual refrain throughout my career. Every time we did the annual human rights report and the other related reports that they made religious freedom an issue.

*Q: Yes, I'm thinking that one of these days it's going to come up with our religious freedom of, what about multiple wives or multiple husbands.*

KALIN: Indeed, indeed.

*Q: Freedom of religion, I mean has been around longer than our present one person, one marriage or something.*

KALIN: Indeed, indeed.

*Q: Where did you go after the Eizenstat?*

KALIN: I thought about extending on E-Staff but another opportunity came up. NEA was looking for a deputy director for Egypt and North Africa and asked me to take that job. I mentioned earlier that I had been sort of following a wonderful officer named Philo Dibble. I had followed him to E-Staff and I followed him again to what was then known as NEA/ENA, Egypt and North Africa, as a deputy director. That worked out fine in the end because Stu Eizenstat moved over to the Treasury Department as the deputy secretary of treasury and so the timing was good for me to move down to, back to NEA, if you will.

*Q: Excuse me. Would you spell the name of the officer who you followed?*

KALIN: Yes. Philo, P-H-I-L-O, Dibble, D-I-B-B-L-E.

*Q: Ah. And what's happened with him?*

KALIN: Philo and his wife, Liz Dibble, were one of a few, I almost might call them a power couple was in NEA and I just learned a lot from both of them. As I say, I happened to particularly like working with Philo because he too was an economic officer.

*Q: Well did you, what was your new job, what did it consist of?*

KALIN: The deputy director, deputy office director is responsible for supporting and backing up the office director anywhere and that was true for me in NEA/ENA. We dealt with Egypt and the other North African countries: Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

Though we had at the time a staff of about eight officers, three or four on Egypt and the others dealing with the countries I just mentioned. So it was a terrific opportunity; so I worked for someone who was a real Arabist, a political officer named Ron Schlicher, who I came to really see as a friend and a long-term mentor on that assignment.

*Q: Was your sort of particular piece of the pie economic or did it-?*

KALIN: Ron and I were a good match because as I said he was a political officer and I was an economic officer. So yes, we did split some responsibilities along those lines. But as with an ambassador and DCM in the field, one can only split things so much. It's almost like a family relationship in a way, with two parents and a bunch of children, if you will. So the deputy officially handles the mechanics of recruiting, for example, so I did a lot of that kind of work and administrative support for the unit, making sure we had the proper equipment and office space and such. But I also got involved in a lot of policy issues regarding our countries. They were and they are important countries and interesting countries.

I was there from summer of 1999 to the early summer of 2001. So that was a transition not only in administrations but in the run up to the real turning point that 9/11 represented. Indeed, going back to the mid '90s during my visit with Chuck Hagel to Alexandria, Egypt, our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania had been bombed. My parents were also in Egypt visiting at the time and unfortunately they couldn't tour our embassy in Cairo because we had locked it down for security reasons. So a lot was happening at that time that really gave me a lot of insight.

King Hassan of Morocco died during that summer and so we were handling the visit of his son. Even our colleagues in Europe who sometimes viewed us as naïve or driven by domestic politics admitted after Wikileaks that we actually did do some hard analysis and we knew the players. So we knew, for example, that the new king of Morocco had been kind of a playboy in his past. Indeed, some of our NEA hands had seen him on previous visits to Washington and knew how he had trashed hotel rooms and quarters at Blair House and such. It turns out he's been a pretty good king. But we did handle that kind of transition in Morocco. Around that period, Hussein, the long-serving king of Jordan, also died. Our office was not directly responsible for that but it was another marker of the generational transition.

We also around that time had to deal with the question of where to seat Madeleine Albright relative to Omar Sharif at a diplomatic dinner. Omar Sharif had been our neighbor in Cairo. We didn't know him well, my husband and I, but we did see him frequently around the complex. So we accomplished that: Madeleine Albright got to converse with this \_\_\_\_ from Lawrence of Arabia.

*Q: What was that all about?*

KALIN: Well again, you know, the king of Morocco, the new king of Morocco's visit to Washington generated all of these events. But I recall that one in particular, the seating

arrangements, because the Moroccan desk officer, a former Navy officer who left the Foreign Service to work with the family real estate business, was very struck by how much Hollywood there was in Washington, how much the sort of social protocol, if you will, came up at that time. We also subsequently did some work with the filmmakers for “Blackhawk Down,” which was shot, I believe, in Morocco at the time. So in contrast to the, if you will, high policy world of the undersecretary up on the seventh floor, on the fifth floor, sixth floor we dealt with a lot more of the details, if you will, of creating, schedules, relationships, staging all of the things that go into foreign policy.

*Q: What about say, Libya, was under your-?*

KALIN: Yes indeed.

*Q: And this was sort of the last years of Qadhafi, wasn't it?*

KALIN: It was. And the desire, the policy impetus even at that time was to try to get beyond the past in Libya and find a way to normalize, if you will, relations there. A lot of the work with Libya since we have no diplomatic representation there, was not in the purview of the State Department, but much of it was. We had a very large number of conversations with oil company representatives, for example, who were interested in trying to lessen or eliminate sanctions, for example. We had lots of conversations with victims of Lockerbie who were very much against any relaxations in that regard. So Libya was a fascinating and enigmatic kind of place. I remember being on my orientation tour of the region when I took this job and watching the Libyan television being beamed into Tunisia. It was so incongruous; it was some kind of throwback to the, I don't know, days of the Cold War propaganda with green backgrounds and odd interpretations of current events on the English language news at 8:00 pm. A very interesting account.

*Q: Did we have anything to do with Qadhafi?*

KALIN: I think what actually caused movement in the relationship came later. The invasion of Iraq famously sent, helped spur Qadhafi's turnaround. I think that, frankly, that had been a long time in the making because there had been contacts of various kinds for years, certainly in the late '90s as well as before.

*Q: How about Tunisia?*

KALIN: Well, I'm sorry to say Tunisia was a little bit of a butt of laughter at the time. The Tunisians, though, were better off than many of our other countries, economically. The beginning of the '90s was a period of general growth and optimism in economic matters, for tourism, even industry, light industry in Tunisia. But they always seemed to want more than we thought they deserved; extremely protocol conscious, to almost laughably so. I guess maybe the Francophone influence was still strong in Tunisia. After all, there are more French tourists to Tunisia still.

*Q: Did we sort of leave Tunisia to the hands of the French?*

KALIN: Perhaps. I'm not sure the French were all that interested either. There just wasn't much going on, frankly. There was not, let's say, there was little change to be observed during that period in Tunisia.

*Q: How about in Morocco? I mean, were we doing, seeing things, were we pretty optimistic about how things were developing there?*

KALIN: I think we were in many respects. As I say, we were somewhat, we were reserving judgment, let's say, about how Morocco would turn out under the new king. We saw Morocco as a place that was becoming more open. There are many Arab societies and with an undercurrent of repression that was undeniable. The embassy always had the reputation and I expect still does of one of those places where you're a little bit unhappy in paradise. There was a very large USAID program. Morocco was very open to other kinds of initiatives, funding, support for democracy and human rights, economic support from the Commerce Department, the State Department and others so there was quite a lot of traffic, if you will, between Morocco and the United States, lots of congressional delegations, etc., etc. And you know, the country is quite beautiful also. The ambassador at the time, Mark Gifford, had been famously a roommate of Bill Clinton's and was pretty well immune to House visitors and issues, as well as ready with support, etc., for Morocco.

*Q: Then with Egypt?*

KALIN: Yes. Egypt of course was the heavyweight. But perhaps before I leave Morocco I should say a few words about the transition. Once we got to the transition to the Bush Administration, new nominees were on the horizon and one was Margaret Tutwiler. Now, Margaret Tutwiler had been the spokesperson in the State Department under James Baker and was under consideration for Ambassador to Morocco. And she was really kind of fun to work with in a way, almost surprisingly because her reputation was of someone who was quite difficult to work with. But I think what she appreciated was pragmatism and directness. She got along famously with the management officer or post management officer who was helping her get ready for her ambassadorship and I also had a great relationship with her. She and I would sneak out before or after a meeting to share a cigarette outside and talk the pragmatic realities of her country of assignment. Her influence, in fact, was important to my later assignment. I had been scheduled and paneled and selected to become the consul general at Morocco, in Casablanca, but Margaret Tutwiler thought that it might be awkward to have the top three positions in an Arab country filled by women. I had also advocated for a woman to be selected as DCM in Rabat and she had been endorsed for that job. So Margaret Tutwiler made the suggestion that maybe one of us should step aside. And well, that's another story, but ultimately I took the opportunity to become DCM in Beirut as a result of that feeling on Margaret's part.

*Q: Well I found her, I interviewed her when she had, at that point she was no longer in the State Department. She went back, of course, but I was impressed by her sort of single*

*mindfulness. She direct on, she would focus on something and really get right to it. I mean, she didn't waste-*

KALIN: Absolutely.

*Q: -she didn't waste a lot of time.*

KALIN: She did not have a reputation for subtlety, OK, but I actually appreciated some of her directness myself.

*Q: Well this brings up a point. Looking back on your career, we can come back to it later, but did you find that there was a "female mafia" or that sometimes this could break down barriers between subordinate and superior, all sit down and talk about what was happening and you found useful?*

KALIN: Certainly there is, there was an "old girls' network," as we called it. If nothing else, out of boredom, if nothing else out of self-defense because the reality was, certainly, maybe still is, that certain kinds of bonding opportunities were gendered. For example, early in my career, when I was first on the desk for West Africa in the early '90s, I had to ask, I had to insist on going to one of the Washington bars with a group and, you know, a group of men and smoking a cigar. I had done that on Wall Street. But the equivalent for women might be going to get a manicure or something. Certainly there was that kind of social network, professional network that was important.

*Q: Well going back to your time dealing with Egypt. Did you feel that Mubarak was changing in how he did it or was he pretty consistent? I mean, in other words did you see the sort of the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood and that sort of thing?*

KALIN: In the mid '90s, as I said earlier, we felt that Mubarak was going to run for a third term. We felt that that was unfortunate, many of us. And we saw the beginnings of a more worrisome trend and that was the possibility that Mubarak was preparing the way for his son to become president. In contrast, the constitutional monarchy of Morocco where that was a natural and expected transition, Egypt was very different. In the case of Egypt, that was absolutely not OK.

I met Mubarak in the context of what was called the "Gore/Mubarak Commission" or the U.S.-Egypt Partnership, one of three or four such partnerships around the world that Vice President Gore had initiated. One was with Russia, another was South Africa, for example. I felt that Gamal Mubarak, the son, who was then in his, let's say early to mid 30s, was actually reluctant to return from London to Cairo and not particularly interested in succeeding his father. Many years later, after the Arab Spring, we see that Mubarak and his sons have been, if not exonerated, legal proceedings in Egypt are now off. At the time, in the mid '90s, the characteristic of Egypt that we saw was a desire for stability. I think that Egypt, unlike some of the other Arab or African countries, in fact does have a sense of itself as a nation, even an ancient nation, and is interested in continuity in ways that some other more divided Arab societies, let's say, are not. Not that there aren't



divisions within Egypt, obviously. There are divisions between Muslims and Copts, for example. But those divisions were in the middle, let's say, of their almost inexorable development at the time we're talking about, with merely precursors of what might happen. One of the most important precursors of 9/11, if not in Egypt herself but for the Arab world and our relationship with it after all is the crash of Egypt Air 990, which happened during the time that I was on the Egypt desk.

*Q: Was that the time when at least it was alleged that a standby pilot got in the cockpit and drove it into the ground?*

KALIN: Exactly. That was something that was extremely difficult to ascertain. When the crash happened we setup a crisis management task force and in the very early hours after the accident I remember speaking with an Egyptian counterpart and asking informally for them to turn the investigation over to the United States. Why? Because we had the resources and the crash had happened just off Long Island in New York, and it made sense to everybody to proceed on that basis. Now, as the investigation proceeded it became more and more clear that Egypt would never agree with us. Our National Transportation Safety Board became more and more convinced that indeed the plane had been driven into the ocean purposely and the Egyptians never accepted that. We sent from the desk an officer who had superb Arabic to work the White House/NTSB team and he listened, we listened, even those of us who lacked that linguistic expertise listened to that tape over and over. And I don't think we ever resolved, perhaps even in our own minds, whether the use of the common exclamation "Allahu Akbar," God is great, signaled that the pilot was intentionally crashing the aircraft or whether indeed he was reacting to a malfunction that was beyond his control. So tragic for the people involved, and never fully explained, perhaps, but a really fascinating exercise in this sense of preparation for what followed.

*Q: Well, did the Egyptians ever sort of formally refuse to our offer of help?*

KALIN: I think they recognized from the beginning that our help was essential. They did not have the capacity to conduct the kind of investigation that we did. But they did at several points decline to agree to the conclusion of our investigation because they simply could not get past their interpretation. They suggested that perhaps there was a mechanical problem that had not been identified and would not be identified because the manufacturer was American, Boeing, and so on and so forth. Ultimately we agreed to disagree on this incident but it was a long and absorbing, interesting and important exercise for us all.

*Q: Well did the State Department contemplate or issue orders not to fly on Egypt Air?*

KALIN: No, I don't believe we did. The accident was treated as an accident. I think that the view of risk was a little bit different 10 or 15 years ago than it is today, just as the view of what is partisan and what is not, should be resolved through a lawsuit in terms of compensation was different. Everybody knew in Egypt, for example, that flying Egypt Air was, let's say, more risky than flying American Airlines in the United States, but then

again it was far more risky to drive a car in Egypt than it is in the United States as well. So those were the kind of risks one accepted, either as a diplomat or an expatriate while traveling.

*Q: This last time that you were dealing with a group of Arab countries, did you see any of the precursors of what was known as the Arab Spring, which is coming or not? I mean, did you have the feeling that this Arab rule has got its problems and things can blow up or not?*

KALIN: I don't want to say we missed that, because I don't think we had a flat or one dimensional view of the region, by no means. I think that there were many Foreign Service officers in many policy positions who understood how complex the region and its societies in fact are. I don't think many entertained a lot of hope for change, frankly. And I don't think many would have predicted 10 years ago, let's say, 10 years before the event that things would turn out the way they did, with perhaps the exception of Libya or, to use another analogy, Iraq. Some in the region, very highly placed in the region, were predicting for example that Libya would indeed fall apart if Qadhafi were eliminated and expected he would be. In the same way, some people predicted tremendous instability in Iraq if Saddam Hussein were to be eliminated, which again, highly placed people assumed would be Saddam's end, that someone in Iraq would assassinate him. So again, I don't want to say we missed it, but I certainly would not say we predicted it in any way.

*Q: Yes. Well, when 9/11 happened where were you? Were you on this job?*

KALIN: I arrived in Beirut as DCM, again thanks in part to Margaret Tutwiler's concern about having too many women in Morocco. I arrived in Beirut on August 6 or 7 of 2001 as chargé d'affaires and had a short overlap with my predecessor, David Hale. And then I was preparing the way for Vincent Battle, who had been deputy chief of mission in Cairo and had stopped in Paris before arriving in Beirut. So on 9/11, literally at the moment the towers were falling, the new ambassador was stepping onto the tarmac in Beirut and I was welcoming him as chargé. The RSO (regional security officer) tapped my shoulder and said, a private plane has crashed into the World Trade Center; such bad news. I said that is bad news. We went back to our business, shook the ambassador's hand, introduced him to the protocol representative from the Lebanese government, but by the time we got down the steps to the reception room we all recognized that a second plane crashing into a tower was a very big event.

*Q: Oh yes.*

KALIN: So that's where I was on 9/11.

*Q: Well, sort of to backtrack a bit, what was the situation in Lebanon when you arrived?*

KALIN: The Lebanese were in what now looks like a period of relative calm, strangely enough. There were frequent incidents along the border with Israel. Relations with Syria were strained, but Syria finally withdraw its troops. The goal of the previous ambassador,

David Satterfield, who with Deputy David Hale, had been to normalize Embassy Beirut. It was one of, at the time, merely a handful of unaccompanied posts.

On 9/11, I was in Beirut, now without my husband. He had returned to Pennsylvania to stay with his brother for a year. In the course of the normalization that we were seeking we believed and hoped that he would be able to join me along with two or three spouses of other officers on a pilot basis. So that's how we looked at that assignment, as a temporary separation for me and my husband but a huge opportunity professionally. And although I had been promoted by then it was a stretch assignment for me, which wasn't uncommon at unaccompanied posts, even within NEA at that time but still a terrific opportunity. And wow, you know, what a place was Lebanon. We had never been, not because we didn't want to go but rather because no American diplomat was permitted to go to Lebanon without the explicit authorization of the embassy, which was rarely forthcoming. So I'd never been to Lebanon when I stepped on the plane but I had read a lot about it. I knew many Lebanese. I'd even been profiled in the Lebanese media, given how social and how, what can I say, how much of a fishbowl, almost, Lebanon is. So it was an exciting time and a pretty good one. We thought that we'd be able to relax our security posture and so on and even in light of 9/11, surprisingly, relatively speaking Lebanon was OK and we did some of that. But unpredictable events had made Lebanon a more significant assignment than what we thought going in, for sure.

*Q: Well what, how stood sort of the political situation there?*

KALIN: The president, Émile Lahoud, had been in office for quite some time. As you may know, Lebanon has an unusual system of government and the president must be a Maronite Christian; the prime minister must be a Sunni Muslim; and the speaker of parliament must be a Shiite Muslim. So the president had been in place a long time. He was accepted and close to the Syrian government. He was from a military posture, kind of a hail fellow well met, not a particularly influential character. But Rafic Hariri, by contrast, the Muslim prime minister, was just coming back into office after a short period of being out of power. He would become very important. He was our, I would say our primary interlocutor and had been for a long time. But he would become very important to me personally simply because we had some things in common and I was able therefore to develop a relationship with him and his advisors that was useful, I believe.

*Q: What were the Syrians up to?*

KALIN: You might say the usual. I believe by then Bashar al-Assad was in place. He had come to power succeeding his father as president, not as king but as president, around that same year. As in Morocco and Jordan, a generational change was happening. And Syria did not have a normal relationship with Lebanon, to say the least. But Syria itself was, you might want to call it stagnant as opposed to stable. So for example, when we wanted to travel a little bit, take a little bit of relief from compound living in Beirut, we would book an armored car as a group and head for the border with Damascus. And there the armored car would drop us off. We would walk across the border after, of course, an unknown period of formalities at the border crossing. We would hop in a taxi and go to a

hotel in Damascus and enjoy a weekend. An oddly, oddly, oddly interesting place. Similarly, officers in Damascus who for example needed advanced medical treatment would get in a taxi, go to the border with Lebanon. We would send an armored car to pick them up and they would come to Lebanon for, as I say, advanced medical treatment. So, and of course, Philo Dibble was the DCM over in Damascus, my friend and colleague, and Jeff Feltman, who had also been in my DCM training class was the deputy principle officer in Jerusalem. So we were able to coordinate a lot between the three posts and that was very, very useful to us as well.

*Q: Well how did the ambassador use you as a DCM?*

KALIN: The ambassador had been DCM himself in Lebanon I guess about seven or eight years before. So he knew what the role was like and he was able, therefore, to mentor me in a very effective way. He saw the role of ambassador and DCM as outside/inside. He was a consular officer who had been chief of the HR senior level division in the Department and has a very long history in the Arab world as well as at the embassy. So he was able to coach me as I settled in. He suggested I walk around a lot and in fact I did walk around a lot. It was a lot of space to walk around in but it was safe to do so. There was about 17 acres on the compound. For example, one of the first things I did on my tour was to go to the basement of the bombed out 1983/4 facilities where at the time we had a simulated firing range. And the RSO sort of challenged me to pick up the machine gun and practice with the simulator, which I did. And then I would go for tea in the public affairs section or head over to the trailers and work with the management officer and his staff. It was like being the deputy mayor, sort of like being a city manager of a small town or that kind of a role. The ambassador, having done it before was able to help me a lot with how to do it. We had similar interests in management issues. I had made a number of suggestions since I was interested in government reform and how to structure an organization like in Cairo where we'd worked together previously. And then, as I say, he knew lots and lots and lots of people in Lebanese society. The Lebanese are highly, highly social and they viewed certainly the Christian portion of Lebanese society, perhaps, 25 to 30 percent of the country's population, as well as the business oriented Sunni Muslim community as key to the relationship with the United States. Not so much the Shiite. We had fewer contacts among the Shiite population, since not all were interested in getting to know us. In any case, the ambassador did lots and lots of external calls. I often went with him since we were both there unaccompanied and it was an incredible experience.

*Q: Was there the equivalence of a green line or a no-go area at all?*

KALIN: Interestingly, by that time, 2001-2002, the green line had been more or less erased. As you drove along from our compound about 10 to 15 minutes north of Beirut on the coast you could look down and see a beautiful small port with the incredible yacht of the deputy prime minister of Lebanon who had been a war profiteer during Lebanon's awful civil war. You could, as you proceeded along the coastal highway, see trees growing out of derelict buildings still. But once you arrived downtown, you saw the beginnings of a clear development called "Solidarity," which had been a brainchild of

Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. He had essentially expropriated the historic center of Beirut after the civil war by forming a real estate development corporation. So there were beautiful new hotels open, government offices had been restored, mosques and churches had been restored, a brand new, the headquarters for World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) were in place. While we were there Virgin Atlantic Records opened a big shop, and an elegant department store reopened downtown. So ironically Lebanon was moving up and was actually more stable during this period, these couple of years, than for example our posts in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In fact, the World Bank and IMF were moving families from Israel to Lebanon and moving single people to the more exposed, the more difficult Israeli territory in the south. We didn't see things quite that way.

*Q: Was the Israeli factor much of a factor?*

KALIN: It was. There were regular skirmishes along the border. We were called upon to report on them a couple of times a month for much of the time that I was in Beirut. We would work with the United Nations, we would work with the Lebanese military, other diplomats to ascertain what was happening and report on it back to Washington, discuss it with the Lebanese officials. The overflights by Israeli jet were very common in Beirut. As I recall, once or twice the electrical stations were threatened. Nevertheless, again relatively speaking, things were not as bad as they were either before or since that time.

*Q: Were our military attachés there keeping track of the military situation around the area?*

KALIN: They were. But again it wasn't, you know, the action was in Iraq and in Afghanistan as opposed to in our immediate neighborhood.

*Q: Well how, I'm trying to figure out when you were there what was happening in Iraq?*

KALIN: We lived through, while I was in Beirut, the U.S. invasion of Iraq as well as the invasion of Afghanistan earlier. In fact, I remember very clearly thinking about trying to travel up to Aleppo, Syria. A group of officers from the embassy was going to go for a weekend and do Aleppo. I was hesitant to go because I had the responsibilities of the deputy chief of mission even though the ambassador was in place by then. Our RSO counseled me to stay behind because he knew that something might happen that would require our full attention and indeed that's the weekend that we went into Afghanistan. Washington didn't send us a night action immediate cable because that would be too expensive; instead they emailed us and supplemented that with a telephone call. I always felt that was highly ironic. If there was ever a moment to send a NIACT immediate telegram, an official communication that would have been it, but somehow that didn't happen. Nevertheless we were informed and, of course, it caused us to redouble, if you will, our effort to report what Lebanese interlocutors were saying, monitor what was happening, ensure no one took advantage unduly of the situation. But of course our actions in Afghanistan after 9/11 were well supported by the international community.

Few had questions about the reasons we were attacking Kabul and the Taliban. The situation was entirely different of course; in the run up to our actions in Iraq.

*Q: Let's talk about this a bit. I mean, this was highly debatable at the time and even today. There are many people, myself included, who considered this really one of the great disasters of American foreign policy. How did you sell that at the time within your group?*

KALIN: Our interlocutors were, to use a single word, incredulous that we would consider this action. People would call us and take us to tea or coffee and ask us, what are you doing? Don't you realize how this will impact the Middle East? Don't you understand the history of the region? Are you sure you want to give Iran vast new influence in the Middle East? And so on. And we duly reported that. Now, this was happening at all levels, from the ambassador to the deputy to the military attachés and so on. Now, it was happening not only in Lebanon but in other places in the region. The chiefs of mission from NEA sat in Washington and elsewhere in February of 2002 and conveyed this clearly to the administration. But there was no turning back by that point.

