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LOUISE S. KEELEY

Interviewed By: Jewell Fenzi
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is Jewell Fenzi on Wednesday, April 15, 1992, interviewing Louise Keeley at my home, in Washington, DC. Louise has come this morning to talk primarily about her evacuation experiences, five in all in their years in the Foreign Service, most of them in the early '70's. And also we'll discuss the possibility of spouse compensation.

Well Bob resented the '72 memo on freeing spouses from unpaid duties but I appreciated it.

KEELEY: Very much.

Q: And yet you kept right on doing what you had always done before.

KEELEY: Well in a sense, but because I felt somewhat vindicated by the '72 Directive, and I think it depended on whether you served with a very difficult ambassador's wife or more than one or whatever. I mean I had had some wonderful people to serve with. Some of them are gone now. Beloved Mary Lee Handley.

Q: I was just going to say, mention the. . . .

KEELEY: And the DCM's wife also in Mali, Claire McKiernan, was wonderful. And at our first post, we had Mrs. Ken Wright who was we thought in the beginning somewhat distant, but after our evacuation. . . You know somehow we'd all seen our first evacuation, we'd been through something together. She was very fair. And then came a wonderful, wonderful couple named Shelley and Francesca Mills who have recently....

Q: Oh yes, we interviewed them.

KEELEY: I think Ambassador Mills has died.

Q: Yes.

KEELEY: They were really very nice people.

Q: Now where were you together?

KEELEY: We were together in Jordan, yes. And then we went to Mali which was such a difficult post that you really had to have decent senior people. And we did. We had the Handleys. No, first of all of course we had Ambassador Wright who was extremely difficult himself. Mrs. Wright wasn't so difficult, but Ambassador Wright was difficult for the men. And he was, let's say transferred, by Soapy Williams to a post that was more in keeping with what he liked to do in a way.

Q: Was he career?

KEELEY: He had been a Navy captain. And there are many anecdotes about him, but I'd have to see them. (laughter) If you could ever interview former FSO and now Father John Leonard of the Greek Catholic Church who was living in Galilee in Nazareth and is now retired in Grand Rapids who was economic officer in Mali when my husband was the political officer.

Q: What I'm doing is jotting down these names because later I'll ask you if I have the spelling right.

KEELEY: I mean it's easier to do it this way in the sense of who were the good After we left Mali.....

Q: You came back here and then you went to Stanford and then you went to Greece the first time.

KEELEY: Yes. We came back to Washington where I knew a few of the senior wives because I was approached by Nene (Leslie) Dorman. This is the one and only reason that I went on the Foreign Service Board when I first came back in 1990 because these