So we prepared the embassy as best we could. For example, it fell to me to try to convince Washington that we should announce the closure of the embassy in Beirut as well as other, let's say, more vulnerable embassies in the region. Now, my argument was that we shouldn't base our decision on the fact that we have very heavy defenses still on that compound, a machine gun nest every 40 yards staffed by former Lebanese militiamen from the civil war who were extremely diligent about protecting us as diplomats. Rather, we should focus on the fact that we were signaling that something was about to happen that concerned the region and the world, rather than just the embassy. It turned out that I was successful in that argument with the other regional posts, we were basically locked down. We were confined to 17 acres together for, I guess it was about three, four weeks, if not a little bit longer during the U.S. invasion. Very few people supported this in Lebanon and we were warned, you know.

*Q: Yes. Well were you, did you have any particular cause to promote in dealing with the Lebanese government during this time of invasion?*

KALIN: I think the Lebanese understood what we were after and what our objectives were. I cannot say they understood them or endorsed them in any way. Most of our interlocutors, with rare exceptions, were incredulous that we would take this course of action. But one particular thing that fell to me in terms of preparation, and to the consular officer, Susie Pratt, was the fact that there was a couple of teenagers with American citizenship and mixed American and Lebanese parentage who were actually living with us at the embassy at the time of the invasion of Iraq. The girls had been living with their father in Lebanon. They had wanted to go to Texas to be with their mother and they were trying to do so without explicit permission. So they were, in an unusual move, brought to the embassy for their own protection. Their father was a Shiite Muslim and the third child, the youngest daughter, was still with him. It was terribly controversial but nevertheless a matter of child protection. So the question was, what do we do? Will the

Lebanese authorities and the father consent to the older daughters' travel to the United States? And should we ask for the younger daughter also to be included? Ultimately we asked for all three daughters to go. Ultimately the consul managed to persuade the younger child to at least try some time in the United States with her mother. And it fell to me to persuade the Lebanese authorities that despite the bad publicity for both governments, frankly, it would be better to allow these girls to travel, and ultimately they did. So that was one of the unseen, if you will, or untold tales that happened during that time.

*Q: Was there any movement of American citizens out of Lebanon at the time?*

KALIN: Actually no, not in response to the Iraq invasion per se, nothing on a large scale. We had estimated that under certain conditions very large numbers of Americans would want assistance in leaving. Not so much expatriates who were born in America, let's say, but many, many Lebanese had more than one passport and that was the case for U.S. passports as well as French and other EU nations. So we had estimated quite large numbers who might need assistance. Ultimately they did not at that time, but during another one of the outright shooting wars later, in 2006, those numbers did materialize and we did evacuate that whole population. But not at the time of the Iraq war, strangely enough.

*Q: You were responsible for morale and all that; how did you find your staff responded at the time? I mean, it was difficult, how did you find they responded?*

KALIN: Well, let me talk separately about the Lebanese staff and the American staff because their reactions were different. The Lebanese staff had lived through a previous closure. Many of them had been with the embassy for many, many years -- 20, 30 years, 35 years in some cases -- so they had lived through the closure and evacuation of the embassy following the events of the early '80s when the downtown facility was bombed and when the north of town facility was bombed. And they remembered that with fear because they were suddenly cut off from American staff and in some cases given new responsibilities that were heavy burdens. So one step that we did was I had a town meeting with staff. I was able to assure them that, based on conversations with the ambassador and with Washington, that we did not contemplate any such spiriting away of the American staff in the night as we had done two decades before. And to help them to share their ideas and understand where we were coming from. I thought that would help all concerned. I did that.

On the American side, people were prepared to deal with it as it came. People reacted by trying to bring in resources to our compound since we knew that most of us would not be traveling outside it. So for example, one officer was able to get an exercise instructor to come in and give us aerobics and tae bo twice a week and some of us went to those classes. Others were able to get their hairdressers or barbers to come in. Still others were able to arrange for other kinds of services. The embassy had lived on such a high security footing for so long that people were really resourceful about how to maintain themselves even in this extreme case of lockdown. As it wore on, it made some people more stressed.

We actually weathered it pretty well and were able to get through it and stay open and operating throughout the period.

*Q: Was there any unusual demand on the consular section during this period?*

KALIN: As I said, there was a child custody case that was really very absorbing. It took a great deal of time, and made some precedents or reinforced, let's say, a trend. The consular officials were later recognized with a group award by Washington, which was appreciated. Certainly the demands of the post 9/11 era were evident for us in Beirut. One of the most poignant moments of my career in the Foreign Service actually came in connection with another consular issue.

A few days after 9/11, I was asked to be the person to receive a phone call from the uncle of one of the hijackers, the lone Lebanese national that had been on those planes. And I was prepared to do that, of course, as part of my duties. The phone call came one evening as I was attending an event at the house of the public affairs officer. I went to the back room of her house and I took the phone call and the uncle asked me at least a dozen questions, all designed to verify that indeed it was his nephew. Or rather, to disprove that it was his nephew that had done this terrible thing, because the family had lost contact with the individual for some time before 9/11. So question after question: are you sure it was our nephew who was on that flight; are you sure that he actually boarded the plane; are you sure it's the same person? And to every question I had to answer yes. And it became really clear to me in the course of this questioning that as a human being I would have to express condolences to the uncle. That was actually hard for me to do because of the injury that this person had caused to the United States and so many families in America, but I decided to do it. And the moment I said I'm sorry for your loss, the questioning stopped. The uncle accepted the reality of the answers that I had given before and after posing a couple of other minor administrative questions about what could the family expect going forward in terms of communication, he hung up the phone and the grieving began in earnest on all sides. It was quite an experience.

*Q: Why was it directed at you, the cellphone call?*

KALIN: Simply because I was the deputy chief of mission. It was felt that that was the right level to take such a call. It was simply ex officio that it came to me, for no other reason than that.

*Q: I guess thinking, why would you have any particular knowledge of-? I mean, were you given sort of the government's knowledge of who was onboard?*

KALIN: Yes, absolutely. We knew what the questions would be and we prepared carefully for that phone call. It was not a spontaneous conversation but rather one that had been planned, definitely planned. As I say what was spontaneous and difficult for me was the decision point about whether to say I was sorry.



*Q: Yes. Well of course one is always sorry when somebody obviously is not in a rational state of mind, no matter how you-*

KALIN: Exactly.

*Q: -something so horrendous.*

KALIN: Exactly.

*Q: And particularly, you know, the family has a connection.*

KALIN: I think what may have influenced my decision to say what I did -- I am as a human being feel totally comfortable with that -- is the fact that my niece was born on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001. So I had that news roughly at the same that we were dealing with all the consequences of 9/11, even though I was alone in Beirut.

*Q: Did you find, completely under the stress of this, things that were happening- Is that a cat?*

KALIN: Did I what?

*Q: Is that a cat?*

KALIN: Get a cat? Oh no, I did not get a cat, actually. But cats were an issue at various points in Beirut. I remember leading a furious dispute among housing board members by certain officers who wanted to reauthorize dogs on the compound, for example. Cats were fine; several people had cats. I didn't happen to have a cat to keep me up at night. But a previous ambassador had such big dogs and they had been so intimidating to the staff, Americans and Lebanese alike, that they had been banned. Well, a new crop of Americans transferring in for the one year assignment were insisting on bringing dogs. I was not in favor of that so it didn't happen, at least on my watch. It was actually quite an issue.

*Q: Well this is the thing; did you have any problems with, oh, under stressful conditions of, I won't say psychiatric disorder but I mean, real problems with emotions or something?*

KALIN: Well, there is no question that Beirut was a special place to be. Life on a compound is not easy, just socially and otherwise. And I think people, the whole thing is expectations and managing expectations. We had the advantage of an ambassador who had previously served in Beirut, who knew what the conditions were like, who had himself recruited many officers he felt would be effective in that situation. The fact that they were one year tours was important. The fact that we had overtime hours available for rest and recreation, travel available to people, help, the fact that we were able to get off the compound, many of us for official reasons but for those who had jobs that did not require as much official travel they were able to book private excursions. We had enough

resources to do that; that actually became quite a bone of contention. How many bodyguard hours and armored cars and vehicles did we have and where could people go and not go. That was all part of managing the transition and the normalization that was our goal. It became quite a bone of contention because some people are quite content to spend a couple of months walking six days a week on a track and watching movies in their small apartment or room. Other officers would have gone out to dinner every night because there are those social opportunities in Lebanon. Balancing that became the subject of another town meeting, lots of policy discussion. We made our way through it at the time somehow.

*Q: Well you do stress the mayoral aspects of being under that kind of restriction.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Since we're using these oral histories for various purposes, I wonder if you could talk about some of the attributes that you found were necessary to be in that position of authority.*

KALIN: During my time in Beirut I wrote to my parents, my dad in particular. I said you know, Dad, having gotten that award in high school, and my mother, having gotten that award for being the General Mills Family Leader of tomorrow, even though my husband and I didn't have children, it came to matter in Beirut. I think managing expectations was key. I think being fair when it came to establishing policies, allowing a period of input from serving officers and others and then closing the discussion, was important. Certainly it was not without difficulty. Some mechanisms from the Department helped, such as classic mechanisms like having a committee or board as opposed to unilateral decisions on the part of either the GSO (general services officer) or management officer or the DCM. Technically, sometimes intervention from my level was needed. I did quite a lot of that type of intervention. I personally approved for many months the trips off the compound, for example, because it was a question of allocating sparse resources and making sure people had an opportunity to get out occasionally. So I think that you need to be a good listener, but you also need to be ready to explain your decisions to your staff.

*Q: Were you concerned about sort of a lone gunman? Not organized attacks but just plain attacking you or not?*

KALIN: We kept a very close eye on the street situation. We were concerned, of course, about attacks, terrorist attacks primarily. Lone gunman is a pretty apt description of the main kind of concern that we had, including for particular officers. We had, for example, a Jewish-American officer and her profile was known to the Lebanese, both officially and informally. So we kept very close tabs on that kind of situation. The embassy also experienced some big demonstrations so we had to exercise some crowd control. At the time, Beirut had what was an unusually large contingent of RSOs, regional security officers, so we had six or seven Americans who were there to help with that kind of tactical situation as well as supervise our very large guard force of about, again, 200 to 300 bodyguards and security staff. That operation was very well established, however.

There was a history at the post and we in fact were, despite everything, trying to rationalize that operation. For example, we coordinated frequently with Embassy Algiers, which was similarly situated and tried to, for example, standardize the length of rest and recreation outings. Three weeks became the standard, instead of accumulating overtime hours and hours of special overtime all patched together and being away for six weeks. Those management concerns were every day for us. And, as I say, I was fortunate to not only have a personal interest and some experience in that from my own background but an ambassador who was equally interested and ready to work with that as well as the deputy assistant secretary in Washington who had previously served in Lebanon and was open to those kinds of suggestions.

*Q: Were you, it must have been a matter of discussion or at least consideration about was it worth it to have an embassy there at the time.*

KALIN: There was never such a discussion because Lebanon, by virtue of its proximity to Israel, number one, was perceived as important to U.S. interests; good, bad or indifferent, it was perceived as important. So there really was not that kind of discussion but rather how can we accomplish it rationally and how can we be effective? During the time we were there, a new consular building was built on that compound, for example. And the other thing I remember vividly, was Darrell Issa, a congressman from California who has since made a reputation as an extreme administration critic, even a penchant for opposing officials in the administration, whether it be California or Washington, coming out and opening that facility. And then there was the whole discussion about what to do with the compound and whether we shouldn't procure grounds for a new building. Indeed, we took Secretary Colin Powell on a tour of properties that we owned and properties that we wanted to own. We had started construction at the beginning of the civil war on a new embassy building on beachfront property in South Beirut. When we got into the civil war and that embassy turned into a rusting hulk of concrete and rebar that we somehow couldn't get rid of. On the other hand, we owned a nice hillside property near the ministry of defense, was a great prospect for us to build a new embassy and we couldn't quite at the time get congressional approval to do it. So far from being an embassy that we were thinking of closing, it was a place we were hoping to build.

*Q: What about visitors? Were you spared a lot of visitors or not?*

KALIN: We were not spared. We had two visits from Secretary Powell, one occurring while the ambassador was absent. There had been so much back and forth on whether the prime minister would travel to the United States or whether the secretary would travel to Lebanon that the ambassador got caught in the wrong place, unfortunately, and physically couldn't get back to Lebanon when it was ultimately decided that Colin Powell would come to Beirut. It was part of a regional tour, and I was fortunate to be involved in that visit by Colin Powell. He was very well received. He was immediately conversant with the prime minister and other interlocutors and it was a terrific time. We got a lot done both internally and externally. Then a year later Colin Powell returned, in fact, for another regional tour and likewise had a very good visit.

*Q: OK. Today is the 11<sup>th</sup> of December, 2014, with Carol Kalin. And we left off; you were about ready to leave Beirut. When did you leave Beirut?*

KALIN: I left in the summer of 2003.

My transition from Beirut to Saudi Arabia wasn't entirely voluntarily so let me explain what I meant by that. In September of 2002, my second year in Beirut, I made a technical mistake in transmitting a classified cable so I got a security infraction for that. The communicator at the time noted that that kind of error was easy to make given the equipment then in use and said the attention to it was a little bit unusual, but essentially we fixed it and moved on. Then in February of 2003, out of the blue, I got a letter revoking my Sensitive Compartmented Information clearance, which is the clearance reserved for intelligence matters.

Well, I asked to be put on administrative leave immediately since I didn't feel I could responsibly do my job without that kind of clearance given all that was happening in Lebanon. And the revocation was stayed or suspended within a few days. So that indicated that it wasn't a fatal mistake, if you will. But the letter was full of what my lawyer later called the language of the "cheap shot," given the sensitivity of this kind of error in the Department at the time. There was a big change in the view of such things after a classified laptop famously disappeared from the secretariat's office during Madeleine Albright's tenure. And as part of what was frankly a welcome effort on the part of Colin Powell to improve management and procedures on equipment and staffing and all the rest of it in the Department, there had been quite a lot of focus on how these kinds of things were handled. In fact, there was a handful of infractions on my record from, principally from Cairo, where there'd been more of this kind of event and failure. People who are familiar with the equipment then at use at the time, will remember that you had to take a piece of the computer out of the computer physically and put it in another location for safekeeping. And in the whirlwind of Cairo I had failed to do that when leaving the office late at night on more than one occasion. Nevertheless, again, that was not a fatal error.

And I think, looking back at when all this became politicized, and the mistake perhaps that Colin Powell and his team made, was treating this as if those of us who were in this situation, and there were many of us in the Near Eastern Affairs bureau, who had been through this because of the intensity of our work. At any rate, basically we were treated as kind of sloppy soldiers when in fact most of us were really more absentminded professors. So I think that the technology initiatives that Colin Powell put in place were excellent but pretty seriously misguided in this respect. Around this time the assistant secretary, Martin Indyk, was forced to admit that he had discussed classified material, high level meetings on airplanes, but pointed at that CEOs of companies did that all the time. So that there was a real problem in the kinds of equipment and procedures that the Department had in place. So, you know, things like transmissions of the minutes of high level meetings as sensitive rather than classified were happening. So there were lots of distortions in the system at the time and I think, looking back, after later, big, high profile

incidents like WikiLeaks or the Edward Snowden disclosures, which of course didn't involve the State Department, is that really the human factor is what matters most.

So at any rate, beginning in, about six months before I left Beirut there was all kinds of back and forth with Washington about what to do about my infraction. At first, frankly, Department officials didn't want to hear about it, didn't want to talk about it. But, then there was a series of talks with Ambassador Battle, who had settled in HR and the director general at the time, Ruth Whiteside, with support from diplomatic security. I had contact with diplomatic security before about an earlier infraction, and I had in fact gone through the retraining seminar that was required to satisfy the political heat around this whole issue. I spent my birthday, July 16, in fact, that year in a Washington hotel waiting for a hearing. The outcome was a short letter that upheld the revocation but added that there was nothing in my record to prevent restoring my top level clearance at a later date. So that was pretty much the outcome that the deputy secretary's office, which ultimately decides on these matters had suggested.

So I was out of Beirut, but my career wasn't over. I took my name off promotion consideration. I closed my window; I had hoped to open it that year but I closed it and bid on other jobs. One of them was a dream job that I never got, the Econ Counselor job in Ankara, but it was one of the few still on the list. I guess what my bid did was prompt another really good economic officer who I had worked with in Washington to finally get off the fence and take that job. NEA in fact wanted to keep me in the bureau, but didn't have a slot in Arabic training, which I never had, or a year available at the War College, which I'd also sort of foregone to come to Beirut. But they did have something else that was quite interesting, as it turned out.

The PDAS at the time, Jim Larocco, offered me another stretch assignment, this time out of cone, as the Public Affairs Counselor in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I would be working for Margaret Scobey, who was the first female DCM in Saudi Arabia, and with Matt Tueller as Political Counselor. He too had been a popular DCM at another NEA post before being asked to leave over a security issue, likewise an inadvertent, one-time incident. So we all thought that this was a good answer at the time.

We also thought that Saudi Arabia would be a kind of a relatively quiet posting with good employment opportunities for my husband on the local economy. And in fact George had joined me in Beirut for the second year of that tour; he was the first spouse back at post in 18 years so we had accomplished something in terms of normalizing the post. And George had worked for USAID and was hoping to find an American company, for example, in Saudi Arabia that he might join. Well, as it turned out our time in Saudi Arabia was anything but quiet. Still, it was a good onward assignment.

When I say it was a good onward assignment but anything but quiet, I guess what I mean is that there's just about as much contrast as you could get in the Arab world between Beirut and Riyadh. Beirut is very open, cosmopolitan, the Paris of the Middle East, and Riyadh of course is the capitol of a really, almost uniquely cloistered, conservative society and is located in the interior of the country, right in the middle of the desert. I had

quite a lot of media experience and exposure in Beirut as well as pretty significant involvement in the cultural and educational programming. The public affairs section was in the process of rebuilding in Beirut after a long period of being drawn down. So that made the job in Riyadh of real interest to me. And I have to say that, you know, even some relationships carried over from Beirut, particularly with the then-prime minister, Rafic Hariri, and one of his senior staff members who I was friends with, Amal Mudallali. Amal had been a journalist and had spent quite a lot of time in the United States but handled all of our meetings during the two years that I was in Beirut.

Rafic Hariri had made his fortune in Saudi Arabia. He had come from Lebanon in the early '80s, I believe as an accounting teacher, if I recall correctly, and then built a construction business and other ventures, in media and communication, and so on. So he had a residence in Riyadh and when he and Amal would travel to Saudi Arabia I would often get a phone call and a silver Mercedes would pick me up in the diplomatic quarter and I would go and have a coffee or a tea or whatever with the Lebanese prime minister. So I guess that relationship had been built up partly because of my work in Lebanon on economic issues. The country has been in perpetual economic crisis. When I first looked at the economic indicators for Lebanon from the World Bank, I thought there must have been a typographic error or two or three or five in those materials because the statistics suggested that the country couldn't possibly be afloat. But it was. So I had worked, for example, with Bill Burns when he was the Undersecretary for Political Affairs and got to Paris to talk about debt relief for Lebanon and so on. But in fact the relationship went beyond economic issues.

One time I went to Hariri's home and he gave me a kind of a tour of the place and this was common for him. There had been so much attention and surveillance on him for so long that he was prone to invite interlocutors to take a walk if he wanted to ask a question or discuss an important matter. So we took a walk around the house. There was a swimming pool complex in the basement. This was sort of the 1970s era house, if you will, and when we got to the bowling alley Hariri asked me if I thought the United States might support a UN Security Council resolution calling on Syria to get out of Lebanon. And I said immediately that I thought we probably would support such a resolution and in fact that's what happened a few months later. I'm sure Hariri asked the question of dozens of people, but I found it interesting that he would ask me, too. Ultimately that relationship ended, of course, when Hariri was assassinated and that was something I watched on television with absolute horror from my office in Riyadh in 2005. I later was at the funeral services that were held in Saudi Arabia as well as, of course, in Lebanon. I actually didn't go to Lebanon but I did represent the embassy, along with others, at the funeral in Saudi Arabia, which was the critical event. I still have, in fact, the gifts of the Koran and posters of Hariri from that day, which was quite a sad day, actually.

So that's how I went from Beirut to Riyadh and as I was saying it was anything but quiet in Riyadh. My husband and I arrived just as the post was coming off of ordered departure so all of the families with young children and attachés and commercial people and so on were returning to post. Then in November, after we'd been at post a couple of months, we were getting ready for bed and we heard a tremendous explosion. It sounded quite

nearby. And so I called the embassy and the initial report was that one of our own residences had been bombed. It turned out that bombing was the second serious incident in Saudi Arabia that year, a serious bombing of a Western housing compound, it was not a diplomatic compound. Well, as Public Affairs Officer I stayed on the phone; though all night, watching CNN, calling in to say that, in fact, no American diplomats had been hurt, that they were all accounted for, taking phone calls from other members of the country team, ultimately talking to the Associated Press and others. This was around midnight, and about 7:00 a.m. I turned the phone over, basically, to my deputy and went into meetings and more follow on to that terrible incident. The compound that had been bombed had been, at one time, a Boeing compound but at that moment, 20, 30 years later, it was occupied mostly by regional expatriates. In other words, Al Qaeda had thought to target Americans, but had ended up killing Muslim citizens of various Arab countries.

Now, I visited the compound with the new DCM, Gary Grappo, and that was the first of much more extensive involvement with the media on terrorist tragedies than anyone could have anticipated. Shortly after that, the post went back on ordered departure. All the kids and family members left. My husband, since we had been through this kind of posting before, saw the handwriting on the wall, so to speak, and went to the Management Counselor and said, you know, I would like a job at the embassy. It doesn't matter what job as long as it will ultimately be declared essential when the post goes to unaccompanied. You know, we anticipated that that is what would happen and indeed, that is what happened. Within months my husband was one of only a handful of spouses still at post. He was working in the management section of an embassy once again. In fact, he helped family members make their reservations to leave.

Just to talk about a few other incidents that were happening, the new ambassador to Saudi Arabia arrived not too long after this first attack. His name was Jim Oberwetter. He had been the elder President Bush's press secretary during the congressional campaign many years before and had spent some 30 years with a high public relations and government relations staff of an oil company. I liked Ambassador Oberwetter very, very much also because he had been born in Kansas, as I had been, and had spent part of his childhood in the Middle East when his father was working in the oil fields. So I was very fortunate being in charge of public affairs with someone so knowledgeable about it in the person of the ambassador. His wife, likewise, accompanied him, one of the exceptions to the rule that only employed spouses could come to post. But as I say, I was quite fortunate to have Ambassador Oberwetter's advice and guidance, you know, dealing with the media as well as what cultural programming we could accomplish during that time.

One of the issues, for example, was the problem of Saudi students. Public affairs, of course, deals with exchange programs as well as educational opportunities, but the primary problem was the consular issue. With all of the revamp and upgrade of checks on visas and travel from the Middle East, particularly from Saudi Arabia, what we were finding was that Saudi students in the United States might, for example, come home for a break and then be unable to return to the United States where they were enrolled. So that created an enormous public relations problem, as well as a practical problem for those students who found themselves in that situation. So all kinds of not only media work but

policy issues came to the fore. You know, how could we validate diplomas, for example. There were many Saudis that had been turning to what we call diploma mills, the private, for profit educational institutions that were offering online diplomas that frankly weren't worth the paper they were written on. So that was an interesting exercise. In terms of, you know, organizing exchange visits, those were pretty much precluded, but we did try to focus on what programs we had, for example, continuing an effort to send Saudi religious figures to meet with counterparts in the United States, which had been quite successful.

So really, quite a lot of active work on both sides of the public affairs portfolio went on, and we were doing it with only four officers out of the 12 positions given the drawdown. So quite an intensive period there, 12 being the figure for Riyadh as well as our consulates in Jeddah and Bahrain, which either were not staffed or staffed with first or second tour officers at the time. So really, a huge set of challenges to manage in Saudi Arabia.

That tour also gave me an opportunity to meet a lot of top American journalists. Often American journalists these days skip the embassy, but in the case of Saudi Arabia the embassy played a big role in helping them with visas and, you know, practical matters as well as supplying them with information because very few journalists were accredited or a resident in Saudi Arabia, though policies were changing at the time. So, for example, The New York Times correspondent, Neal MacFarquhar, came frequently from Cairo. Another international correspondent named Richard Engel, who was then just starting out, came regularly to go on NBC TV. Our job was basically to explain Saudi Arabia to them, and it turned out that we had a good role to play in that, more so than, perhaps, would be the case elsewhere.

A sad incident happened when the BBC security correspondent, Frank Gardner, was reporting in Riyadh and was ambushed in a neighborhood. His cameraman did not survive that attack but he did, although he was going to be in a wheelchair as a result. So, those are the kinds of things we were dealing with in what was contemplated to be a rather quiet time. Perhaps we were overoptimistic in thinking so.

*Q: What was sort of the general atmosphere in Saudi Arabia and the embassy that was out there?*

KALIN: I think, you know, one of the things that impressed me about the general atmosphere in Saudi Arabia in 2003 to 2005 was that the Saudis were recognizing, and it was brought home to them in a difficult and yet unmistakable way, that their society needed to change. The bombings of the Western housing compounds were one thing. But the bombings of, for example, the Saudi interior ministry and other Saudi facilities were something else. So during these couple of years, unfortunately, those attacks were at their peak. There was about 50 fatalities in each of those years.

So when I first arrived, I had the opportunity, for example, socially, going to receptions with Saudi women, to actually hear people say. "We don't believe that our citizens carried out the 9/11 attacks. They must have been a conspiracy by American Jews to



disrupt U.S.-Saudi relations.” That kind of conspiracy theory was absurd on its face and yet I actually heard people articulate it, which was fascinating. But over the course of the two years it became clear even to those who had indulged in this kind of thinking, after seeing destruction in their own streets, that Al Qaeda had an agenda.

I would that say in the older generation, in the Saudi cabinet at that time, a majority had been educated in the United States a generation earlier. They had gone to University of Oklahoma to study petroleum science, for example, or to the University of Illinois or to any number of mainstream representative American universities. You also saw a lot of American cars in Saudi Arabia, in contrast to other places in the Middle East. You saw McDonalds. You saw all kinds of other representations of American culture: Chuck E. Cheese had the largest restaurant for kids in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia at the time in the world. So while there was a great liking for American culture on the part of many, many Saudis, there was a sense of almost disbelief, not just surprise that the United States was having the reaction that it did to 9/11.

At the same time, as I say, there was a growing realization that maybe their own society needed to do some things differently. During the time I was there, for example, Saudi Arabia began a 24 hour news channel and many of the presenters were women. This was a surprise for many Saudis. And those women would appear with their faces uncovered, with only with headscarf and robes and no veil. So we had contact with lots of prominent Saudi women, many of whom had been behind the wheel of a car. Women were not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia because of the idea that in traditional Saudi Arabia that a woman needed a male escort. Now, the limits of that were discussed and kind of explored in some interesting ways. For example, is having your own boy an escort? Socially, it was. But as a practical matter, the idea that a seven-year-old boy would protect a woman from attack or troubles on the road is not really rational. So it was all kinds of debate and such in those terms that was very, very interesting to watch. Our interventions helped that debate along in some respects. At one point we had a visit from Karen Hughes, who at that time was the Undersecretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy. Her influence was generally quite positive in that she had President Bush’s ear and could explain to him, for example, why the use of certain words like “crusader” was not a good idea. But she went to Jeddah and talked about women driving and it initially generated kind of a backlash. So it’s a very, very interesting society in Saudi Arabia and one that generally wanted contact with us, at least Saudis of a certain generation recognized that they needed contact with the outside world. But it was very, very delicate work, I’d say.

And then, of course, women are still not routinely allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia but there have been women Saudi athletes at the Olympics. And women are now in the Saudi parliament and in ministerial positions, too. (Note: Women are now allowed to drive, as of July 24, 2018.)

*Q: My wife had a Saudi driver’s license.*

KALIN: Really? Don’t tell.

*Q: Well I had to tell our consul general, Walter Schwinn. We were in Dhahran and were having a problem because the men had to drive the wives to do the shopping.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And so you went to the emir, Saud Bin Jalawi, who was a product of the old school. Walter and looked at the leader, who said, you look sad, my friend. What is your problem? He says, I've got a problem. My officers are being shamed.*

KALIN: Ah.

*Q: And he said, what's the problem? He said they have to drive, do women's work of driving them to do shopping and all. And so he said well, so let's see if we can do something about it. And they got around it so that the wives could drive to the air base or to ARAMCO and to the consulate and they got little driver's licenses.*

KALIN: Fantastic. Well, let me say two things about that: in contrast to that experience. Some of the women officers in Riyadh, a couple of them had been lawyers in the United States. So their approach was to prepare a memorandum, which later they filed formally, to force the State Department to allow them to drive in Saudi Arabia as a matter of discrimination and employment. Well, we had a discussion about that internally and I argued, as did others, that this was not a question of discrimination and employment on the part of the State Department; this was a matter of diplomatic privileges that would or not be extended by a host government, over which we had no way to compel what we wanted. Certainly the U.S. Court decision was not compelled, did not produce the result they wanted, so. And second, if the more practical women at the embassy simply wanted to make sure there were sufficient cars and drivers to get around. And during my time there, cars and drivers more or less were sufficient because the number of officers was reduced. So that's a real contrast.

The other thing is that by the time, we're talking about 2003, ARAMCO had become almost, certainly the vast majority of ARAMCO employees were either Saudi or Arab. Very few were Western by that time. So a lot had changed.

*Q: Well, did you find yourself drawn into women's support movements and all? I mean, Saudi women's support movements?*

KALIN: Those of us who were women officers did have responsibilities along those lines. The consul general in Jeddah during my time, in fact there were two women officers in that position and I myself was acting consul general between their tenures in summer of 2004. So yes, we did follow those issues quite closely and advocated privately for things like permission for women to vote in municipal elections. That wasn't forthcoming in 2005 but has since been permitted. So we did a lot of that but mostly behind the scenes, I would say.

*Q: Well, were there ever sort of groups of Saudi women who'd been to American universities and all, getting together with you all and maybe with women from other embassies and talking about their problems and all?*

KALIN: Yes, there was, although it was quite difficult to hold such meetings at the time, not only because of the sort of natural reluctance, if you will, of women to speak out against the prevailing social feeling or any group who has a dissenting view but also because of security. The diplomatic corps where we and other diplomats lived was a beautiful place. It had been built on a plateau just slightly outside of the city and it had lovely walking trails and shade, shelters and replicas of famous places in the Islamic world, statues and such. In fact, I was able to do a wonderful series of photos for my nephew who was then involved in this Flat Stanley exercise, drawing a picture of himself and sending it to someone and taking photographs with it. So I have a whole series of lovely photos there. But the diplomatic compound had been pretty much open. In fact, on weekends what we'd often find is families of Saudis who came out to use it like a park. So when I first arrived that kind of contact was fairly easy. But, because of the security situation, by the time we left there was a huge barbed wire fence around the neighborhood. There was much greater military presence, tanks and such, guarding the entrances to the quarter. And it was rather a quieter and lonelier place, frankly. When the embassy would organize an event very often we would have to send a local employee from the ambassador's residence or the embassy to the gate to vouch for our guests. And some became discouraged and turned away. So it was very, very difficult to get that kind of exchange flowing, if you will. It continued but it took a lot of effort.

*Q: The security situation, I mean, were we able to monitor what the threat was? How did that work out?*

KALIN: We actually became known in 2003, 2004 and 2005 as very good at doing that as a mission. The relationships with Saudi counterparts were quite close at the level of the security forces, the intelligence, diplomatic corps and so on, so we had pretty good information and we seemed to have pretty good judgment as well. We did suggest that Americans leave Saudi Arabia, for example. We issued warnings or alerts in advance of essentially all of the major incidents. That would occupy a great deal of time in terms of the emergency action committee and so on and then managing the dissemination of information. In fact, it became so routine that we would alternate between first calling Associated Press and then Reuters and then UPI, the wire services. And we were ultimately complimented for that although the incidents grew increasingly disturbing. In June 2004, for example, a worker, an American who was working for one of the British security contractors on helicopters was kidnapped. His name was Paul Johnson. And that sadly resulted in a public beheading on video by the Al Qaeda operatives who had kidnapped him and that was a dramatic exercise in media relations. During the time that the captors publicized Paul Johnson's disappearance we worked with teams from the FBI who came into town and others to try to find him with the Saudis. So the Saudis, for example, conducted a house to house search through much of Riyadh and ultimately discovered his head separated from his body. As gruesome as that was it was necessary given the congressional reaction in the United States, those advocating that we do

everything possible to rescue him. For example, we had Paul Johnson's wife make an appeal on television. So it was necessary, sadly, to track every detail of that incident. For example, the ambassador got a request from the family that they would not accept anything less than the complete remains of their father. Well, since that was impossible the ambassador simply said, it's up to you. We will keep the remains that we do have until you're ready for us to send them to you. It was awful, right? For my part, one thing I remember is agreeing to do an interview with an American radio station. And as I was on the phone with the American radio station I heard the announcer of this morning program make a joke about the incident. Well, I told the producer that I would not go forward with the interview after hearing that context and hung up. So that was quite an experience. Ultimately, the family did have a memorial service and achieved at least some closure over Paul Johnson's death. But it was very tough stuff.

*Q: Oh boy.*

KALIN: This was, of course, sadly the precursor to what happened to our own consulate in Jeddah. In December of 2004 I was in my office as usual in Riyadh and I happened to have a Reuter's correspondent with me for a meeting. His phone rang. He took the call and he looked at me and said, is something wrong in Jeddah? And I said not that I know of. Well, within five minutes there was an alert transmitted through the embassy that we needed to respond to an emergency. So, I escorted the Reuters correspondent to the exit and promised to stay in touch. It turned out that that consulate was indeed under attack.

A small team of Al Qaeda operatives had made their way through, fought their way through the entrance of the consulate behind an American officer's car. And the consulate staff was in the safe area with a phone connection to the ambassador in Riyadh, who was seeking help both from the Saudis and connected to the Department's operations center. Meanwhile, our phones started to ring off the hook in public affairs, literally. We had Chinese news agencies calling, we had CNN calling, we had Saudi journalists calling, we had BBC calling; everyone was calling. So, with our phones glued to our ears I would, myself, run upstairs to the ambassador's office to see what was developing in the situation, work on statements, respond to media inquiries, run back down, take another officer back up to keep in touch. The incident took place over the course of a day and just seemed to get worse over the course of that day. By evening the Saudi security forces had overcome the invaders. Our own RSOs had successfully staved them off and kept them out of the main consulate building. Unfortunately, five of our local staff had been killed by the invaders, some shot because they weren't cooperative. So it was an awful day, a really awful day.

In the evening, the embassy organized a team to go to Jeddah and help the consulate. So I was part of that team. Three or four of us got on a plane to Jeddah and went to the consulate and started to help with the media inquiries and other urgent issues. Within a few hours the international press corps had begun to gather as well as the local media, of course. So that was also quite an intense day. The consulate held up pretty well even though people had been lost and several had been injured. But it was quite, quite tough. My mother called my residence when all this was happening, as it had started to break on

news channels in the United States. And she spoke to my maid, a wonderful Moroccan woman who had been with us throughout our assignment, who had given birth to her son and her son, a baby boy, was living with us and her husband was working for another employer. So my mother gets on the phone with Amina and asks where I am. And Amina tells her that I'm in Jeddah. Well, my mother freaked out, of course, because she assumed that I had been traveling there while the incident was in progress rather than to help with it afterwards. But at any rate, we were able to make it through that incident as well. The consul general stayed in place, the officers stayed in place, local staff came back as they could and so for about a week I was there looking at the burned out buildings and bullet holes and trying to keep Washington apprised and keep the public affairs operation going.

*Q: Well, what was the consulate general in Jeddah's main job at that point?*

KALIN: Jeddah is an important place due to its proximity to Mecca, as you know, and had been the capital of Saudi Arabia until the '80s. The embassy had been in that fight until it moved to Riyadh in the '80s. So Jeddah was staffed with a number of political officers as well as a visa issuing operation, which was important to that part of Saudi Arabia. And the consul general had been in place for a while; she was an Arabist herself who I had known when she was at the White House seconded to the National Security Council. So she was quite a prominent figure and did a lot of the kind of women's issues, outreach and other educational outreach that we were talking about earlier.

*Q: What was her name?*

KALIN: Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley.

*Q: Was this Al Qaeda completely sort of a homegrown organization? I mean the one that attacked the consulate general.*

KALIN: By then, even then, let's say, Al Qaeda was more of a franchise than a centralized organization but since the bin Laden family had been based in Jeddah the attack had obvious significance.

*Q: How did we view the Saudi efforts to stop this sort of thing? I mean, were they pretty strong?*

KALIN: Well, I think two things were done, two tracks almost of Saudi efforts. One was to become much more aggressive in the security response, to essentially use force as required to stop incidents like the attack in Jeddah. Frankly, it took a little longer than we might have hoped for the Saudis to do so in that particular case. But the other track was one that related directly to the big emphasis in the so-called war on terror and that is to combat the ideology. What the Saudis did was culturally appropriate and religiously appropriate for their situation. Essentially what they did was offer an amnesty to those who would renounce terrorism and return home. Few people took them up on that but one or two did, and to publicize the views, let's say, of those who had, in fact, come back into the mainstream, if you will. So there were Saudi television programs featuring people

who had at one time held extreme views and later renounced them, lots of coverage of that sort of thing, programs to reintegrate those individuals and so on. This, of course, meant awful things like coverage of the Abu Ghraib photos.

*Q: Well anyway, speaking of security things and all, was somebody looking at, you might say Saudi education practices? You know, they've discovered back some time ago, after 9/11, that the Saudi-sponsored schools were teaching sort of death to the infidels, more or less. I mean, it's pretty nasty stuff.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And it's built into the textbooks and all. And we had never; as I gather we never really focused on that as a reporting instrument. But what was happening now? Were we able to monitor the Friday sermons and what was being put in the textbooks and that sort of thing?*

KALIN: We did, actually. The ambassador had an interest because he had worked extensively with the Dallas public school systems on education matters and had a particular expertise in that. And for obvious reasons, as you say, we'd long had an interest in what was happening not only inside Saudi Arabia but more particularly outside with their sponsorship of the so-called madrasas or religious school that spread extremist views. So yes, we were monitoring what was happening in the mosques; we were monitoring as best we could efforts to reform education. I remember telling the ambassador that the education reform effort had been going on for a dozen years but was still in about year one or two. It seemed to us that there had been a lot of discussion or at least a fair amount of discussion of the issues but not enough consistent action. I think that the pace of change in Saudi Arabia is difficult to comprehend from a Western point of view. It is glacial and often happens only as a result of tragedy.

For example, in the '90s, I believe it was, a girls' school burned to the ground with the schoolchildren inside because firefighters were reluctant to enter given that the school was a woman's area. This was so egregious that it permitted the Saudis authorities to make some changes. These are the kinds of things, sadly, that generate change. One could make an analogy with gun control in the United States; only tragedy produces action, sadly, in many cases. There were some notably advanced pilot programs, if you will, going on. Women's colleges in Jeddah, for example, were very forward looking and there was in the planning stages what later has become the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology where, for the first time in Saudi Arabia, co-ed education, where women and men of college age study together, is now in place.

Saudi Arabia, it must be said, was educating women at the university level in very large numbers but their employment prospects were dismal. And so there were debates over whether women, for example, should be allowed to be sales clerks in places like lingerie stores. And the obvious answer would seem to be yes, but it wasn't so obvious in Saudi Arabia. Or the efforts of American universities to open branches in the Arabian Gulf and in the Arab world in general were slow to take hold in Saudi Arabia and in fact I think

that the Saudis declined, if you will, the opportunity to do what, for example, New York University had done in the United Arab Emirates, and that is establish a branch. Women of college age in Saudi Arabia would often apply to those institutions in preference to going to the United States because the requirement on the Saudi side, if a woman wanted to study in an American university, was that a male relative or responsible male of the family would also attend the same university. This was a big dilemma for us. Should we accept that limitation and honor the applications of both or not?

The other interesting thing is that the age of marriage in Saudi Arabia was quite young compared to in the West; it was almost as if the Saudis were a generation or two behind. My mother, for example, married late at age 21 for her generation. It was common in Saudi Arabia to have a marriage occur at 18, 19 years of age. So lots of internal discussion and ferment almost was going on in that respect.

Saudis textbooks, I think, did not have the same focus, perhaps, as textbooks in the Palestinian areas, for example. The Saudi kids were fighting a major war in oil fields, not equipping Palestinian children to understand the world to save Israel. And then separately our concern over the madrasas, sponsored elsewhere in the world, were part of an overall effort to control the flow of funds from individual Saudis to these organizations. The government had made an effort or at least they planned, let's say, to control those flows of funds out of Saudi Arabia to extremists around the world.

*Q: Well, I think France and other countries, are looking with caution and frankly disfavor on the sort of export of Muslim clerics from Saudi Arabia to France or other places because sort of almost invariably the authorities find they are preaching too extreme a doctrine.*

KALIN: Yes, there's a lot of that concern. There were also some notably moderate Saudis and we tried to support, understand and encourage that as well but yes, it's a vast concern. Interestingly, in the history of the Middle East some of the more extreme views were not merely indigenous to Saudi Arabia but came from exiled teachers from Egypt, for example, who had left Egypt for economic reasons and because of their adherence to organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood. So it's a complicated regional picture. I will say that the accession of King Abdullah, which I was able to witness on August 1, 2005 when King Saud, who had been incapacitated for a decade, finally died. I think Abdullah enjoyed a great deal of credibility because he was seen as righteous, in other words a modest individual, not the typical reputation both within and outside Saudi Arabia of princes who had a playboy kind of lifestyle. So a religious person who was not corrupted. And he was able since then to institute some changes, for example, depriving the religious police of the ability to detain people. I once had to assist a female journalist from Lebanon who had been detained by the religious police simply because her headscarf wasn't on properly, or so it was said. In fact, many women in the embassy had that encounter with the religious police. Although I could never stand to wear the headdress, I had few encounters with the religious police partly because I had long since learned to plan my life such that I would travel with others rather than alone, and perhaps

because I was a little older at the time. But, the new king has gone some way at least to improve the social conditions within Saudi Arabia.

*Q: Did we have reasonable contact with the, and his name escapes me right now, but the conference of elders, you know, the-*

KALIN: The Majlis ash-Shura?

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: We did, actually. The Majlis was well established at that period and again there were individuals within in it involved in national dialogues over some of these issues and the discussion of the municipal elections was taking place. Again, they were held in a somewhat restricted manner in 2005 but were widened to a little more participation later. So the Majlis was a fairly well functioning institution at that moment.

*Q: Looking at Saudi Arabia while you were there, I mean, I keep thinking about this country is now, what, about 25 or so million people? I mean, I don't know how big it is now.*

KALIN: Yes, about 25 million or so, yes.

*Q: Yes. And they're sitting on a pile of sand and oil and at some point the oil is not going to be, you might say, as important.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And, you know, thinking about, well, the Thais and the Vietnamese and all these other places that are really getting with it with technology and all that; the Saudis have got piles of money but it seems like they're still relying on Filipino labor or the equivalent to do most of their things which, when they run out of money they're going to need their own people to do.*

KALIN: Yes, it's a serious issue. We are certainly reminded of the seriousness now when oil prices have reached a five year low. Virtually all of the middle class jobs, let's say, and certainly the lower class jobs were performed by third country nationals, be they Filipino or Indian or Pakistani or others. And that is a really serious long-term issue for Saudi Arabia. It's not clear to me at all, looking back, how the society will adapt to that. Very talented young people who I met at the time, you know, who might be, let's say, even on the track for upper middle class or upper class kind of work, very talented people who might have become full professors in the United States, for example, are still teaching English as a second language in Saudi Arabia. So, it seems to me that there is still a big adjustment in the country's future and how that will go is unclear. Certainly the country is not in the condition of, let's say, Yemen, where the population is already too large for the resource base in terms of water and so on. The Saudis have done better planning than that, but people used to say even 10 years ago that it reminded them of



Texas. For Americans outside of Texas, the reputation is that there's oil wealth and other kinds of wealth and everybody's rich. But that's really not the case. And then, of course, you have the whole Mexican labor question along the U.S. border. But there's a lot to be reckoned with down the road for Saudi Arabia and it's unclear how it will come out, not least because of the leadership trends. The Saudis tried to formalize it with the accession of the new King Abdullah, but he is in his 80s and it's really unclear how it will be accomplished when the time comes.

*Q: Well, you know, I was in Saudi Arabia 50 years ago, I saw during the time of Nasser and you know, we were all thinking about will this Saud dynasty last. And you know, it was sort of assumed that there was going to be a Nasser right revolution. And the Saudis were the authorities that has split the army into sort of the White Army, which is the tribal army, and the regular army and keeping the Egyptians and Palestinians out of everything except for the air force, which were frankly flown by maybe Palestinians. But I take it that, I mean, how were we looking at the military there?*

KALIN: Interestingly, just months before my arrival, we had withdrawn the tens of thousands of Americans that had been based in Saudi Arabia since the first Gulf war. So there was a feeling that we had kind of done that and that that was kind of that. Moreover, the Saudis were distancing themselves from us in other kinds of ways. I think that our position on the military then and now is to try to nurture it, to try to support it, to accept, as we had with ARAMCO, that Saudization, so to speak, is necessary and inevitable, certainly. But, you know, our effort at the time that I was in Saudi Arabia was not as focused on the military as it might have been even a few months before.

*Q: Well, I keep coming back to this situation for women serving in Saudi Arabia because obviously it's a major issue. Was there equivalent to, within the diplomatic corps or within our embassy a female mafia? In other words, I mean, looking at this thing not just, isn't it awful or something but I mean, what are we going to do about it, what's our role and that sort of thing.*

KALIN: You know, there were more and more women serving in Saudi Arabia during my tenure. Margaret Scobey had been DCM when I arrived; she was soon to leave for her next assignment as ambassador to Syria, which left me as the senior-most woman at post for a period of a few months so I therefore hosted the women's Ramadan event and so on. There were a fair number of women working in the consular section, for example. There were women, other women in public affairs, a few other women in political and economic sections as well. And of course the female consul general in Jeddah --

*Q: Who was that?*

KALIN: Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, who was then succeeded by Tatiana Gfoeller-Volkoff, who came in the fall of 2004. So I think that there was a lot of that communication among us and between us as women serving in this unusual situation. But in terms of our interlocutors, we were American first and women second, if you will. I had many interlocutors who declined to shake my hand because I was female, according

to the Muslim belief that men and women who aren't related should not touch. But I did not feel disadvantaged in those terms. I was able to speak with even those affirmatively religious interlocutors as a professional.

So I was invited, you know, on the weekends Saudis would go to the country, basically, so I could contrast a couple of such outings. One was offered by one of the more modern young princesses and so two busloads of diplomatic women, 80 percent spouses and maybe 20 percent commissioned officers of various countries spent a day riding camels and making tea in the country. And then on the other such outing I was carefully, with very careful preparation, invited to go with the ambassador and a party of male officer to a different country installation. We used to say as women that we had access to both worlds and that actually, you know, that was somewhat effective. Having said that, the degree of careful preparation that was needed for me to go during daylight hours with the ambassador and party speaks to how difficult it would have been to meet Saudi men in the middle of the night at their campsites, which frequently was something that male officers did.

*Q: Yes. Well I know back in the '70s I was in Seoul, Korea, and one of the entertainments was the Keesing Party, which was basically a male drinking with young ladies, Keesing girls, who sort of brought your food and all that. And the question would come up, you know, what do you do when you have a visiting person who's a woman? And the queen said, oh hell, she's an honorary man.*

KALIN: Yes, I think that was the case regularly for women diplomats in Saudi Arabia. It did have its limits, certainly, but at the same time the newspaper editors and so on would interact with me in a professional way, as they would with anyone else.

*Q: Were there any women in the Saudi diplomatic service?*

KALIN: I really do not recall any.

*Q: You never at a foreign ministry did –*

KALIN: No, I did not meet the women in that capacity. Other than the clerical capacity there were a few women in the Saudi embassy in Washington, for example, who were in a support role, whether it be a receptionist or a translator, for example, but I do not recall ever working with a Saudi woman in an official capacity.

*Q: Did we have any problems with teenage children of our embassy staff?*

KALIN: We might have but during my tenure the families were evacuated shortly after my arrival so the problem was the opposite, in fact. We had unaccompanied people, unaccompanied officers and staff who missed their teenage kids so when post went to unaccompanied status about six to nine months after my arrival as it became clear that the second bombing of a Western compound would not be the last incident, we had a lot of administrative discussion on what to do. Families had been evacuated, teenagers had been

evacuated, so the question became well, how do we staff and recruit? Many people curtailed because their teenagers had to be in school and they didn't want to leave them in the care of just one spouse, for example, back in the United States, or at another post. So that kind of took care of that.

We did have some incidences with military personnel who were part of our embassy and new media technology. This was somewhat interesting. One person, a military member, posted to a personal blog the opinion that religious freedom in Saudi Arabia was completely lacking and this had terrible results. Well, this is not something that we officially disagreed with, but it was not appropriate for a military member to be putting that on a personal blog. It caused a reaction because it was a personal story and spoke to a Saudi individual, a host country national. The military at that time was a few months or years away from issuing a formal policy on social media so that that kind of thing didn't take place.

*Q: Well, you mentioned the embassy dependents had been sent out of the country because of a bombing?*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Well now, was there a second bombing while you were there?*

KALIN: After the first housing compound bombing there were bombings at the Saudi interior ministry. Several lesser targets such as the driver's license bureau was bombed, and another kidnapping incident, and so on. So sadly for pretty much our entire tenure there was a serious incident, not to mention, of course, our own consulate being attacked in December of 2004. There was an incident every four to six weeks that resulted in death, either of Westerners or Saudis. So it just so happened that we were there at a particularly violent time.

*Q: How did you work getting around Saudi Arabia as far as going out to cities beyond the Jeddah/Riyadh/Dhahran—*

KALIN: Sadly, we weren't able to do much of that at all. A few officers who were Muslims visited Mecca. Of course the overall restriction on anyone is that you must be Muslim to visit the holy sites, so there were some carefully planned contacts there. The consulate in Dhahran was able to travel by road to some of the cities in the eastern province, which were of particular importance for stability because of the Shia presence and discrimination, social and legal, against that population in eastern Saudi Arabia. But the kinds of things that one would have wanted to do, camping in the desert or casual contacts outside of the big cities, was not possible during our time there, unfortunately.

*Q: I apologize for this sort of hit or miss thing but while I've got you here I'm trying to get feelings about an interesting and vital area.*

KALIN: Yes, indeed.

*Q: At a particular time.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: What about Israel? Again, I was there, we're really talking about a real gap here; I was in Saudi Arabia 50 years before you were there.*

KALIN: Right.

*Q: I was there from '55 to, or '58 to '60.*

KALIN: Ah, indeed.

*Q: I mean the Saudis had been living with Israel. I mean, they can hate it and all that but it's sort of like a sore tooth, you know, you sort of get accustomed to it. Did you feel that their protests and all this were more sort of ho hum or pro forma or was this a burning sore or what?*

KALIN: Well, interestingly, the feeling was that we had missed an opportunity around the year 2000. There was a feeling, both on our part and more particularly on the Arab side, that we should have succeeded about the year 1999 or 2000 with Yasser Arafat. The commonly held view is that the Clinton Administration tried and it was the Palestinians, particularly Arafat, who failed to get an agreement. During my time in Beirut the Arab League had come up with a proposal that would have normalized relations with Israel in exchange for recognition of Palestinian rights. So there was a sense that we were close or almost there or might have been there and I think the only reason that issue didn't come up more was the preponderance of attention on the war on terror and on our activities in Iraq, you know, that, and Afghanistan, for that matter, although certainly the feelings about Iraq were much more pronounced than those about Afghanistan, even in Saudi Arabia. Just the proximity and the fact that the U.S. invasion of Iraq had opened the way for an Iranian influence to get much greater in the region predominated at that time. In other words there was, I think, a sense of, some sense of dulling of the issues over time but also a sense that there was simply too much else on the agenda to go back and deal with Israel. So as I said earlier the Saudis were, the ordinary Saudi, let's say, the man on the street or woman on the street was prepared, at least some of them, to believe that there was a Jewish conspiracy behind 9/11 as opposed to a problem with the 19 hijackers themselves and their ideology. So the Israel/Palestinian issue was definitely part of the conversation but the feeling was that the United States was, if you will, distracted, with everyone else, Iraq and terrorism.

*Q: Did we have people who served in Israel serving in Riyadh when you were there?*

KALIN: There were but it was not a focus of contention. I never heard anyone who put that on their resume who was in any way harassed or had difficulties because of it.

*Q: Again, in my time if you had served in Israel you couldn't serve in Saudi Arabia.*

KALIN: Yes, I see. Well, things had changed, certainly, by the time I got there.

*Q: Were we using interns in our embassy?*

KALIN: We did not at the time because of the security situation, once again. As I say, we were able to retain positions for a handful of spouses but we didn't participate in the internship programs because it just was impossible to assure people's security at the time, unfortunately.

*Q: What was your impression of some of the more active embassies there or were there? Were we kind of the most active predominant embassy?*

KALIN: I would say that we were. The American influence in Saudi Arabia was and perhaps still is disproportionate. The ties to ARAMCO, the ties to education you know, of the generation that was in place in ministries at the time, were simply overwhelming. You would meet Saudis who had been educated in Britain, for example, but far fewer who spoke about ties to France or Germany or other places. So really it was kind of a lopsided situation, if you will.

*Q: I was wondering whether you had sort of Michigan alumni days or something university, of people who had served, I mean, Saudis who attended the University of Michigan. I mean, various universities. I'd think this would be a fairly active group.*

KALIN: Yes, there were some associations like that but interestingly there was almost a generation gap there, okay, so that people, many Saudis had gone to the United States for education in, let's say, the '60s, to some extent the '70s, but far fewer had that opportunity or took that opportunity, let's say, in the '80s or '90s. And that was quite a large cohort, actually. Saudis themselves would regret that that generation had not received the same kind of training or exposure. The population grew dramatically during those years so there was a very large cohort that had been educated exclusively in Saudi Arabia and frankly had an education that was of a lower quality than those who had had an opportunity to study abroad, wherever it might have been, in the earlier generations. So this was a big concern. Now, we made comparisons, for example, of this generation of Saudis with their peers elsewhere in the region and sadly they were behind. So we thought about soliciting and responding to offers to, you know, for Saudis to sponsor more study abroad or, again, one of the American universities coming to Saudi Arabia. And there just, you know, it just didn't quite come together. There's a lot of push and pull in that society.

We did ultimately try to make a serious effort to get more Saudis back into American education in the latter part of my tenure. We had hoped, for example, to use some Saudis from the Middle East Partnership Initiative or MEPI to set up a scholarship program that would sponsor and resolve some of the visa issues that were plaguing those who had contracted independently to go to the United States. We were hoping to set up an

organized program. But it didn't take off for a couple of reasons. First of all, it was hard to prove a negative. You know, can you prove that this young Saudi will not commit a crime in the United States or become radicalized or spread radical views? That was tough, number one.

And number two, qualifications were a problem. Did they have the capacity to take on university study in the United States? Often the answer was no, so there was a provision to take advantage of what some American universities offer in terms of a year of language study in preparation. But thirdly, we ran into sort of cultural issues on the Saudi side. The Ministry of Education, for example, held briefings for students who were heading to the United States and elsewhere that we were excluded from at the embassy. Those briefings included counsel like, be careful, American friends can lead you down the wrong path towards sinful activities, which is, of course, not a message we would have endorsed. We did have briefings ourselves at the embassy that tried to prepare students in a more realistic way, but the pushes and pulls were truly difficult to resolve in that particular program. So we never got anywhere, at least during my time.

*Q: Well what caused this gap in the '80s and '90s?*

KALIN: Well, I think to some degree it was just the numbers. There was this generation that grew up in relative wealth and therefore factors that had limited the population growth in earlier generations, things like child mortality, disease, etc., were resolved. In other words the Saudis were going their so-called demographic transition that had taken place in other Arab countries. Egypt's population, for example, grew enormously. Throughout the Middle East and indeed the developing world there's a large cohort of young people who didn't have quite the advantages or at least are not as prepared for the workforce as you might hope. Even in the United States that's true to some degree.

*Q: Again, turning to a completely different subject, but who was your ambassador at the time?*

KALIN: Jim Oberwetter, a political appointee who had grown up as an oil worker, born in Kansas and grew up with his family for part of his childhood in the Arab world where his father worked in oil. And he had been President Bush's press secretary early in the elder Bush's career and had been the head of government and public relations for the Hunt Oil Company for most of his career. So, someone very discreet, knowledgeable, well qualified and somebody from whom I learned a great deal.

*Q: Alright, did you, I mean obviously he, working in the White House, understood politics and I would think that, you know, you can call it a kingdom or a dictatorship or a monarchy or whatever the hell you want to call it but politics is still around there. And I guess he, did he understand and did you all understand or feel you understood the politics of what drove things within the Saudi government?*

KALIN: You know, the phrase that pops to mind is an analogue to the Kremlin watcher. We all were Saudi watchers. One can never feel that one understands perfectly the

dynamics of the 17,000 or so members of the royal family who are interacting and have various interests and so on. But we had a very good team of officers. The ambassador was very astute politically. He was well connected to the White House and to others. For example, he had been a long-time friend of Margaret Tutwiler, who at that time was ambassador to Morocco, as I mentioned earlier. He knew Karen Hughes very well so he was able to understand certainly with extreme clarity what the objectives were. And he was very good at adapting those policy decisions from the White House to our situation. I'll give you an example.

At the time the White House was producing something, a daily report called "The White House Global Messenger." And that was essentially a sheet of talking points about major policy issues that we were supposed to use with interlocutors around the world. The difficulty was that the piece was written for a strictly American audience. So, for example, it would occasionally have a religious tone, the same kind of error that Karen Hughes had pointed out to President Bush in using words like "crusader," which were not translatable into our context, or other points that were not relevant to our context. So I explained this to Ambassador Oberwetter, why I had not used this product in my daily work, and he immediately grasped what I meant. And I have no doubt that he was able to influence some of that thinking back in Washington and report as accurately as we could what was happening in Saudi Arabia. We were quite frank, actually, with visitors to Riyadh from the United States. We, for example, at the highest levels, from the ambassador on down, would tell staff members of cabinet secretaries or assistant secretaries that they could not expect to get a meeting scheduled more than 24 hours in advance, say, at best, that simply the Saudis would arrange the schedule that suited them and that was all there was to it. So we also, as we did in every embassy, explain that one could not order Diet Dr. Pepper and boiled eggs for lunch as one might in Ohio.

*Q: Well, you know, in your public affairs/public diplomacy role, how successful were you with the Saudi press? Could you do anything with it?*

KALIN: Oh, we could actually. The Saudi press was surprisingly, I might say open, at the time. The current Saudi ambassador to Washington, a man named Adel Al-Jubeir, an American-educated, then-young person, who was the media advisor for the government, was quite determined to modernize the Saudi media. This made a lot of sense in part because the Saudi media, a large number of Saudi media outlets, were based in London and already open to the rest of the world. So it absolutely was possible for us to interact with them. We knew for example the officials and editors at Al-Arabiya, which was a venture that Rafik Hariri had been involved with and was sort of a counterweight to the larger Al-Jazeera, which was and is sponsored by the Qataris, who are opposed to Saudi Arabia historically and certainly during the time I was there.

So it actually was quite interesting to meet Saudi journalists. They would take our point of view, take quotes, think reasonably clearly with us about the United States and what was happening in the United States. And even issues that were quite painful and difficult, such as Abu Ghraib, were somewhat mitigated, if you will, by our efforts and they were pretty broad and deep. As I say, we had a very media savvy ambassador who met

regularly, very graciously with international press. Our political officers were highly experienced and very willing and able to do background briefings with journalists, and had journalists among their contacts. We also had terrific staff within the public affairs section, really long-serving locally engaged staff who were highly educated and very plugged in. So we had all those advantages.

*Q: Well now, did, say, local newspapers and radio stations, did the head of it or the editors present points of view or were they more or less obliged to follow rather strictly what they felt was the government line?*

KALIN: There was perhaps some degree of self-censorship, but less than one might expect. I mean, certainly the embassy in Cairo had a much harder time than we did, for example, taking the editorial point of view of the media seriously. I'm not saying that we got positive coverage; we did not. Our policies were highly unpopular at the time. Everything from the invasion of Iraq to, as we discussed earlier, absence of any progress for the Palestinians received the kind of coverage you might expect, negative. At the same time people were still trying to talk to us, trying to persuade us. They had not given up, if I may put it that way. And they were permitted, pretty clearly, by their government to express these things.

*Q: Well now, turning sort of lastly to the Iraq War, by the time you were there we had taken Baghdad. Is that right?*

KALIN: That's right.

*Q: During the time you were in Saudi Arabia how was this war? I mean the effects and all, first by the officers at the embassy and all, these were Arabists or people who were used to that world, how is it viewed? And then, and again beyond that, let's go to the Saudi viewpoint.*

KALIN: When I arrived in Riyadh, we had taken Baghdad, but only six months before. So we were in early days of the Coalition Provisional Authority and still believed that the war would be over soon. Many officers in Riyadh were optimistic, shall we say, that this would be the case. So we had yet to get bogged down, if you will, in some of the violence and insurrections that we were to experience in the coming years. That is not to say that our interlocutors thought our actions were justified. No, they did not.

We were able to follow the evolution of U.S. policy from, let's say, our unwarranted confidence that we could use shock and awe and our superior economic development, our nation building capacities to remake Iraq in our own image or the model for the region within a year or two or six months or three months. The conversation took place, at least. The Arab people had not cut us off. But that's language they used and, you know, that's the best face I can put on it because it was seen, in Saudi Arabia, perhaps to a somewhat lesser degree than Lebanon, but still seen as a tremendous mistake and something that was going to cause very great difficulties for a long time to come, which has proven to be the case.



We did have occasional visitors come through from the embassy in Iraq, too. I myself was asked to go to Iraq during this period. Again, this was in that early time when the Near Eastern Affairs bureau was hoping that by rotating experienced people through Iraq for periods of three and then six months and then a year that we could handle the situation and that would be that. I actually declined to go to Iraq three times because I did not believe the effort was going to succeed. And I felt that I could do more for American policy in Riyadh where we were at least able to work on the real problem as I saw it and still see it, and that is Al Qaeda and its ideology as opposed to Saddam Hussein and his awful regime.

I actually in a way benefitted from the drain that was Iraq. Embassy Riyadh had been approved for a position, a kind of a super PAO or political appointee who would work with the ambassador. That position was not filled because of a need for people in Iraq. So I was able to do more for the ambassador and learn more from him than I might otherwise have been able to do.

*Q: I mean, it sounds like a super PAO, a political appointee sounds like just a job for somebody who owed a favor or something like that.*

KALIN: Yes. Well, we did have an initiative at the time, rightly in my judgment, to prioritize which embassies could make the difference after 9/11, if you will, for U.S. policies and Riyadh was one of those 15, I guess. I totally did advocate for and ultimately received some more funding although, as with Iraq and Afghanistan, money was only part of the problem. I remember vividly one day when a military officer called me and asked if he could get my help in filling out contact information for journalists in Saudi Arabia. And I said, of course, and he then proceeded to tell me that the budget for his project to collect the names and addresses and phone numbers and email addresses of journalists in the Arab world was \$250,000. Now, that was one-fourth of my entire programming budget for the country of Saudi Arabia for the entire year.

So, while we were underfunded the real, the more pressing issue for us, frankly, was staffing. We had an inspector come through towards the end of my tour and the question was well, we need the NEA hands in Iraq. And our answer was well, we need them in Saudi Arabia, too, and we'd be very glad to take officers from EUR, WH, and any other bureau to help us because we're starting to tire. And in fact staffing was such a serious problem during my tour in Riyadh. I had signed up to do three years rather than the standard two, given my situation, but I ended up leaving early because the staffing that we did get was so inadequate. So we decided that was simply, after my husband and I, after going into our fifth year in an unaccompanied hardship tour, decided that we had had enough. Moreover, the Department was so unresponsive to inquiries even about the process of dealing with such issues that it was clear to me that this was not going to be a productive use of my time.

I took six weeks of home leave and went back to the Department around Christmas of 2005.

*Q: OK. Today is the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 with Carol Kalin. And Carol, you had mentioned something; I don't want to go into names, but a problem that occurs from time to time. You said you had somebody who was obviously a minority who was claiming discrimination and seemed to be embarking on this as being his or her major preoccupation, which is very unsettling if you're trying to run an office. Could you explain the sort of complaints you were getting and how one dealt with it at the time?*

KALIN: Oh, yes, that was a really, really difficult issue. I left Saudi Arabia exhausted and quite discouraged, with a feeling that I had made important contribution to our fight against extremism and U.S.-Saudi relations and yet accused of this kind of discrimination. And in fact I may have taken it a little bit too personally, given that I myself had come in as a mid-level entrant under a program that was designed to correct some of those errors of the past. It was just particularly stressful. I will say that the officer had complaints all the way up and down the line. The officer came in, I think, first of all without the support of the NEA Bureau, one of those officers who sadly had gotten themselves in a situation that senior HR officials were not sure about what context to place them in anymore. It might have been in the DCM training class when we talked about it as people who were pretty much assigned by HR to various bureaus in turn with the hope that they would find a fit. There wasn't a fit in Saudi Arabia. I think the officer came in with expectations that were highly unrealistic, once again thinking about whether people were prepared and understood the kind of life and flexibility and work, or lack thereof, they would have in a hardship post or a high threat post. So the officer was concerned that the post was not responding to the month of Ramadan correctly, for example, not doing enough entertaining, not doing enough in the public diplomacy realm. Certainly our programs were restricted to a great extent by security concerns.

The officer had ambitions to make very close contacts in Saudi Arabia that were also to prove problematic, for example marriage proposals. So it just was highly problematic. The officer was also very critical of others, and even the local staff members complained that they were being told how to dress during Ramadan. You know, the women were asked to wear additional veils, for example, during that time, all of which was very, very disruptive to a mission that we had tried very hard over the last couple of years to make functional, despite our difficult circumstances and mistakes.

So that was handled at the time, I will say, poorly from my perspective. I became aware of complaints that were back in the Department only after I actually had come out of being acting Consul General in Jeddah during that summer. It had been quite a successful few weeks, interesting to me, a job that had restored my intelligence clearances fully within 24 hours of my request, by the way, so that was very important to my progress. So I had spent about a week back in Riyadh and then went on R&R, and discovered in Washington that HR had asked to see me and I thought, okay, perhaps it's about my clearances or my future or any number of in-house service things, how to manage a difficult post. I had done some talks on best practices as a spokesperson at the NEA public diplomacy officers' regional conference. I thought it must be one of those topics. In fact, it was about the EEO situation.

In other words, it was about something that I had literally had a week of exposure to. And the head of HR's senior level division was two weeks from retirement at that point. The line he told me was, you have to work with this officer; I worked with this officer 20 years ago at a major post and although I wasn't in the same section and really had very little contact the relationship worked then, it has to work now. I was shocked by that kind of approach.

So I went back to post and did the best I could, but the situation had already become quite difficult to manage in my two or three week absence and only got worse as time went on. And by time I mean a few weeks. So it was really quite a volatile situation. The other officers at post had mixed feelings. One senior officer told me off the record that he didn't want this officer at representational events in his home, for example. That was difficult to manage or explain. I had asked for the officer to be included, be given a chance; others, as I said, local staff had all kinds of very, very mixed feelings. Other colleagues reported that inappropriate conversations disparaging American colleagues were taking place with local staff over lunches in public view and so on and so forth, so it was quite difficult.

The DCM at post, Gary Grappo, was about to leave post for confirmation hearings for an ambassadorship; that put him in a difficult position because he was not going to be there long enough to resolve the situation and had to be quite careful to observe all of the bureaucratic procedures. The ambassador was very, very understanding and did everything he could to make sure the post dealt with the situation as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. In Washington, when I became aware that complaints were about to be launched I reached out and I got no response, literally no response of any kind, from the Office of Civil Rights. It was as if I didn't exist somehow and that was very, very disheartening.

An inspection team was at post at the time to make things all the more interesting, along with two cabinet level visits, one in Riyadh and one in Jeddah, and the inspectors tried to give us some insight. Ultimately, however, I felt almost physically threatened by this individual and decided that I simply had had enough. So I did what I could to wrap things up and had an abbreviated round of farewell calls and so on, left the new DCM with the section as acting PAO, as well as DCM. He was a colleague, Michael Gfoeller, who had been Political Counselor, so we had worked together for quite a while and he was very, very supportive, as were many officers, of public diplomacy activities. There was a saying at the time that we were all public diplomacy officers. That wasn't really true because some of us were actually focused and trained in those functions and others weren't, but people recognized how important it was to get this all straightened out.

Ultimately, the complainant didn't stay long at post beyond my departure in December. But a very good PD officer who I had gotten to know during his time in Cairo, Jim Bullock was his name, had been in Iraq and had fallen out of favor with the team in Baghdad because of his honesty, I believe, so he was able to come to Riyadh and fill in for me and then retained his onward assignment to Paris as public affairs chief there.

So things ultimately worked out but it was very, very difficult. And, as I said, perhaps I shouldn't have taken it quite as personally as I did. But it did have very, very specific career consequences for me so that kind of led to my decision to look at a post outside of the Middle East, a place that my husband could live a bit more normally, let's say.

*Q: Well, when you got back to Washington, when you put in a request, was it treated sympathetically?*

KALIN: It was. People recognized that those of us serving in places like Saudi Arabia, which were under very high threat but didn't have support that was available in Baghdad, people recognized that two years was about the limit, that a third year at a post like that was extremely difficult. So there was not a particular problem in granting my request, but it was nevertheless made in very unfortunate circumstances. I had a lot of sympathy and support from senior PD officers. As I mentioned, Jim Bullock was able to come in. Duncan MacInnes, another long time public diplomacy officer, terrific insight, was starting a new unit, along with Adam \_\_\_\_, who I had known earlier in Washington, he was then the deputy spokesperson, to do what was called rapid response. In other words, to really look carefully at what was happening in global media, not only in the Arab world but well beyond, and prepare a very succinct, one page report that was circulated not only to Karen Hughes, not only to State Department senior officials, but other U.S. government officials.

So that turned out to be a good six month assignment. We had a very small team; we would come in at about 6:00 a.m. in Washington and prepare this one page report with major themes and edit it quickly and circulate it around. And I think it did give people a sense of how the United States was viewed around the world. It's very easy to lose that sense when you're back in Washington so I think that was a very nice bridge for me. It allowed me and my husband to find a very nice little bungalow in Arlington, Virginia to rent and by then we were looking forward also to going to Greece. I had decided that with another DCMship unlikely because of all of the turmoil around this EEO matter. I almost fainted when the EEO investigator told me that it would be two, three, five years before it was resolved.

But once I recovered, I recognized that the thing to do was to find a good post, step back a bit and keep going. And I decided that I would stay in public diplomacy. I just wasn't attracted to the idea of going back to the straight-laced world of economics, having dealt with the full range of issues in my last couple of posts, nor was I particularly competitive in that cone since I hadn't served in an Econ job for a while. So that's why I bid on the spokesperson or information officer job in Athens. The other thought that I had was it might be an out tour or it might be a retirement tour, since I would have 20 years of service during that assignment. And of course the other factor was that another person I respected and had worked with in NEA before, Tom Countryman, was the DCM in Athens at the time. So luckily that all came together.

Moreover, the EUR Bureau had only a handful of bidders on that job. Normally, if we had six or seven in NEA we would think that that was a highly competitive and terrific post, but in EUR if there weren't at least two dozen bidders the post wasn't all that desirable so they were prepared to give it to me. They did mention that it was part of what they called the Iraq tax; in other words, that EUR would be doing me a favor, doing officers a favor who were not EUR hands but were coming out of hardship posts in the Middle East. That was an interesting split that we explored further after we got to post. Ultimately, it was a good decision to take that time and learn a new language. It was the first time I'd actually had language training from the Department in all my years of service, aside from a few weeks of French, and being at FSI was terrific. It allowed us to get to know a lot of people we'd be working with in Athens and I very much enjoyed learning Greek. The instructors were terrific and the program was great. And I also had a chance to join a group of mostly military officers, about 30 or 40 of us, on the weekends who would go listen to eminent academics talk about foreign policy through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Seminar 21, kind of a fellowship program. So I had a chance to kind of take a breather and do some thinking and learning during that year and that was good for us, both me and my husband.

*Q: On this EEO case, looking back on it, in the first place, what happened to the individual? Did you find out? And did you feel that if somebody can claim a minority status of one sort another and start complaining the system just sort of lets them go, you know, and being disruptive. You know, it's poor management to allow this sort of thing to fester, but did you feel that everybody was covering their ass or what?*

KALIN: Oh, absolutely. I'm sorry to say that's exactly the feeling I had. As I mentioned, Washington was entirely unresponsive to my inquiries in the first place. People at post tried to help but only to a point. As soon as inspectors got there that in a way made things better because it allowed us to have an authoritative source of information on the ground and witnesses, honestly, to what was happening, but on the other hand it was isolating. You had asked me a few times, and I've mentioned a few times sort of an old girls network, people asking for advice. And literally one senior colleague who I called who normally gave me excellent advice said exactly that: she said just let the person do what they're going to do, there's nothing you can do to save your section. It's just not manageable. And that it was even meant to be unmanageable for all concerned.

The officer, as I said, was removed from post a few weeks or months after I left. While I was at FSI another minority officer who I had worked with in Jeddah spontaneously came up to me and reported what was happening to the complainant, namely that the person had gone to Iraq and also been extremely disruptive there. The officer, nevertheless, was promoted while in Iraq, which is something I don't understand, given that I was not promoted. I shouldn't draw personal comparisons with any particular individual but I rather think it was a mistake systemically. At that time the Department was basically saying if you want to be promoted you must serve in Iraq and conversely service in Iraq will get you a look at promotion. And I think that that came out of NEA's custom. You know, in NEA if you "did the sand," I believe David Welch, one of the assistant

secretaries, had originated that saying, then you had proved yourself within the bureau. Same with Iraq.

I think that extending that to the entire Foreign Service was a mistake because it generated a lot of promotions that would not otherwise have occurred, number one, and number two, left those of us who were serving in other places that were comparable, such as Saudi Arabia, more or less out in the cold. Not to mention people who had careers that did not involve the Middle East. So it was just a really odd and difficult configuration all around.

I understand why the administrative procedures are designed the way they are and that one wouldn't want someone who was prejudiced or a poor manager or whatever. And certainly I'd been the recipient of prejudice in the Foreign Service as a woman from time to time; you wouldn't want those individuals to be, well, you want to protect the complainant, obviously. That makes sense. But to the extreme extent of failing to respond to inquiries from others involved in the process is just really unfortunate. It's one of those things, you look at it and you say, in principle this makes so much sense but the way it was executed was so poor.

*Q: Well, in Washington, before you went into Greek training, you were working there for a while and what were you doing?*

KALIN: Well, I spent about six months on a bridge assignment with a small unit that was newly developing called Rapid Response. And again, we would produce a daily summary and analysis and special reports on public opinion as it was expressed through the media of the United States and our actions or reactions to significant events. For example, the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samara was a big report we did. The conflict between Hamas and Israel also occurred during that time. So we did a special report on that. It was very interesting work and I think a real service to policymakers, one of those things that the former U.S. Information Agency had done as a core function but that had been neglected or, let's say, people had thought to save some money by contracting that kind of thing out. But in fact, we were so well placed to do exactly this. We had a network of embassies and consulates with locally engaged staff and officers who trained in watching all of the things that were important to us, so it made absolute sense to do it in-house and happily Karen Hughes had kind of recognized that and we were doing it. So, I spent, again, about six months doing that work and then transferred it to others as we went along. That was a good way to spend six months, probably better than taking leave without pay, which I seriously considered at the time.

*Q: How did you find the study of Greek?*

KALIN: I really enjoyed the study of Greek. In an earlier generation, Greece was a high profile place for the United States as kind of a bulwark against communism in Eastern Europe, a base of operations. Greece, of course, had a very strong diaspora, a lot of Greek-Americans. In fact, my best friend is a Greek-American, also a Foreign Service officer. And my husband and I had been to Greece on vacation at different points and we

both enjoyed it very much. It's a Mediterranean culture somewhat like Lebanon, lots of warmth, lots of complexity, lots of, just a very social place and we found that even as we studied the language. So we had really great teachers in a small group and really good instruction. We were able to converse as well as read and even do a little bit of writing by the time we had spent that academic year studying Greek. The other thing I would observe is that it's a good thing the Greeks simplified their language in the mid '70s, because learning it would have taken two years, as with Arabic, had they not done so.

*Q: Well you served in Greece from when to when?*

KALIN: We arrived in Greece in the early summer, around, I think, June, June/July of 2007, having spent 2006 learning the language. So we arrived there that summer and stayed until the summer of 2009, as it worked out. It's funny; we had, as I mentioned, seen Greece as a kind of a safe and wonderful place, despite its complexities. Someone threw a bomb at the embassy before we even got there and yet the threat of terrorism was quite different in Greece than in the Middle East so it really didn't bother us. Somebody, apparently an anarchist, we never to my knowledge resolved the case, lobbed a small package of explosives at the beautiful 1960s-era building with the great seal of the United States right out front. And that package went through a window behind that seal and landed in a bathroom and exploded and did some minor damage.

I say that to kind of illustrate the split or the difference in perceptions. When we got to Greece and even before in language training we had seen how different the world can look depending on where you've come from. Coming from the Middle East, as we had, we had a great vision of Greece. Others coming from, let's say Brussels or Paris or London thought of Greece as a kind of a chaotic and difficult place. One person told me they thought Greece was dirty and I thought to myself that that person must never have been to Cairo or even New York or any tough part of an American city. But again, it is all a matter of expectations, thinking about this kind of post. I had seen kind of the same split from the Washington perspective in posts like Rabat, Morocco, or Tunis, where a lot of people with, officers with different experience and different expectations were together in the same place. So it was interesting.

*Q: What sort of office were you running there?*

KALIN: I, again, had stepped back a bit professionally. I was the information officer or spokesperson for the embassy so I was not in charge of a department, of a section, rather, nor on the management team per se. But I will say that I was able to make use of my experience to some extent. I observed as kind of a semi-official member of the country team so that I could plan for any issues that might come up publicly and how to manage them with the Greek media, which was a very wild and undisciplined bunch but with some very astute commentators. And I served as acting PAO for periods of time in the normal rotation and even as acting DCM one summer. But I had a great local staff who had become very long serving, very astute observers of Greek life and who remembered the time that when Greece in, let's say the '70s and '80s, was a much bigger post for the

United States than it had become in the era of the post-Berlin Wall and rise of the European Union time that we were in. So it was a good tour in that sense.

One of the first things that happened, for example, illustrates all this. Shortly after we arrived, as I recall, we were dealing with how to help Greece defend itself and recover from massive forest fires. Like California, Greece is subject to those kinds of events and during that summer it had been particularly dry and hot and the forest fires were in the outskirts of Athens. So we queried the Department. We looked at all of the available programs and frankly we couldn't come up with too much. The Greeks of a certain generation, at any rate, kind of looked at the United States for that kind of help, you know, the indispensable nation or the world's only super power was the image of the United States for many Greeks. And certainly in the diaspora in the United States there was a sincere desire to see what could be done to help. But ultimately all of our firefighting equipment and even military assets, we had a few military assets that could have helped, but all of our water dropping planes and so on were occupied in California and in the American West, whereas the Russian planes were quite nearby and able to help as well as, of course, lots of assets from the European Union. So ultimately that's what happened and we used the Greek diaspora newspapers to help explain that fortunately Greece was able, as part of the European Union, to help itself and we would do what we could. We hosted some firefighting officials later on to help figure out what to do for the next time from the United States, including Greek-Americans.

We did a belated interview with Deputy Secretary John Negroponte, who was of Greek origin. That was a funny thing because we had prepared at post a simple yet we hoped effective greeting for him to say in the language, in Greek. And one of my staff had made a little practice tape for the deputy secretary because, like me with my few phrases of Swiss German, he understood a lot of Greek but hadn't spoken it a lot. So we sent the practice tape and the text back to Washington and waited a couple of days and he was unavailable and things were happening and so on and so forth.

Finally, I got a call from the desk officer and the desk officer sent me an entirely different text. And the text was apparently a translation of something that the deputy secretary's staff had written instead of what we suggested. It was lengthy and complicated and nuanced and all of the things that one might wish for if one were sitting in Washington and hoping to do an interview with, I don't know, Foreign Policy magazine. So our task was to identify anything in the translation done in Washington that couldn't be said. Our straightforward approach was not good enough, and we had a major change to suggest, too. We avoided a bad slang term with gang violence connotations. So we did do that and ultimately the interview got published on page, I don't know, the back pages of one of the newspapers as a courtesy to us. And then two weeks later one of the high ranking EU officials came to Greece and said two words, "madi sas," meaning we're with you, and that got front page coverage as well as TV air play. So it was one of those things that I had learned personally and hoped to implement as a public diplomacy officer as opposed to a regular diplomat: that sometimes the simple message is best. We were only somewhat successful in getting that across to Washington. Nevertheless, we did make a contribution and in fact embassy staff spent weekends the next year helping Greek



volunteers plant trees on the burned hillsides near Athens and so it all came together but as usual, not in an easy way.

Just a couple of other major issues and maybe memories from Greece. We were there before the Greek economic crisis reached its peak. But Greece was nevertheless in a fair amount of political turmoil during our time there.

Moreover, Greece has a real live tradition of protests. The police had shot and killed a 15 year old demonstrator, I believe. That year the Greeks actually, Greek protestors actually burned down the national Christmas tree, which was down in front of the parliament, so that was a bit of an interesting time to be there.

*Q: Why would they do that?*

KALIN: You know, it's funny. The Greeks, as I say, they have this tradition of protest and the main venue for a protest is a beautiful open plaza called Syntagma Square right near the parliament. The parliament building is situated in this lovely hill overlooking a big open square right in the center of downtown. So naturally it's a wonderful place for public displays of all kinds. But in the course of things some of these demonstrations had gotten so out of control that the national Christmas tree literally burned down and shops and businesses had some burning, too. So it was one of those things. We lived near the national gardens and down the street from the ruling party headquarters at the time, called New Democracy, so we basically rolled down the wooden blinds on our apartment to keep the tear gas out. We got up the next day and walked to work. It was a very odd thing to see that kind of protest up close.

But as it turns out the Greeks rightly were quite worried about their country. You know, the causes were not in Greece but the economic crisis actually manifested there is very tough for Greece during those times. GDP fell by 25% one year. I think people sensed it was coming somehow. For example, it turns out that the government had been basically cooking the books as well as borrowing too much money and I think people were starting to sense that even before things really got bad.

*Q: How did you find the press there, some of the major newspapers? How did you find dealing with them? Because they were very personalized, weren't they?*

KALIN: Highly personalized. You know, some officers in Athens found that quite frustrating. As in Lebanon, for example, in a culture that's highly personalized, there were dozens, at least a half a dozen major newspapers and in a country as small as Greece that's pretty remarkable. And dozens of other smaller outlets. Not to mention television stations that put on the most polemical discussions. You know, we've got nothing on these television stations. And there's a famous sort of visual image in Greece: you get half a dozen commentators and guest speakers and you put them in boxes on the screen and display them simultaneously, which is important because they're usually talking simultaneously. It was interesting to work with them. I thought it was good to work with them. I'm a person who believes you can advance policy by having a coherent message

and getting involved in the discussion. So they were very uneven, the outlets; some of them were really, really professional and many, many were really undisciplined.

One of the big problems we had, for example, was the whole controversy over the use of the name “Macedonia.” The Greeks considered Macedonia to be a northern province in their country or a historic region. And the country of Macedonia, on the other hand, considered that heritage to be theirs. This was not something that we could understand as Americans for a long period of time. It seemed to us to be a tempest in a teapot. The big complaint about the Greeks at the time I was there was that they were not cooperative and they were obstreperous, for example in NATO, on different issues. So we didn’t really understand this controversy at all.

In fact, I remember being tasked out of Washington to come up with a list of words not to say, for example. All the posts were tasked with this and it was a good idea because visiting officials might not have the sensitivity to understand that there were certain things that one just didn’t say in a particular country. So we wrote such a piece, talking about the use of the name Macedonia to refer to a country. It never got published, I’m afraid, because we were in all kinds of negotiations over that. But one visitor really got a sense of what the Greeks were talking about. I think it was a Deputy Assistant Secretary from the EUR Bureau out to visit. We took him to a conference, a big conference that had a number of academic speakers and local officials and senior politicians and so on. At that event, the future prime minister of Greece Antonis Samaras, known as a little bit of a nationalist, held up an advertisement from an international magazine. The image on the advertisement was a bottle of Absolut vodka, I believe it was, with a map showing the state of Texas as part of Mexico. And he pointed out that this ad had caused so much controversy in the United States that it had been pulled. So I think that might have been one time we kind of understood what the Greeks were talking about and I believe the visiting DAS took that image home with him.

But that was an example of the kind of issues we were working on along with lots of interesting stuff about President Obama’s election in 2008. I had helped organize the tents in the ambassador’s backyard in Riyadh to deal with the Bush re-election in 2004. The Obama election in 2008 in Greece was a welcome contrast in a way because the entire town of Athens was talking about this. We did a lot of work with both Republicans and Democrats abroad. We had venues like Hard Rock Café in Athens with those kinds of events. The ambassador in Greece, our Ambassador Dan Speckhard, who was a brilliant civil servant had come from Wisconsin with his wife Anne, equally brilliant, a researcher and psychologist. They had been college sweethearts. I knew that because I helped them with a photo session once and I realized that once I got them to look at each other and then turn to the camera their faces were smiling and relaxed. Anyway, Dan Speckhard had, to his credit, played this very, very well, really explaining in speeches and editorials, that U.S. foreign policy was going to be as much about continuity as about change, even if Obama were elected. So it was an interesting time.

The other thing that I remember clearly, given my own background, was Obama’s Cairo speech, which I watched with a group of officers in my office in 2009. In fact, my staff

liked it so much that we took the initiative to translate the speech into Greek and for a while it was on the White House website in Greek along with many other languages. It isn't today, somehow, maybe because there's no Turkish version or because there's not as many Greek speakers as Urdu or what have you, but that translation and projects like it made for a hopeful and interesting time.

*Q: Did you have a problem dealing with Turkey?*

KALIN: You know, relations between Greece and Turkey were improving a lot around that time. They had already been on an upswing for a few years after the earthquake in Turkey that the Greeks had helped with. I guess that was around 1999, if I remember correctly. There were relatively few problems in terms of foreign policy between Turkey and Greece at that moment. There was a lot of focus on immigration, Greece being the first country immigrants would reach overland through Turkey. There was, of course, a lot of societal feeling, an historic feeling against the Turks among the Greek population given all that had happened between the two countries in history. The siege and sack of Constantinople in the 1300's, today's Istanbul, was very much something that people felt viscerally, as if it had happened in their own lifetime. But there was no issue. Lots of people traveled, lots of journalists traveled in particular back and forth to Istanbul regularly. In fact, we sponsored a trip by some major journalists to Istanbul for a conference, I believe it was, and things were relatively smooth in those trips.

*Q: Were there any terrorist groups wandering around or was this a problem?*

KALIN: There may have been some, but they were not targeting Greece. The greater threat, I felt, was from the domestic terrorism, if you will, or anarchists or others who had issues particular to Greece as opposed to international terrorism. So fortunately, nothing that was a particular threat or a realized threat, let's say, while we were in Greece.

*Q: Well, you know, the Greeks have always a significant Communist party. I was wondering whether sort of the demise of the Soviet Union, did this- old hands tell you this has really changed the leftist side of Greek politics or not?*

KALIN: Yes, I think that it had changed quite a bit for Greece. There was still an active Communist party. And I spoke to some of the communist outlets from time to time. For example, there was a challenge from the communist news outlet about our visa policy. Greece was very nearly qualified and indeed during my time did qualify for the visa waiver program, which was in widespread use in Europe. But early in my tenure there was still the issue, as there had been elsewhere, of people getting visas. Could they get visas after being a member of this or that party, or a member of or affiliated in any way or suspected of affiliation with any kind of bad actors, be they terrorism or money laundering or smuggling, all of which were issues in Greece.

But by this time it was, what, 15 years or so after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the function that Greece had performed during the Cold War of being sort of an outpost, if you will, for democracy was not as necessary. It just wasn't as prominent a role.

American firms too, had closed down. There had been, for example, in Thessaloniki where we had a consulate to the north, a Goodyear plant and lots of other operations. And those operations had largely closed. By that time it was more of, people were wondering why we weren't concerned about China, which was being considered to run one of the big ports in Greece. And so things had really changed, almost generationally, in the 15 years. The other interesting side of that is that many Greeks identified strongly with Russia co-religionists, as Orthodox Church members, even though there was a different branch of the Orthodox Church, of course, between Greece and Russia.

*Q: What about Greece and the Middle East? I mean, you know, an awful lot of Greeks have been, well, in Turkey and in Egypt and all-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: -but that kind of issue's pretty well gone but still the children were around. Was this an important element in our concern about Greece?*

KALIN: Greece continued to play some part in the Middle East. As you said there were historic ties between Greece and Egypt, Greece and Turkey, even Greece and Syria, even Greece and Afghanistan and even Greece and the Horn of Africa. I met a very interesting woman who was highly placed in Greece's stock market, for example, and she had family ties in, I believe it was Ethiopia. So yes, it was important. We hosted a few of the so-called track two conferences which sought to bring Israelis, Arabs, Greeks and others together to talk about business or policy or security informally.

And yet during that period there was essentially no action on the Middle East peace process. As one Greek put it, Greeks could not understand why we weren't, as I said a minute ago, more concerned about China. I think they were wondering why, as Washington commentators put it, Iraq ate the U.S. government. The focus was so overwhelmingly on that problem in the Middle East that there it stayed until the Cairo speech and then later on until the address to the people of Israel and then following that our latest, unfortunately not unsuccessful attempt to broker an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Q: Turning again to a little different subject, was Greece getting inundated by immigrants from Africa?*

KALIN: Yes. There was great concern about immigrants, not only from Africa or maybe not even as many numerically from Africa, but people coming in from the Middle East and again, from as far away as Afghanistan overland from Turkey. So there was a lot of concern about that. In downtown Athens, some of the neighborhoods had become predominantly immigrant and they were often in desperate conditions, making those neighborhoods dangerous as well as very visible to everyday Greeks. There were a lot of detention facilities, some in the islands but mostly on the mainland that were dramatically overcrowded, overstretched, problematic.

The Greeks made a successful appeal to the rest of the European Union for help in dealing with and managing the immigration problem, both in terms of policing and in terms of resettlement and such. But it was certainly something that was on people's mind. You know, the Greeks are a welcoming people to visitors but they had trouble understanding many of them, frankly, how to integrate this latest wave of immigration. It was just not at all clear to them that there was going to be a way to employ, feed, live with, the large numbers of these immigrants. So it was not perhaps quite as visible as in France, but enough of a problem to attract real attention.

*Q: Did things crop up like the use of the veil and things of this nature that sort of really got the French in a-?*

KALIN: Yes, right. Greece did have a small Muslim population but I would say that it was much smaller than in France, for sure, and I think the Greeks have a different attitude towards religious exercise in a way. It was unclear to the Greeks how all of these people were going to integrate into their society, which itself was pretty cohesive. I mean, people still felt themselves to have a strong sense of nationality. Greeks felt that the Orthodox Church was a force for cohesion and stability and that tradition was not hostile in any way to those with a different religion. In fact, the sort of assumption was that people should be highly religious and to the extent they are, and don't violate any laws or our own traditions, then that's okay. I didn't see the kinds of questions about that in Greece as in France or other places.

*Q: Did you have any or the embassy have much contact with the Greek Church and was the Greek Church of importance in the political life?*

KALIN: The Greek Church was important in political life and economic life, as well. During my time in Greece there was a scandal that was being exposed in the media whereby the Greek Church had traded some useless property for some very important property and not done so in a transparent kind of a way. It was quite a scandal and my local staff certainly thought it indicated a real unraveling of the kind of trust between the people and the Church and the government, because government officials were involved and had profited by some of these real estate transactions. So it was an important force and yet something that was a problem at the time rather than a solution, just because of the changing relationship of the Greek public to the Church.

*Q: How did you find the embassy staff? I mean, was it sort of a happy ship or what was your impression of it?*

KALIN: In terms of the American officers at post, I thought there was something of a split. People coming from the Middle East found Greece familiar and exciting; people coming from elsewhere, Northern Europe, found Greece chaotic and frustrating. And yet given the pace of work, the variety of work, professionally people thought it was pretty good.

One of the controversies around this time was the phenomenon of what was known as “prime candidate” for service in Iraq. The split became very clear at that point. We had a roundtable where we discussed this sponsored by the DCM, who himself had service in the Middle East and was an Arabic speaker but had not volunteered to go to Iraq for family reasons, so we actually talked this through. Personally I thought that identifying officers who had not served in hardship posts as “prime candidates” for service in Iraq or other hardship posts was a very defensible policy. I had declined to go to Iraq myself because I didn’t believe in our efforts and I preferred to stay in Saudi Arabia, but one of my fellow officers in Greece had spent the previous eight years in Italy. She found it a little hard to believe that she was actually going to be asked to bid on some difficult places rather than going next to France. This officer actually ended up in Cuba and did a great job. Another officer was planning to withdraw from AFSA, American Foreign Service Association, because he felt the organization had not protected the Foreign Service from this awful, unreasonable demand. But he thought better of it after the roundtable once he heard what some officers had actually been through in the Middle East and in some of the more difficult places. So in the end a handful of officers did go from Athens to Baghdad, and for most it worked out just fine.

*Q: You know, as you were following this, both in the Middle East and, I think I’ve asked you this before but maybe from the perspective of Athens and the embassy there, what was the feeling about our foray into Iraq and all?*

KALIN: You know, the Greeks didn’t see that as being very wise. We were relatively late in the game by the time I was in Greece so there was much that was done that couldn’t be undone. I think the Greeks recognized the need to do something about terrorism because even though the variety they had been exposed to recently was of a different nature, more domestic than international, I think they understood the need for self-defense. They were, at least among journalists by that time, somewhat more interested in what we were doing in Afghanistan than in Iraq. Alexander the Great, of course, had been as far as present day Afghanistan so a few Greek journalists had been there and actually found some descendants of Alexander the Great as they believed in the part of Afghanistan called Miristan. So there was real interest and of course we were quite focused on helping Greeks and other members of the European Union understand why we thought Afghanistan was important, why we thought Iraq was important. So they felt like they had a small part to play in terms of our involvement in Iraq, maybe a little bit bigger part to play in terms of Afghanistan through their role in NATO, which was more significant in Afghanistan than elsewhere perhaps. But they certainly had never supported joining any kind of coalition of the willing, to use that term of art from 2003 and no, we’re not seeing any reason to do so by 2000, you know, or 2007.

*Q: Well, did they have the Macedonian thing, did that sort of sour things for- I mean, were we- was it always coming up or had that pretty well run its course as far as an irritant goes?*

KALIN: You know, I heard something about that Macedonia thing not too long ago. I suspect it will remain an irritant for some time. It’s just, for the United States it’s just one

of those sort of local matters. It's almost as if you should get beyond it has been our approach. But the Macedonians keep pressing the issue and given the depth of feeling about it in Greece, that's not an easy issue at all. I think that we are past the issues of Kosovo and so on which were likewise sensitive in Greece because of the feeling that we hadn't understood some of the historic concerns of, again, co-religionists like the Serbians. Obviously that was 10 or 15 years in the past when I was in Greece, but still a question under discussion because of Kosovo at the time.

*Q: Being in public affairs did you feel that you really had to walk very carefully in this prickly neighborhood?*

KALIN: Absolutely. Absolutely that was quite important. I think that those of us in public affairs in this kind of an environment quickly developed a sense of when to just let it go and when to push back. You had to have quite a thick skin to withstand a lot of the insults almost that could come up about you in the Greek press or the Lebanese press. Certainly there was enough of that in the Greek press to make it an important focus. But I was determined and I had support from management, the PAOs, both PAOs I worked for in Greece as well as the DCM and ambassador, not to give in to that sort of thing. I mean, officers would come to me and insist that we put a rebuttal, for example, on our website. And in fact the post had had a history of doing so. When I first got to post and I looked at the embassy website there were maybe a dozen press releases for the previous year. Eight or nine or 10 of them were this kind of rebuttal: no, our political officer is not a criminal; no, our political officer did not insult the patriarch, or whatever scurrilous thing might have come up. I tended to issue those sorts of things verbally and just tell officers, okay, don't work with this journalist anymore. Make sure your other contacts that are important to you know our positions. That's kind of the way we handled things.

*Q: Yes. Did you find that, would you call, the Greek press professional or the journalists or was this a bunch of free ranging people venting their own opinions?*

KALIN: Well, there were some highly professional journalists in Greece, actually, and then some of the latter variety as well. There were two or three correspondents who had been part of the Washington press corps who were coming back to Greece at the time I was there, some of them because they were reaching the age, you know, 40 or so, where they had their children and wanted their children to grow up in Greece. There were others who were still sort of in the older mode of sensationalism and a little paranoid and so on. But the big media outlets in Greece were doing quite good work. There was a group called Kathimerini, for example, the daily newspaper, Everyday Life, you might translate it, that looked very much like The New York Times and aspired to that level of journalism and often achieved it. Other groups, you know, To Vima, which is a very traditional Greek newspaper, sponsored a visit by the very eminent economist Paul Krugman around the latter part of my time because they knew an economic crisis was upon them. So that was a very good public service. And then there were outlets that were more or less funded by fringe parties, extremists; few really practiced kind of what we would call "yellow journalism." But again, my advice is standard for public affairs officers: tell diplomats to just keep it simple, keep moving, and don't let it get you down.

*Q: Well how did you find social intercourse?*

KALIN: Often quite lovely in Greece. It's a very social place. We got lots of invitations to dinners, cultural events. We really tried to take advantage of that. It was wonderful to be able to get in the car without a bodyguard and drive yourself to Adelphi and see the museum and lovely setting where the Oracle of Delphi had been active in mythology. And to be able to fly up to Thessaloniki and see people there, have dinner and have lunch, talk about environmental protection or other issues that were of interest to the Consul General there. We took a wonderful trip down to the southern tip of Greece to a wonderful little medieval town called Monemvasia. So it was really wonderful to be able to just interact with a very gracious and warm people on normal terms after having not been able to do as much of that as we would have liked early in our career.

*Q: Would you say that Greece was, I mean, the Greeks, you know, we've always had a, well a difficult relationship there.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Had that, by this time is it, you might say, was it in pretty good- was the United States in pretty good order?*

KALIN: You know, relatively speaking I think we were. I think that we always will have some difficulty with Greece, for several different reasons. Just geopolitically they're cut and made like Lebanon, let's say, to just throw out an analogy that I happen to know about. They live in a difficult neighborhood. They live in an important part of the world. They have a big diaspora in the United States and like all diasporas people remember Greece when, you know, when people immigrate they remember their country when they left it, not as it is today. And they may have left in difficult circumstances. So I think that we'll always have some controversies, let's say, some active discussion to use a more diplomatic term, in our relationship with a country like Greece. But it's still quite close in many respects. I can't say that we had any high profile visits during the time I was there, but we came very close. Secretary Clinton had been scheduled to come one early summer and we had put together a good program for her with lots of interesting things to see and do, which met with enthusiasm on the Greek side. Unfortunately the secretary broke her arm at that moment when she had been scheduled to come through and she couldn't visit at that time. But I think that certainly we'll always have close relations with Greece and usually warm ones.

*Q: Were there any sort of gnawing issues that you had to deal with that there's no real solution to?*

KALIN: We've talked about the Macedonia question. We were able to resolve the question of visas between the United States and Greece, which had been one of those issues. I think the economy maybe is one of those issues that we can't resolve, not that it poses any special difficulty, if you will, as it relates to Greece, but Greece was so



seriously affected and so important in causing the crisis within the European Union, that I think is going to persist for a long time, only because the European Union itself needs to address the design flaws, frankly, that underlie some of these issues. The economy and the behavior and the creditworthiness of a country like Greece or any of the southern tier is simply different than that of a Germany, which is again different from that of France. And in the design of the European Union, and the Euro in particular, the currency is simply not taking that into account. Only recently have they made some move to get those fundamental facts worked into the design of that currency. So we'll see how it goes. There's still a chance that Greece might abandon the Euro. And that's the funny thing about Greece; they have been unable to come to agreement just in the last week on who will be their next president, more or less a ceremonial position, but it may require another snap election so that will not make it easy on anybody.

*Q: Well, were we, you know, I mean, this wasn't quite in your bailiwick but was there real concern about the economics of Greece in the embassy while you were there?*

KALIN: Yes, there was. As I say, it's somewhat of an indirect concern because the economic relationship between the United States and Greece had changed so much. You know, big American firms were not involved, I can't even remember one that comes to mind. Some had ties in Greece or offices in Greece, but Greece was not prominent in any particular way that I recall. There was concern about Greece on the economic side because of the possible consequences of its failure systemically for the European Union as a whole and that concern was warranted. There was concern about Greece as part of the pipeline question about how to get Russian gas into Europe and that is a geographic matter. So naturally there was a lot of concern about that. And yet, from Greece's standpoint, it made sense to participate in that kind of a project. So lots of interesting issues for the economic section, long-term issues that certainly we're still struggling with in many respects today.

*Q: Greece is an interesting place because there are so many, you might say, problems.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: I mean there's something you can get your fingers on. In some countries, you know, if you're dealing with Palestinians and Jews and all, I mean, God-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: -I mean that's almost a loser from the beginning. But in Greece, I would imagine it's sort of, if they'll only get their act together.*

KALIN: That's the feeling, that was the common feeling, actually, among officers that served in Greece. I think that fundamentally I have a fair amount of faith that the Greeks will get it together and I think they're just, they're extremely resilient people. So I think that we need to kind of respect that and at the same time we'll have to keep sort of explaining our own policy. And again, as I may have said earlier, there are people who

have such a sense of their history justifiably because they have a history, and a sense of their own centrality that we have to respect but at the same time be realistic about. I mean honestly, the fact is that Turkey has a far larger population than Greece, for example. The fact is that Greece is part of Europe as opposed to a separate interest for the United States. So these are things that I know change over time but have a constancy as well.

*Q: Well after Greece, what did you do?*

KALIN: Actually in the spring of 2009, I was getting closer to the end of my time in Greece and starting to think about the future. My husband was finding himself ready to come home. That year was my 20 years of government service in September so we had started to think about that. I decided early in 2009 to start looking for something else. By then the DCM in Athens was Deborah McCarthy, who I got a lot of support from. She ironically had been the Deputy Econ Counselor in Paris when I had bid on that job many, many years before so we had actually met before. Of course I went to Cairo instead of Paris but I did get, at any rate, to work with Deborah later on.

So I discovered that there was an opening in Kabul. I decided that it would be interesting to spend what I thought might be the last year of my career, or perhaps not if that service went well, back in a super hard post. And as I say, my husband was ready to come home. We actually did buy a house in his hometown here in Pennsylvania that we're still living in. In 2009 we were ready to do that and he was certainly disenchanted with the life of a Foreign Service spouse. He had had enough in Athens of working in jobs that, while they provided an opportunity to serve, were never going to be something he could advance in. By that time spouses had the ability to bring their benefits and their past experience at other posts along with them but sometimes it didn't translate in practice and that was the case for my husband. He had, for example, run many parts of the administrative apparatus in Riyadh at different times and ended up being the postmaster there. So in Greece he did the classified pouch, but it just wasn't satisfying. Frankly the managers he had were, maybe it was a matter of perspective, but less and less experienced. So he was ready to come home and we thought that might be a good solution.

So I bid on the job called Congressional Liaison Officer and I got. It was one that Kabul had thought about leaving vacant, but since I was available they decided that I would be a good candidate. And even before we left Greece the embassy in Kabul called me one day and asked me if I wanted to take on the larger role as the executive secretary or chief of staff in the front office since I had been a DCM and had qualifying experience. So the Deputy Ambassador, Frank Ricciardone, at the time in Kabul had also been my mentor in my first years in the Foreign Service when he was serving a tour in HR. So that seemed like a great idea. I will say that I got a couple of pieces advice that seemed also like great ideas at the time but ultimately didn't work out too well. One of them was from Jim Mussomeli, a wonderful manager who was one of the five ambassador team in Kabul. He said be sure to take your home leave and then come to post after training and as soon as you can but walk, don't run. That seemed fair. I should however, have gone to post directly. Then my mother said, don't leave your husband home alone again. So George and I talked about that second piece of advice and he decided that despite the fact that he

was ready to be home he would give it one more year and come with me to Kabul. So we went and did the defensive driving or the famous crash-bang, as they called it, training in West Virginia and some emergency medical training, firearms training and so on, all of the things that the Department was offering to prepare people for the war zone, and took a little leave, and then got on a plane to Kabul. Unfortunately, we lasted only about a month in August of 2009. That was an interesting moment to be there because the presidential elections were taking place, but the post was not a fit.

*Q: Well, I think this would be a good place to stop.*

KALIN: Yes, okay.

*Q: And we'll pick this up the next time when you arrive in Kabul.*

KALIN: Okay. Sounds good.

*Q: Today is the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2015, with Carol Kalin. When did you get to Kabul and what was the situation in Afghanistan at the time?*

KALIN: My husband and I arrived in Kabul in August 2009 during Ramadan and just a few weeks before the presidential election. So while we were there for just a short time, just a few weeks, it was quite an interesting moment to be there, both in terms of what Afghanistan was going through and in terms of what the United States was going through in Washington and at the embassy. So really quite a moment.

*Q: And so, could you describe sort of what the political/military situation was at that time?*

KALIN: In the run up to the presidential election, there was a lot of concern whether it could even go forward. The situation was quite difficult in many parts of the country. As I recall the figures, only about two-thirds of the polling stations were open. So there was natural concern whether any result would be seen as legitimate. In the end, I think, we did a fair job as the United States and in the international community of controlling expectations. Looking back today at the first and second term of Hamid Karzai, we do a good enough job of that. I think that the results of his administrations were substandard, clearly. Nevertheless, that election did go forward.

There was the larger question of our military strategy; should we put more troops into the country and how should they behave? What should our approach be? In this effort General Stanley McChrystal was bringing his famous reassessment to a conclusion around the time we arrived. So that was also an interesting process to observe. There were many phone calls between officials in Kabul and not only General McChrystal, of course, but on our side Ambassador Carl Eikenberry, himself a former military commander for international forces in Afghanistan. While rightly those phone calls between President Obama and Vice President Biden and others back in Washington involved only the principals and not those of on staff, we learned through media leaks

and other testimony since that there was a lot of doubt about our new counterinsurgency strategy at the time.

*Q: How would you basically say the strategy was at that time?*

KALIN: I think that I can speak most authoritatively, if you will, about what was happening inside the embassy, which itself is an interesting study. The thing that the embassy was trying to do with literally five ambassadors in top jobs was to build a big organization. You constantly heard the metaphor, “we’re building it in flight, building the airplane in flight,” which is something that from a common sense perspective seems to have a high risk of crashing. But I think that what was fascinating was trying to work within that framework. I think the biggest contrast that stood out for me and something that I wasn’t really prepared for, frankly, even though I had done a short period of consultations in Washington, was the intense militarization of the embassy. Having an ambassador who was a military officer I still was not really prepared for. And despite having worked with the military many times, I still wasn’t prepared for what was happening on the ground in Kabul. It was really quite fascinating.

Even my original assignment to the job of Congressional Liaison Officer was not the same. It was not policy- or relationship-focused as in State Department terms; in fact it was a job that had a purely administrative focus on what is known, in the military, as the Joint Visitors Bureau, meaning the people who handle protocol and administrative, hotel and accommodations, travel arrangements and such for official visitors. In fact, it was often referred to as JVB inside the embassy, even though that term wasn’t strictly appropriate. And it had recently been moved to the front office from the management section. So really the emphasis on the original bid job that I had been paneled for was producing kind of a visitors’ checklist, which was all well and good but didn’t go far enough, if you will, to really help handle the intense flow of visitors.

The embassy, for example, ended up trying to compete with the military to host congressional delegations. During the month of Ramadan or Ramazan, as Ambassador Eikenberry called it, having a background in East South Asian and China work, this was just a herculean and ultimately frustrating task. We concluded quickly that we really should have sent a cable pointing out to Washington that we were in the month of Ramadan and urging visitors to postpone, in my opinion, we should have avoided trying to host individual congressional members in favor of the larger delegations, as had previously been the military policy because of the greater efficiency of transportation and logistics arrangements. But that was perhaps another thing that arises naturally, competition between various units. I think we should have competed differently, but that’s a different matter.

More examples of this: it’s really quite striking that the new ambassador wanted to do things like be in the conference room as soon as possible. And really there was no reason to be in the conference room during Ramadan because it wasn’t a question of a few Army grunts losing a little sleep to slap some paint on the walls overnight. Instead, we were an embassy calling on locally engaged staff who were dealing with the holiday, the most

important holiday of their year, who were in many cases quite poor, and undernourished, with the associative health problems. And of course they were out facing security threats that we were protected from. There was a large, deadly bombing near the ISAF headquarters which was near our compound that month, for example. So what we ended up doing after countermanding various orders to paint this conference room was to put up some maps and posters over the cracks in the walls. We progressively took down the art of Afghanistan that had been displayed by previous ambassadors. And to me that was really an interesting illustration of the military versus the civilian approach. The military approach being, we're here to operate, so we need maps. The diplomatic or civilian approach being, we're here to integrate but we should remind ourselves of where we are.

And I guess I could mention one other thing along those lines. The practice of the embassy at the time was for guests at the ambassador's dinners to literally wear name tags. This might have helped some of the visitors, of course, but I can't say that I felt it did much for diplomacy because it implied that Americans couldn't be bothered to learn the name of their host, and of course many people in Afghanistan had just one name. So that was quite striking to me and to other diplomats posted to Kabul at the time.

*Q: Well, what would a day to day job be like for you?*

KALIN: Day to day it was an almost 24 hour day. As I mentioned there were many conference calls happening at that time and because of the time differences between Washington and Kabul they might occur at 3:00 a.m. And yet, as I said the military approach of trying to over organize everything wasn't terribly helpful, and neither is the State Department approach that literally every situation is unique. So we were trying to come up with some kind of a schedule, literally, which would indicate what time the front office would open, what time it would close and how we would handle such things. I can't say that we made a whole lot of progress but we were trying to get the operation more organized and streamlined. We had very few staff to run that kind of a large operation.

There was one staff assistant, for example, who had been highly recommended by Richard Holbrooke and company, who was a first or second tour officer, as I recall, but with a lot of knowledge of the region, who'd been trying to basically handle the entire work of the front office, including note taking and other functions. And that was simply overwhelming. There was one other staff assistant recruited but for a 24 hour operation that's really quite inadequate. We had a couple of terrific LMSes but they too were working 18- to 20-hour days. So it was a really, it was a tough, tough assignment. And so I was trying to do sort of both jobs in the way that I had conceived of it at any rate, the policy- and relationship-oriented function of the Congressional Liaison Officer as well as the administrative aide.

We had a couple of terrific spouses working in that visitors' bureau who did a great job of handling the really hard, logistical arrangements for visitors. And we also had a very interesting, what they call 3161, or contractor, a journalist named David Cloud. He had, with a co-author, written a book of biographies of military leaders called The Fourth Star.

I highly recommend that book. At any rate, Carl Eikenberry had been one of the generals profiled so David Cloud was on the staff as well and he assumed some of the note taking and reporting responsibilities.

So we were getting there. At the same time, we were trying to work with other units of the mission to standardize procedures, which was more important than it sounded. Because it's one thing to specify that here's the format for a decision memorandum, an information memorandum, action memorandum, all the standard things that State Department officers know, and to try to get USAID, for example, of course they had quite a large organization in Kabul, to use them. I must say we had mixed success on that. Trying to get an organization like USAID full of PhDs and development officers to write only a page and a half in a short decision memorandum is quite a task. But I think actually in business terms we were working harder, not smarter as we went along. And the days kind of blended into each other and there were very, very tough days.

*Q: Well let's take, on the congressional side, can you talk about some of the personalities that particularly struck you that came out there?*

KALIN: Yes. Thank you for asking that question, Stu, because there were some very interesting personalities. I could, I guess, start with two. I've spoken a bit about the ambassador. He was a very knowledgeable person and very dedicated to public service. That was clear to me from the start and I respected that a lot. At the same time I think that his very profound commitment and grounding in the military in many ways interfered with the flexibility that was needed to run the diplomatic organization.

When I got back to Washington after this very abbreviated tour, it wasn't a fit for me, it wasn't a fit for them, clearly, and we all agreed on that. When I got back a very senior State Department official said, well, some military officers of that rank are like Norman Schwarzkopf, who had a designated colonel to carry his eyeglasses, and that's the kind of approach they're used to. So that was quite interesting.

But anyway, on the other side, there were other personalities like Richard Holbrooke. Of course, he's so famous that I don't need to say a whole lot about him, but I do have one Holbrooke story. Quite a character. I had prepared for a tour in Kabul by doing the rounds in Washington, including the growing organization that was back in Washington under Holbrooke, and I'd been introduced to him, of course, very briefly. We'd shaken hands. And when I recalled that in Kabul the answer I got back was kind of shocking. I said, yes, sir, we've met before, we shook hands briefly in Washington. And he said, was it good for you? This just confirmed for me that this very prominent and in many respects profoundly talented diplomat was really a carryover, socially, from a much earlier generation. I had not been approached with that kind of a sexist remark for many years. He was controversial among the embassy staff and among the Afghans, of course, by that time and had had a couple of visits with his entourage.

The other character that I had a chance to meet, I say "character" in the sense of this historic effort, of course was General Stanley McChrystal. And I have a vivid memory of

my exposure to his organization. When a group of very high level congressional members came, the general presented them with a graphic, a chart, prepared with the help of a group of academics that he'd recruited, basically his own think tank. This graph looked like spaghetti and it must have been consciously prepared that way to emphasize how complex the tribal relationships and other kinds of relationships in Afghanistan were. That kind of graphic, frankly, we call it in economics the "gee whiz" graph. It's the kind of graphic that suggests you don't really have a clue. And the kind of graphic that as others have pointed out, notably a wonderful professor of statistics, now retired, named Edward Tufte, is the kind of thing that leads people to say about the military, "PowerPoint makes you dumb." Okay, so far too detailed, far too complicated and apparently designed to impress but not particularly impressive.

It was not too long after, also, that General McChrystal was let go because of the "Rolling Stone" interview by his staff which disparaged the president and others. And frankly this was no surprise because the staff working around General McChrystal, even for us working at the embassy, was very difficult to work with; thought they had the answers to everything, again on a PowerPoint slide. So it was a tough dynamic out there.

I guess the third person I would mention briefly is Senator Lindsey Graham, who famously does Reserve duty in the military. He elected to do his Reserve duty in Afghanistan during that period. So that was an interesting thing. I don't really know what he did day to day as a reservist but certainly he was still a senator while in Kabul and he had something to say about the election so the ambassador called the spokesperson for the embassy and said, get CNN over here. Well, the spokesperson called me and despairingly saying, we need to call CNN. It doesn't always work to summon the media like that, but we managed it that time.

*Q: We're talking about the state of mind of both people who are coming and also people you were talking to. Were they saying, oh my God, let's get out of this mess or was there any hope or how stood it?*

KALIN: I think people by 2009 had formed opinions. There was that moment, of course, with the new administration, an attempt to step back and consider what we should do. There was an attempt, at any rate; as I mentioned General McChrystal had recruited a group of academics to give advice, to give a reassessment and that reassessment was actually produced during that month of August 2009. Congresspeople came with points of view. The questions before us were things like: Should we commit more troops? Where should we focus our development dollars? In effect, can we do a surge as we had one in Iraq in 2006 and 2007 or not? What should we be doing? Holbrooke had brought to the table the very prescient points of treating this as a regional problem rather than a single country problem.

There was some talk, even at that stage, of negotiations, the diplomatic answer to the political problem as opposed to a purely military or developmental kind of solution. So people had a variety of views and were trying to come to some conclusion. And I think

they came to Afghanistan with that, certainly the congressional visitors, that policy focus very much on their minds.

But also, inevitably, a kind of constituent service and more purely political standpoint to be able to say that they had visited, to be able to have photos taken with constituents, to be able to even spend a night or a day and a night with special forces and operate new weapons systems, play with toys almost. So people had a huge variety of motivations and that was true also in Washington, I think, in retrospect. None of us on the staff were included in the conference calls that were going back and forth. There has since been discussion of that in the media, and the disagreement on strategy was pretty clear. So five years later now, we're at the end of our operations. That sort of timed horizon was established during this period. And whether it will have been judged a success is, I think, still an open question.

*Q: Well what was your impression of Karzai?*

KALIN: I did not meet him personally. In fact, in my role either as executive secretary, the informal role that I had been given, or in my more official role, if you will, the job that I'd been paneled for as the Congressional Liaison Officer, I didn't have exact, specific exposure. But I can say that there was tremendous frustration, even at that point, with the Afghan leaders. Tremendous frustration.

The relationship between the ambassador, Carl Eikenberry, and Karzai seemed to be okay. In diplomatic terms we certainly had access at that point. In fact, even during the month of Ramadan because of the intense and frankly uncontrolled schedule of visitors, we had senior-most officials from the Karzai cabinet into the ambassador's dinner table two or three nights a week, which is like saying in American terms they were there for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years. So there was that good relationship at that level and certainly the political section had normal access, as did many other parts of that very large mission.

But the capacity of course on the Afghan side was extremely low. We had already tried to address that by putting American advisors into some of the Afghan ministries where that was accepted. On the other hand the relationship between Holbrooke and Karzai was notoriously bad. There was a lot of dislike almost at that level, it seemed, so it was really quite a mixed picture. But the factors that have since emerged, corruption on the part of Karzai's government and family and so on, play into the tribal constituencies as opposed to thinking about the country long-term. I don't think it could have been otherwise.

*Q: Was Pakistan seen almost as the enemy or how was, at the embassy, how was Pakistan viewed, would you say?*

KALIN: People I think were beginning to realize how important and influential Pakistan was. But it was not a central feature, if you will, of the conversations that I witnessed or was involved in at the time. So there was still at that point a greater focus on the internal dynamics of Afghanistan. For example, could we get the justice system functional within



Afghanistan; if so, how? What could we do to move the police and justice system training along? Because there was a clear feeling that the lack of governance at the most basic level was something we needed to urgently address. I think that later on that focus on Pakistan became much greater.

*Q: Well, was there- were we able to get out to the provinces to meet with the tribal leaders and all? Or how sort of bound were you to the embassy?*

KALIN: There was a serious effort to get people out to the provinces. We had the equivalent if not the reality of consuls general at several places in Afghanistan at that time. We had the famous diplomats embedded with both international and U.S. military units out in provinces, which operated with varying levels of effectiveness, let's say. I remember one young woman who arrived roughly the same time we did and who I got to know when we were sheltering from the bombing at ISAF in the dining facility ladies room. She had just come out of the swimming pool. Anyway, she later wrote about her experiences in one of the provincial reconstruction teams as being a noble effort but not a particularly effective one. I may be putting words in her mouth. But I think that's in general the feeling that certainly I had about those teams, that as with the whole counterinsurgency operation that the military was trying to adapt. That's a better approach than treating the country as a territory to be conquered, probably, but is still one whose ultimate success is questionable.

*Q: You know, the Rolling Stone investigation sort of ruined General Mc Chrystal. Were you aware of discontent with him?*

KALIN: Yes. I mean, at the staff level, his staff was extremely hard to deal with. They felt they had the answers to everything and had a tendency to call up and order various things to happen or to assert that this was going to happen and we could get onboard or not, which of course is not the right way to approach an embassy. Indeed, at the top there was a real question about the relationship between the two generals or let's say the sitting general and the former general who was our ambassador; between, I mean, McChrystal and Eikenberry. I will say that the two men certainly from Ambassador Eikenberry's standpoint tried to coordinate. He would, for example, invite General McChrystal for a private dinner from time to time so that they would at least understand each other's position. But I must say that the "Rolling Stone" article that came out later was not a surprise, given what we had seen of the staff while, even as brief a time as I did spend in Kabul.

*Q: What was your impression of the staff? I mean, were they sort of given maybe too much leeway or were too tightly held to account or what?*

KALIN: It's funny, I don't have a really definitive impression from just a few weeks' exposure, but my feeling is that what develops often in these situations and what I think developed there was a kind of loyalty to the person over loyalty to the institution. And I say that with regret, and I suspect that those involved would dispute that point. But what I mean is that it's very easy when you have a very charismatic and important boss to

defend that turf, if you will, and lose sight of the place of your principal, your boss, in the overall effort. And I suspect that's what happened, thinking about some of the contact that we had.

*Q: Well, you were saying your job didn't really fit. Now, what was behind all this?*

KALIN: I'm sorry, what?

*Q: You were only there a rather short time.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: And you say it was apparent that there wasn't a good fit.*

KALIN: Right.

*Q: Could you talk about that?*

KALIN: Well, looking back I think I was underprepared for the assignment and I wish that, in retrospect, rather than taking what seemed like very good advice at the time to get some home leave between Greece and Afghanistan that I would have been better served to go directly to post, for example. Just because of the timing. Ambassador Eikenberry had arrived in May so I had been asked to take on this fuller role as executive secretary or chief of staff, it wasn't quite clear, in June, let's say, May/June, and I didn't arrive until August. That was a mistake in retrospect. I also wasn't prepared for the level of militarization, if you will, or the culture of the embassy being so very heavily influenced by that of the military despite my long exposure to military colleagues over time.

I did preparations in Washington with the Congressional Liaison Officers at the State Department, which was important, but I didn't do as much preparation as perhaps I should have with the management section. Because the actual role of a Congressional Liaison Officer in Kabul was that of an administrator, a manager of logistics rather than policy- or relationship-oriented. I also did the usual preparations to the extent I could with the policy staff in Washington. That was appropriate, but I probably could have done more to work on some precedents.

I said that the military has a system and that's the system and that's what we should always do; the State Department tends to view every single situation as unique so that it appears there is no system. Yet there was. I wish, for example, that I had reached out to a couple of office management specialists and officers that I had worked with previously and who had served in Iraq and dealt with the kind of buildup of a good front office operation that I would face in Kabul. And I wish I had reached out to them. So that was a failing on my part.

And when I got to Kabul the intensity of it all was overwhelming, and again my husband came with me, probably a mistake as well because neither of us were particularly happy

with the situation. So by the time I got there personnel matters were in flux. The woman who had been trying to manage the front office operation but was overwhelmed had a hard time letting of things that she had tried to institute, understandably perhaps, concerned about where she would fit into the new hierarchy, understandably again. But the fact was that those things didn't resolve themselves easily and it just wasn't working. I, for example, approached my job as I had as a deputy chief of mission, in other words presenting options for decision for the ambassador. The preferred style that I discovered from Ambassador Eikenberry was to have full and open debate, more of an action orientation as opposed to deliberative staff meeting. So that was frustrating on both sides and I soon realized that it just wasn't going to be a satisfactory situation.

So I actually asked if I might step back to the role that I had been paneled for, to be the Congressional Liaison Officer even as that job was defined in Kabul. I fully respect and appreciate the need for good management of logistics and planning and so on but even that proved not to, in the end, make sense given my situation and my husband's desire to go home. Which is unfortunate because we had had declined assignments, let's say rebuffed approaches to go to Iraq because we didn't feel that made sense for the United States to have gone there in the first place. We disagreed strongly with that policy. But in Afghanistan we felt that that was an appropriate intervention for the United States and would have liked to contribute more than we did, ultimately.

*Q: You're saying something I really haven't heard before and that is if a recent general is put in charge of an embassy there's a tendency to turn that into a military operation, I mean a military administrative operation.*

KALIN: Well, I think certainly the situations in Afghanistan and Iraq are mixed metaphors at best, right, for embassies. The military is operating, doing nation building, okay, while a conflict is ongoing. It is something that we haven't historically done, if you will. So I think that mixed metaphor is not perhaps unique to this situation but one that played out over the last decade in both of those countries. Thousands of diplomats in Iraq, for example. Do we need thousands of American diplomats in Iraq or not? I think the answer is not at this point, or at least the thousands of diplomats in Iraq have not been very successful in helping the country get back on its feet and functioning. We certainly see that now with the situation with the Islamic state taking over large swaths of Iraqi territory. We see that in the dramatic dysfunction of an Iraqi government that's helped create the conditions for that.

Afghanistan likewise is hardly a stable and functioning democracy at this point, so I think that perhaps systemic factors as much individual history is happening here. But it was quite noticeable to me from my vantage point that Ambassador Eikenberry was far more comfortable and far more inclined and did, in fact, move the embassy towards the military style of operation as opposed to adapting to the traditions of diplomacy, as I say even in something as seemingly trivial as wall decorations. To me that was an indicator of a phenomenon that I think has been pretty widely discussed, actually. You know, the militarization of foreign policy.

*Q: Well, so what happened? When did you leave and how did this work out?*

KALIN: So we left Afghanistan literally after three or four weeks, around the end of August, early September of 2009. And as I said, my husband decided to move back to Pennsylvania at that point and I was about, less than a year or just about a year away from eligibility for retirement. So I decided to look for another job in Washington. I was on, the books in the South Asia bureau and had helped out a little bit there on the Afghan desk, but I spent the next few weeks looking for another bridge assignment, if you will. And I ended up back with a very congenial group of old friends in Public Diplomacy operations, and this was at the time known as the GSEC or Global Strategic Engagement Center. And essentially our task was to help with messaging for counterterrorism operations. In fact, the unit had previously and has since become known as the Counterterrorism Communications Center. So I was back on, if you will, the staff of the Undersecretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy.

*Q: And so, what did this entail?*

KALIN: GSEC was a small unit at the time, I guess about four to six people. And our job was to take a look at what messages were going out, both from the State Department but even more so from the White House, Homeland Security, USAID and others, certainly the military, and see what we could do to coordinate those messages. In effect we were kind of a little, kind of a small elite unit, if you will, almost a backup or a policy job or a think tank attached to the undersecretary and we would contribute to debates over, for example, how to handle the terrible underwear bomber incident, which happened in December of 2009.

So the question there was okay, we put emergency measures in place to screen all travelers from 25 high risk countries coming to the United States after that incident. And naturally that caused some protest because screening every single traveler from 25 countries makes travel quite difficult. So the question was, should we relax those emergency measures and if yes, what should we replace them with? And naturally there was quite a battle over all that in Washington. The Department of Homeland Security had not thought to put those measures in place with any kind of notification to the host governments on an emergency basis. So that right away put us in deficit with governments that we actually needed to work with, including governments like Pakistan.

The State Department took the position at a certain point that those emergency measures ought to be rescinded and rethought. Homeland Security was not persuaded. So there was a long series of meetings at the White House, and myself and others would participate in those meetings and work to persuade the White House to in fact rescind those measures. It took a month or so, but ultimately, State won.

I sat down and drafted points for a new message and also helped draft a cable to ambassadors so that they could notify the 25 governments that we'd be making this welcome change. And the irony was that it took probably more effort to get permission to issue that cable than to draft the talking points because there was so little understanding

of why it was important to go diplomatically to the governments before going to the media. It sounds astounding, but in this case that was literally what happened. So all the way up to the highest reaches of the National Security Council you had to explain that it was a good idea to notify host governments first as a courtesy. And all the way down to the spokesperson level at the Department of Homeland Security we had to say that it was better to state the fact that we were going to rescind emergency measures as opposed to taking a more domestic approach of spinning our security's even better. So it was quite an exercise.

The upshot was, we sent out the cable and at the same time the White House called some journalists together, informally, at midnight and characterized the new talking points as a leak. Now, why they didn't state them from a podium I still don't know. But at any rate the matter was handled and although we still take off our shoes at airports and go through all that, we managed to get the job done over the course of several weeks.

*Q: I have to ask it, was there any discussion about checking underwear?*

KALIN: No, but there was a fair amount of confusion and embarrassment on the part of some of us as a matter of fact. It's a funny thing to try to get what seems like a straightforward message out sometimes.

*Q: I know I had to take my belt off going through one of those detectors and my pants started to fall down.*

KALIN: Indeed, indeed. There's a whole thing on that. It's funny how perspectives emerge from a large group of people. I don't know whether to attribute these kinds of incidents or this phenomenon to this particular administration. The leadership style of the Obama Administration I think very much reflects the roots in community organizing in Chicago politics.

Another one of our tasks in the unit was to try to organize the follow-up or to make real some of the commitments that President Obama had talked about in his famous Cairo speech, the speech that was to reconcile the United States with the Arab world. For example, we were trying to figure out how and when to organize the cultural exchanges in science with Egypt. So that was an interesting dynamic. The point is that the large meetings that I had been involved with 10 years before as part of the Gore-Mubarak initiative organized by the White House had a totally different character than the ones in 2009-2010. Earlier the White House had solicited information from the various agencies and then decided who was to do what. The later style was to treat it almost as if it was a voluntary matter, or a meeting of non-governmental organizations. In other words, the question wasn't what can you do, the question was what might you be willing to do.

So I have to say that many agencies walked out of those later meetings uncertain of what was being asked and unclear as to what was to happen next. And the other difference was the emphasis on programs versus events. So instead of being tasked to develop a program for, let's say, improving commercial law over the long-term is one of the very most

successful examples by the Commerce Department in Gore-Mubarak and related initiatives of the 1990s, early 2000s; the emphasis this time was on, well, which famous scientist can we support to go to Egypt on a particular date. So it's fascinating how things have evolved and it's really quite a commentary. It may be a generational thing, but for me a more decisive style of leadership is a better one when you're dealing with very large agencies, as is certainly still the case.

*Q: Well, you're dealing with what has now become quite an issue but the reluctance of in declaring what our concern is, is obviously the fringe group of Islam but not mentioning Islam or-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: -it's very hard to avoid condemning even a, well a religion, a huge religion where-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: -well you know what I'm getting at.*

KALIN: I do. I do and then, you know, in fact that is quite difficult. Back in Beirut on 9/11 my ambassador, Vincent Battle, said to me, it's really too bad we didn't cast this event as a crime against humanity, or as a crime, rather than a war because war on terrorism doesn't really make sense. War is between people, not against a tactic. And war is not against a religion but against offenders, particular people or groups or nations, let's say. So it is quite a conundrum. I think what has been one part of the analysis that has made sense to me, thinking about the Islamic state now is, to be concerned because it has features of a state, i.e., it has an army that's holding territory, it has a budget, it has fundraising mechanisms, it has trade, etc., etc. And that is truly a challenge and is a more real challenge, if you will, than the arguably, I would say over-response we had to the phenomenon of terrorism as such. Terrorism in my mind is like crime; it will always be with us to some extent. And to focus on it to the all-consuming degree we have I think has been a mistake.

*Q: That's one of the best descriptions I've heard of our situation. Well then, were you involved in any other particular things in this time?*

KALIN: During this time, along with my old friend Dan Sreebny, who was acting director of the unit at the time until he was tapped, in retirement, to become the acting coordinator for the Economic and Cultural Affairs Bureau, we had to deal with the hurricane in Haiti, which was quite an interesting dynamic. On that day we of course, being a news driven and current events tracking unit, we were immediately looking at all that was happening. And the Undersecretary asked us immediately to try to take the lead in dealing with the public affairs side, the public diplomacy side of this event. And fair enough, you know, that was part of our mission. But as Dan said, I guess the interesting part is that structurally and formally the unit with the lead in that kind of situation is first of all the embassy and secondly, even for Washington purposes, more importantly, it's

USAID, because they are the first responders. So it was quite interesting for us to try to intervene, try to coordinate all of that messaging that was going on from the State Department and to try to get all the parties working on the same page, not to mention the White House role. I think that certainly the White House under the previous administration when Karen Hughes was Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy had a very good, let's say, understanding of the value that the State Department could bring to bear. It's not as clear in later administrations that that was the case. But we did our best. We were almost a kind of a consulting group, if you will, to try to pull it all back together. So fascinating times and as I say, those were probably two or three key events and there were a couple of others along the same lines.

At one point there was a controversy over something one of the senior military officials had said domestically. It was discovered that rifles we were sending all over the world, manufactured here in the United States, had Bible verses printed on them. So this became known and the question was how to react. The military's first comment to the media was well, this is no different than printing "In God We Trust" on American coins. Well, in fact, most people thought it was very different, that we should not be shipping weapons with Bible verses on them for use by, let's say, Islamic government troops. And indeed that was the position taken by governments like New Zealand, who said well, we will end our procurement relationship with this American company until they stop doing this. And ultimately that was the position we took as well in the United States. But again, the internal dynamics of that were quite funny.

We at the State Department recognized immediately and the White House also recognized quickly that this was not appropriate, that we needed to take some kind of action. Even the military recognized that this was a problem. So their proposal was to put some modified talking points out and we agreed pretty much on the substance of those talking points and the military was going to activate its social media units and start backing away from their statement. But no, the State Department bureaucratically wanted that message to come first from the State Department or first from the White House and not from the military. So we were delayed by about a day in actually coming out and saying okay, we recognize this is a problem and we're going to take actions to stop it. So it's funny how internal dynamics can take over even when there's agreement on an issue.

*Q: Yes. It's interesting, you know, I mean, part of the thing is, of course, we are, you might say, trained to observe. We always think about reactions outside of our own circle and though-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: -and other people, you know, I'm always surprised but shouldn't be, that other people just don't have the same reflexes we have, that we sort of unconsciously build up over the years. I mean, gee, how's this going to play not in Peoria but in Kandahar or something.*

KALIN: Exactly, exactly. So it is, to be fair, it is an extreme challenge in today's world to make those distinctions. It's not always possible. Because literally, what you say in Peoria will be echoed in Kandahar within minutes.

*Q: Yes. Did you find, I'm not sure if it would have but were there sort of new dimensions of problems because of the internet and Facebook and all this communications?*

KALIN: Yes, certainly there are new problems. I can't say that I had anything particularly unique to say on this score. I think that those problems manifested for me in my career a little more closely in Nouakchott, in my last tour, as opposed to the time with the undersecretary in the strategic communications unit. My approach to these things has always been to say okay, the mechanism may be new but the underlying principles of communications still apply: who is the audience, what behavior are you trying to influence, what is the content you're trying to get across? And then look at the design and do an evaluation. The so-called A, B, C, D, E model, which is taught in communications around the world traditionally and was, again, something that Karen Hughes re-emphasized for us in the State Department. So focusing on the vehicle, whether it be Facebook or Twitter or what have you as opposed to the message or the concept is a mistake, I think.

Quite recently I noticed one of our younger officers put out a great article in "The Foreign Service Journal" entitled "Twitter Is a Cocktail Party." I really believe that. I was asked in Athens to use Twitter as an early adaptor and I declined with no regrets because I didn't think that our communications with the Greek people actually warranted that mechanism at the time. But we're certainly in it today.

*Q: Yes. Well then, where did you go after this time?*

KALIN: Well, I had intended or certainly was considering strongly retiring because I had 20 years as of September 2010. But I was also not quite ready to end my career. The experience in Afghanistan, while exhilarating, let's say, or very, very interesting was not a successful one for anyone concerned and so I kept my eyes open for other things that might come down the pike. And I noticed at a certain point that they were recruiting in the Africa Bureau for a deputy chief of mission. I had also thought about, an old friend of mine was curtailing from the PAO (Public Affairs Officer) job in a new post in Hyderabad, India, which would have been a fascinating tour. My husband wasn't particularly anxious for me to go back to South Asia and ultimately I didn't do that. But the Africa Bureau was where I had started out in the Service and so I threw my name in the hat for some DCM jobs that were opening there.

And as soon as I did so I got a call from the Bureau and Don Yamamoto, who at the time was principle deputy assistant secretary. He convinced me to take the job in Nouakchott, Mauritania, as the deputy chief of mission. So I did that.

I left in, I guess in July of 2010 for that assignment and it brought my career full circle in many ways. I had started out in Dakar, Senegal, so just a few hours' drive north through



the desert along the coast was where I was going to finish up. My predecessor in that job was somebody who I had served with in Saudi Arabia. He was very instrumental, too. He called me up and said, you know, this is a really terrific job. There's a lot of responsibility. Things that are happening here, interesting, and by the way, I too thought I would retire out of this post as an O1 but I was promoted to the Senior Foreign Service so you should definitely come here. Well, so, I took the job.

*Q: Okay, you served there from when to when?*

KALIN: I arrived in July 2010 and left in February 2012.

*Q: Okay. Who was the ambassador?*

KALIN: The ambassador when I arrived in Nouakchott was Mark Boulware, a wonderful, wonderful man, old-time Foreign Service. He had been an Army officer before. He had been in place for, I guess about three years, a little over three years actually, at that point and was transitioning to another ambassadorship. He went over to Chad to take over there. And Jo Ellen Powell had been selected as ambassador. She was also an administrative or rather management officer who was second generation Foreign Service. She had had a long career in different places in the world. She had served in Lebanon early on in her career, which we had in common. So she arrived in November. Between July and November I was chargé with the exception of an unexpected medivac.

Nouakchott is one of those places where it is still hard to find healthy food. So, I have a sensitive stomach and I had some stomach issues while I was in Nouakchott. I went to Dakar for a few days to get them investigated. I went to a lovely clinic that I had actually visited years before as a first tour officer. I felt great in a couple of days and was able to spend a couple more days at my favorite hotel in Africa, the Meridian, right on the westernmost point of the African continent. I was ready to go back to post but the Regional Medical Officer, who was a TDYer, was not onboard with that; he thought I should come back to the United States for further testing so unfortunately that's what I had to do.

*Q: Well what was the situation in Mauritania when you arrived?*

KALIN: The country had just been through an election not long before. Well, Mauritania was approaching its fiftieth anniversary of independence; in its early history, like a few other countries in Africa, the situation had been troubled. There had been more or less a president for life or former military general, a dictator, essentially, in place in Nouakchott for 25 years and then a short period of democracy that was probably welcomed a bit too warmly. Expectations were not fulfilled when there was a democratic election in 2007 in Mauritania and then another military takeover in, I believe it was 2008. But the country had managed with the help of our embassy and other embassies -- the French, notably, have still strong interests in Mauritania as they do throughout West Africa. The country had held a generally acceptable election for a new president and so that was the situation

when we got there. The country was stable but reforms were starting to slow down, if you will, so not without its challenges.

*Q: Well, wasn't this a period where the, one called The Bulge of Africa where you were, was having some problems with Liberia and Sierra Leone and blood diamonds and all that sort of thing? Or were you too far removed from that to-?*

KALIN: Nouakchott is an interesting place. Mauritania is really, truly a border country. In fact, throughout its history it's kind of, you know, shifted between the Arabic speaking North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The intensity of the involvement with the bulge, the Liberian conflict and so on, was in the past by the time I got there and the North African issues were in the forefront for sure. The phenomenon of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb was very much on our minds, again as part of the whole focus of international affairs and U.S. foreign policy. Mauritania was an ally in that war on terror, for lack of a better term, and was quite determined to defend its territory and to regain its sort of historic position as a center of study for moderate Islam of the kind practiced in West Africa, in other words tolerance, open. Mauritania has been the site of Islamic scholarship for centuries and also had, unfortunately, a few very famous members of Al Qaeda. So, that was a big focus.

What was even more fascinating during my time there was the whole Arab Spring, which sharpened and shifted that focus a bit because Libya changed governments. The French-led military intervention toppled the Qadhafi regime during that period and the Mauritians were in the leadership position in the Organization of African Unity, the AU. They were the rotating head of the OAU. We also did, in terms of the bulge of West Africa, deal with the leadership crisis in Côte d'Ivoire with Mauritania in the chair of the OAU. So it turned out to be not only a sort of a sentimental or nostalgic or nice closure for me but also an unusually and unexpectedly active tour.

*Q: You were there from when to when?*

KALIN: July 2010 to February 2012.

*Q: So sort of what was happening? What was the embassy like, first?*

KALIN: Well, the embassy, like much else in Nouakchott was a bit rundown. The embassy was a little cinderblock complex, built in the '50s or '60s, I guess. It must have been the '60s because of the timing of Mauritanian independence. And our compound was adjacent to the presidential palace and it was on sort of the Nouakchott equivalent of Embassy Row, if you will. There was ourselves, the Spanish, the Germans, etc., on that row and the French, I believe, had a compound actually on the other side of the presidential complex that was much larger, they having been the colonial power. But our compound had been designed for everyone to live on the premises because there really wasn't much in Nouakchott. It's hard to convey. It felt like, I don't want to say going back in time, but I might almost say that. We didn't live on the compound, only the ambassador lived on the compound. But Nouakchott, when I arrived there, had no street

lights. So that on the way to my house from the airport literally took the armored 4x4s over ruts and puddles with no street lights. That's how almost left behind the country had been. And it was very challenging.

The embassy had grown from 20 years before when I was in Dakar. Earlier, it was just a handful of officers, literally, because we had cut off USAID in the '80s when Mauritania and Senegal had an awful, racially tinged conflict and expelled citizens, one from the other. We had shrunk to just a few skeleton staff in Mauritania 20 years before but we were back up to roughly the same size of embassy as I had experienced in Lebanon as DCM, about 45 staff in total, 45 to 50, depending. Many of them were military. For example, in the public affairs operation there were about a half a dozen military guys from Fort Bragg who had a big budget for public affairs and public diplomacy programs.

I would say too, that more than half of the embassy staff, State Department and others, were doing their jobs for the first time. That was an interesting phenomenon. Not unfamiliar to officers of my generation because the big surge of diplomatic readiness that Colin Powell had initiated had resulted in a very young Foreign Service, more than half brand new. And that was fully reflected in Mauritania.

So there was an ambassador with roughly 30 years of experience, myself with roughly 20 years, a management officer with about 10 years and a few others with five to seven years but most people were on first or second tours. So it was a lot of learning for a lot of people in pretty challenging conditions. As I said, it was hard even to get good food. Electricity was sporadic. Travel was quite difficult. The only flights were to Paris or Senegal and those were suspended for many months during my tenure due to disputes between the governments or terrorist threats or unsafe conditions and so on and so forth. So a very, very challenging environment.

*Q: Well, I'm looking at a map on my computer of Mauritania and it's only got one town or city, Nouakchott on it.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: I mean, obviously there are places but it seems like an awful lot of nothing there.*

KALIN: Well, it's a very large country with very few people, that's quite true. There are more cities in Mauritania than Nouakchott, for sure. In fact, there's five ancient cities that are quite fascinating and centers, again, of Islamic learning and libraries. For example, manuscripts dating back 1,000 years in places like Chinguetti, which is in the interior, and reminds one very, very much of places in Saudi Arabia, the geography being very similar.

And along the Senegal River one has the same feeling as northern Senegal, a majority black African population. The second city of Mauritania is right up there, near the Western Sahara. And it's a port city that has the curious feature of occupying exactly half of the peninsula it sits on because the other half, with that imaginary dotted line on the

map, belongs to the Western Sahara and has therefore remained undeveloped given the dispute over the Western Sahara that's been going on for decades. So, a very, very fascinating place.

It's the only country I've ever been in that questioned its own existence in the run up to its fiftieth anniversary of its independence. Many people in Mauritania feel that it would have been better just to become- to be a province of Morocco, for example, rather than be an independent country.

*Q: Well, what about the Western Sahara? What's the history of that?*

KALIN: Well, I had dealt with the Western Sahara as deputy director for Egypt and North Africa in the '90s when I guess it was Jim Baker who had a tour as special envoy from the United Nations to try to deal with that issue. It's a big bone of contention between Morocco and Algeria and Spain, for that matter. But the solution, sadly, wasn't at hand in the '90s and was no closer to resolution in the last few years either. It wasn't as much of a factor in our diplomacy as relations, for example, with Mali and what was happening in Mali were. So that's one of those unfortunate places that still hasn't found its place in the world. De facto, Morocco has invested a great deal in the country, roads and subsidies and so on. So I think that de facto it's a part of Morocco as opposed to a part of Algeria. I mean, a few activists from Western Sahara came and sought our help or a listening ear or occasionally scholarships or other individual forms of aid. But it wasn't a big factor for us in Mauritania during the time I was there.

*Q: What about oh, say, the whole thing of fundamentalist Islamic problems and all? Was that an issue where you were?*

KALIN: That was a very central issue. I think the Mauritanian government felt very, very strongly. The advantage, if you will, of having a former military officer as president, in Mauritania at that time Abdel Aziz, was that he was seen as someone who brought a certain degree of order and determination and forward looking pragmatism, if you will, to the situation. And he, again, was very much prepared to take action in concert with us or indeed the French or indeed and most interestingly on his own against the terrorists who were living in those open spaces. For example, he would actually send military units to track down terrorists and he had some success in doing so.

So this was well supported, actually, among the population of Mauritania. The government asked for help from citizens, for example, when groups of terrorists attacked downtown in Nouakchott one evening. It got the population to report the whereabouts of these fugitives and they were actually apprehended. In addition, the government followed up and held a trial of the murderers of an American citizen who had been a humanitarian worker in Mauritania, working in the prison system, and convicted the three people who were involved in that crime. So the government and the population in general was very much wanting to get rid of extremists and return to a more peaceful kind of existence.

*Q: Was Mauritania involved at all in the, well, there's the Polisario movement?*

KALIN: Not during the time I was there. Again, that just wasn't a particularly big focus at the time. Instead, the questions were more how to deal with moral conflicts, not so much conflicts but questions around the spaces close to the Mauritanian border with Mali. Mali, of course, had a coup itself shortly after I left and a brief takeover by Islamic extremists. And the Mauritians had been quite concerned about that kind of possibility for many months leading up to the whole Arab Spring phenomenon which, by the way, actually did reach Nouakchott to a certain extent. There were lots of demonstrations, looking for more democracy, more freedom. Because of the transition that Mauritania had already made, however incomplete, I'm afraid the opposition, the sort of traditional or secular opposition had lost too much credibility in Mauritania, so there was never a critical mass of revolution or anything approaching it. But there was a lot of discussion of what was happening in Libya and Egypt, in Bahrain, in Saudi Arabia, all of that was very much on the minds of Mauritians due to their identity with the Islamic world.

*Q: The Talban, were they a tribal entity that was influential in that area?*

KALIN: You know, I think that I don't know if I would call it a tribal entity. There certainly was a tribal dynamic in this, kind of the same way that one can think of family dynasties being important in, I don't know, 1920s Philadelphia or something. And there was the whole religious organizations that had, not really a tribal character, almost a denominational character that was very important and networked between Northern Senegal and Mauritania and up into Morocco and so on and so forth. So it was really important to see things in those kinds of terms. You were mentioning earlier how you, as a Foreign Service officer, developed a sort of understanding that you need a totally different mental map than you do in Europe or whatever or even in your own country. And that was pretty important in Mauritania, too.

A lot of human rights issues that were longstanding and very, very interesting as well; the whole question of slavery, for example. Mauritania outlawed slavery in the '60s but had a more, let's say, complete and formal renunciation of it in the legal system in the '80s. But the phenomenon persists there and in recognizable and traditional form. What they call white Moors or people of Arab and Berber descent very often had families of black Africans with them who were in effect slaves even today. And the government was loathe to acknowledge that. The government disliked and many in the government would not use the term "slavery." They used the term "vestiges" or "consequences" of historic slavery. And so that was a really fascinating dynamic to handle.

And activists actually challenged the government on some specific cases. For example, a young woman who had clearly been exploited came forward and a group of activists challenged the government on her behalf. The government actually responded, the court system responded by penalizing both the white Moor or Arab mistress of the young woman as well as her black parents. And that was the first time that a court case had actually been resolved in that fashion.

So it's really quite an interesting place, both in terms of external politics, if you will, and internal politics. The government was also trying very hard to come to closure on the incident I mentioned that had happened 20 years before: the conflict and population exchange and land tenure problems between black Africans who had traditionally farmed along the Senegal River on the border with Senegal and people, landowners, Moorish landowners, white Moor landowners who had since taken over those tracts. A longstanding refugee effort along the border with Senegal by the United Nations that was coming to an end at least formally at the time I served in Mauritania. So lots of really fascinating stuff.

And I should also maybe say that the cultural richness of a place that has been and continues to a certain extent to be isolated is worth noting. Mauritania is often seen as sort of the place where the blues originated, believe it or not. So there are two or three very famous Mauritanian musicians who are quite notable and we got to know them very well at the embassy. Again, a small, a relatively small embassy, a relatively small country, a very tight diplomatic corps generated the kind of rich experience that diplomats may have had 25 to 50 years ago. So it was a very interesting experience.

*Q: Was Nouakchott used as sort of an entrepot or whatever you want to call it for young Arabists in our Foreign Service?*

KALIN: In a way, yes. We had some. The post was too small to serve much of a role in that respect but some mid-level officers, one of whom I'd served with in Saudi Arabia, for example, had come to Nouakchott to head the consular section and do economic work as well, for example. And he was able to get his French to the very high level of his Arabic while in Nouakchott. So, yes, it's definitely a border country in that regard. There was some question of whether Mauritania belongs in the Africa Bureau or with Near East Asia, the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau. The military had made the opposite decision. They had put Nouakchott with North Africa rather than with Sub-Saharan Africa as we had done. So definitely it's a place that serves that function, on a small scale.

*Q: Well, how about the Sahel? How stood the weather during the time you were there?*

KALIN: I'm sorry; how?

*Q: Is the Sahel or, you know, the drought. What was the situation during your time there?*

KALIN: The advance of the desert was a fact of life by the time that I was serving in Nouakchott. It generated an impetus to improve people's life standing, the positive side, if you will, of a leader with a military background; the negative side, of course, being inflexibility, unwillingness to deal with political dynamics in an effective way and so on. But part of the upside of this, one of the first projects I remember our ambassador supporting and remarking to me on, Mark Boulware, was the idea of a green belt, restoring the city of Nouakchott's green belt. Even in the desert it is possible to create sort of live fences or sand dune stabilization programs using trees. So there had been an effort like that and it was making some progress.

The government had also realized that it was very important to do things that resulted in practical benefit for citizens, as elementary as that sounds. So they had managed to get a whole number of squatters out of a particularly marshy area and into better housing on a hill. Not to say that there weren't still appalling conditions in different parts of Nouakchott. The town originated as a French military outpost rather than as a sort of historic center or town like Chinguetti or the other ancient cities.

Although it was near the coast it was not on the coast. There actually were a couple of beachfront properties, so to speak, that diplomats congregated at, but they were on the order of a hotel that was, well, like a 12-room hotel that was partially constructed out of cement little by little and had been near abandoned by a French expatriate. Nevertheless, that same French expatriate or another interrupted soul had put a barbecue made of bisected oil drums on the beach and one could go on the weekend and get some beautifully blackened shrimp or fish and a few imported beers if you were a diplomat. So it was a funny place that way. And yet there was, as I say, while I was there there was some hope that conditions would improve, which is more than one can say for many places in Africa, unfortunately.

*Q: Yes. What about other embassies? Did they play much of a role there?*

KALIN: They did. Increasingly, the European Union is a force in those countries. I say increasingly; historically that's been the case. After all that part of Africa is close to Europe and it is, in some respects, like their Mexico. Immigration is important between those countries and European countries. Aid programs are far more extensive today from the European Union than from the United States. We had an almost impossible time getting USAID to participate in Mauritania's development or if they were participating it was from an office in Ghana that only incidentally dealt with Mauritania. Not to say that USAID didn't try. They did try to send us, for example, a counterterrorism expert to help with cultural and other kinds of programs designed to deal with extremism. But the government rejected that. The government said why should we have an independent American expert set up shop here when what we really want is support for our own indigenous efforts. And it was hard to argue with that, frankly. USAID was unwilling to do that on procedural grounds. Ultimately we were able to get some of the funds redirected towards, for example, World Bank-sponsored projects but the independent American expert from a particular non-governmental organization never came.

*Q: How about the Saudis? Were they doing much there?*

KALIN: The Saudis were not very active. The Arab countries were present but Mauritania's kind of an extreme end of the world. Some of the large Pan-Arab funds were doing big water projects, for example, but one did not have the sense that as a matter of foreign policy Mauritania was particularly important to the Arab countries. It was more a matter of humanitarian solidarity than otherwise.

*Q: Was the French embassy a major force there or not?*

KALIN: They were. They had a large staff, a very, very good staff. My French counterpart was an absolutely superb analyst, diplomat. I really very much enjoyed that relationship and found it beneficial. He was also quite a good walker. He would go walking on the beach. As I said, there was a pristine, pretty largely underdeveloped beach. Every weekend he would organize groups of us to go with him, which was a great service to the community. So the French absolutely were influential. The Mauritians, I had the sense, were actively positioning the French in competition with us in terms of military assistance and intelligence cooperation. But that is all to their credit, if you will, in terms of the game of diplomacy. We tried very hard not to play that game, particularly because it's not necessarily to our advantage to supply things that the French wouldn't or vice versa. So that was kind of a behind the scenes, if you will, dance that, as I say we tried to tread carefully.

*Q: You mentioned a woman who was helped by the courts by being, sort of having her status as a slave-*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Were we pushing human rights there?*

KALIN: We were, and I'll give this as kind of a small example but I think it may be worth telling. So Ambassador Powell, Jo Ellen Powell, did arrive just in time for the fiftieth anniversary celebrations in November of 2010 and fortunately the Mauritians accredited her quickly, although their diplomatic practice was really opaque and quite antiquated. They usually insisted on a full swearing in ceremony as a group. They were unwilling to schedule a particular country for a special ceremony or even to allow an ambassador to operate informally by presenting a copy of credentials to the foreign minister. No, it had to be formalized. That was a disadvantage of a military president with a military background. At any rate, the ambassador had arrived in November of 2010, just in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And we managed to get her credentialed and all the ceremonies taken care of and so on and so forth so.

By the next year, when we were ready to do our Fourth of July gathering, the question was what remarks should she give. And the initial thinking was to simply read the statement from the White House. I advised strongly against that. I suggested that while that was appropriate for some smaller countries and for many larger ones where the primary group at the Fourth of July celebration was American expatriates, we ought to make an original statement. And the ambassador was very much in favor of our taking on human rights issues but was concerned that maybe that wasn't the venue. Ultimately she did talk about human rights in her speech and it was quite well received. Marcia Bernicat, who was then ambassador to Senegal, another old friend and mentor of mine, had done the same and also got favorable press for it. So that was nicely successful.

I think honestly we were balancing human rights concerns among many other foreign policy concerns so I can't say that it was our primary focus in Mauritania, but it was a



very important one for us because of the egregious nature of what was going on there. I personally had some understanding of the government's position that slavery is not a matter of merely bad will or ignorance or recalcitrance on the part of Mauritanian society, but also an economic phenomenon. It's easy to forget, and I was reading about this in the last little while, it's easy to forget how wrenching it was, even in the United States, when the slaves were freed. And in Mauritania often slaves stay with their masters, particularly in remote areas, because as you rightly observed earlier, there is just not much between them and the sand sea; it's almost like living on an island.

There was another incredible story of a slave who was helped to courageously leave an abusive situation in a remote village and survived only because a member of the Mauritanian military gave him a ride to the next town. It's all too easy to die in the desert out in a very difficult place.

*Q: Were there any incidents or disasters, coups?*

KALIN: Well, I think, as I said the country had experienced the coup and more or less righted itself by the time I arrived. But there was one echo of that that's probably worth telling about. WikiLeaks happened shortly after I arrived in Mauritania and because of the intensity of the coup and post-coup and election period the embassy in Nouakchott had done a voluminous amount of great reporting. Much of that reporting was disclosed in WikiLeaks. Now, most of the officers who had signed those reports were gone by the time WikiLeaks happened, but there was one young officer who was still in place. And it was a serious question for her how to handle this problem. She did well. She had to face some embarrassment among her contacts but ultimately she was able to overcome that and remain very effective in the section. There was a lot of confirmation, sort of grudging admiration from our European colleagues that appeared in the press that came to us as well in Mauritania, along the lines of, we assumed that Americans are naïve and unaware of the internal dynamics of a society like Mauritania, but we were wrong. We now see in your confidential cables that you indeed do know what's going on. So that was quite an interesting phenomenon.

*Q: Yes.*

KALIN: The Department or Washington panic, almost, over WikiLeaks was quite remarkable. We didn't have, fortunately, too much concern over individuals among our contacts, fortunately. Some were embarrassed but thankfully nothing more.

*Q: Well, did you have the feeling that there was a clampdown on confidential conversations and all?*

KALIN: Certainly there was more caution in reporting after WikiLeaks and I think that's unfortunate. We basically, at least at our post, we did what we needed to do, just with another level of awareness and reminder that we needed to be clear when something was reportable. We needed to a certain extent watch the tone of our reporting but I think we managed to stay on track, more or less, because otherwise what is our value? There's a

certain level of achievement represented by that grudging admiration from the Europeans, a certain amount of realism and even gritty detail that we need to maintain. Otherwise, truly we can all be replaced by, I don't know, social media and phone calls. I never believed in that and I still don't.

*Q: You left there when?*

KALIN: I left in February of 2012 but not before a truly wonderful experience. I mentioned that there are five ancient cities in Mauritania, as they're called, and they're world heritage sites that have extensive manuscripts of importance in Islam and historical value. And in some cases they are quite spectacular settings. The Mauritians organized newly, when I was there, a rotating series that they called a festival of the ancient cities. So I was able to attend one of those festivals in February of 2012.

The government had gone to a fair amount of trouble to organize diplomatic accommodations so ambassadors, all the major countries' ambassadors went, including our ambassador. This one was held out in, I believe it was Ouadane. These festivals involved things like attending plays in the evenings and musical presentations and displays of falconry or archery during the day. And so the ambassador went the first day. Unfortunately, that day there was a tremendous sandstorm so most of the diplomats were staying in either sort of rudimentary hotels that were kind of French Colonial era or before. That was quite uncomfortable. Some were staying in tents, which normally is a wonderful experience. As in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in desert cultures usually these tents are quite comfortable and well-appointed. But that night the tents actually blew over in the snow and- I say snow; the blowing sand resembled snow. The plan had been for the ambassador to go the first day and I would go the second day to inaugurate a grant through public diplomacy, to restore one of the fortress walls of this city. We passed the ambassador's convoy on the way back. The drivers had the windshield wipers on and it was like driving in a snowstorm.

Well, luckily the weather was much better on the second day and I was able to go with a small group from the embassy and do the inauguration and attend a cultural event and meet some colorful characters. One such character had a very checkered past and was, for example, banned from travel in Spain but was a just fine host for a dinner at the hotel. Another was quite famous and has gotten very recent recognition, this being Abderrahmane Sissako. I believe he is the filmmaker who did a film called "Timbuktu," which dramatizes the takeover by Islamic extremists in northern Mali that I mentioned occurred in 2011-2012, and shows how local people resist fundamentalism. It's actually been nominated for an Academy Award as a foreign film in documentary in the last few weeks. Unfortunately I haven't seen it because it's only playing in selected cities and at least a year ago it had no U.S. distribution at all. So I hope I will be able to see it soon and I hope others will, too.

*Q: You might try Netflix.*

KALIN: Yes, exactly. At any rate, that was a truly, truly wonderful experience and a great way to finish my career. I actually had hoped I would continue in the Foreign Service but; 2011 was a particularly bad budget year so although I was then ranked around 65, 66 out of 400 plus officers on the promotion list for overall performance, that was enough to get an honorable mention but not a promotion. The previous year I had been ranked 19 out of, I think 18 or 19 out of 20 out of a total of 78 for the public diplomacy officers, again just a place or two shy of the promotion list so unfortunately I was involuntarily retired from the Foreign Service. Then again, as a colleague said when I was able to travel over to Bamako, Mali, we're in such good company to have made it this far that we shouldn't feel bad. So that trip to the interior of Mauritania was in many ways a fantastic way to wrap up and close an almost 20 year adventure and I'll never forget it, that's for sure.

*Q: You left there when?*

KALIN: Around the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, almost exactly, I guess, about three years ago. So around the 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2012.

*Q: And then what?*

KALIN: Then I came back. By then my husband and I had bought a home in his hometown of Royersford, Pennsylvania. We did that in 2009 when we came back from Afghanistan. And so I spent a little bit of time, a few weeks with him and then went back to Washington for the job search program. I spent the month of March 2012 doing that with some old and new friends, if you will. And interestingly that led to what I'm doing now, kind of indirectly. There was an exercise during the job search program on asking for networking help. So I did the exercise and the woman next to me was an administrative officer who had come in as part of the post-9/11 wave of diplomats. She had been a financial management officer, actually, of a large American international conglomerate and had served as a management officer in various places. Anyway, she said, well why don't you call this friend of mine in Philadelphia when you get home and ask about University of Pennsylvania. So I made a note.

I didn't go to the University of Pennsylvania directly after retirement. Instead I started by teaching a course in economics at a smaller college near home, called Ursinus College. But the following fall, the fall of 2013, I applied at University of Pennsylvania and that's where I've been since, teaching, actually teaching writing, which is a skill that's central to diplomacy and it's been very satisfying.

I teach non-traditional students at the University of Pennsylvania, moreover, so people who are over 21 and who may have delayed college for any number of reasons. For example, I've had students who are professional ballerinas or ice skaters or baseball players in my classes. I've had returning military veterans who spent what would have been their college years deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere. People who are maybe from underprivileged backgrounds who weren't able to afford college. People who may have started out at a community college but had the talent and drive to apply to

an Ivy League school like U Penn and be admitted. So that's been a terrific experience and one I'll recommend to others.

*Q: Did you find that a lot of people really haven't learned how to write? I mean, I'm talking about coherent writing of sitting down and doing a paragraph and that sort of thing.*

KALIN: I did. I asked some colleagues from both Ursinus and U Penn to validate my observation that students today are not taught the kind of structured approach to writing that I remember being taught. And I think that's true. But it really comes down to making a good solid argument and that's one thing we try to teach and I know it's perfectly possible. Many younger officers in the Foreign Service were excellent writers, though some were not, and I find the same is true in the college student population.

*Q: Do you recommend people go into the Foreign Service or not?*

KALIN: I have mixed feelings. I do recommend people go to the Foreign Service. I have had a few students ask me that person and I do recommend it and I do my best to help them through the process to the extent they're interested: think about how to prepare for examinations, write recommendations and so on and so forth. I wish I could say, however, that I had real faith in the future of the Foreign Service as a profession. I am afraid that the State Department is increasingly, to quote an unnamed friend who retired around the same time I did, increasingly dysfunctional and irrelevant. This militarization of foreign policy has had some bad effects. The absorption of USIA instead of what should have been done, the absorption of USAID 20 years ago. The incredible lack of faith in government as a whole that I see in the students I teach, for example or in American society in general. The rise of the congressional staffer as a kind of shadow government. Even the increasing use of so-called special envoys, which to me always signals policy failure. I'm no fan of that designation. I do think there is a serious need to almost get back to basics. It's almost like we seem to recognize, imperfectly, that we have to have the best possible professionals running our economy. That has come into question, of course, since the financial crisis. But we still seem not quite to have come to the realization that we probably need professionals running our diplomacy too. Somehow we should have stayed in the Executive Office Building rather than allowing it to be taken over by political appointees, for lack of a better term. I hate to use that as a pejorative because many political appointees are, in fact, quite wise. On the other hand bringing in political appointees at literally every level is, I think, a mistake. And I don't know quite what I personally could do to help with any kind of rethink but maybe just stating the need, as others have done, is something I should do. Having said all that, going overseas to serve one's country to me is a wonderful thing. If that is a calling for any young person today, by all means I would support them.

*Q: This is probably a good place to stop.*

KALIN: Okay.

*Q: I wanted to say one thing I think we- I didn't get, and I think it was important in the small set of, I would say, not misunderstanding but being unaware, of the general who was our ambassador in Kabul.*

KALIN: Yes.

*Q: Who wanted to have the conference room painted during Ramadan. Could you explain the situation and all?*

KALIN: So Ambassador Eikenberry was quickly coming to the conclusion, watching us struggle in the embassy and to some degree in the military with the number of congressional visitors who wanted to come to Afghanistan in August of 2009, was coming to the realization that we actually needed to take into account the fact that it was Ramadan or, as he called it, Ramazan, which is more of a South Asian and East Asian pronunciation, interpretation. Ambassador Eikenberry had done advanced scholarly work in China and yet these kinds of basic understandings of how to approach or integrate with, if you will, or understand the workings of our host country is not what comes naturally to a military officer. What comes more naturally is the: we must operate in this country so let's look at a map kind of thing. And that to me is where there's a huge difference between diplomats and the military, is that our instinct as diplomats, even for the United States, the world's most powerful country, is to understand that we are guests, that we are dealing with a nation state, that we are dealing with others, not ourselves. I mean, more generally that's come into question in the last many years. Is the world all just one place, we're all alike and we can all just get along if only we recognize that we all have the same values and so on? Well, yes and no. I mean, we don't all have the same values. You know, cultural differences actually do matter. Borders and balance of power and all of those classic concepts actually do matter.

*Q: Okay. Well, I think it's probably a good place to stop.*

KALIN: Okay.

*End of interview*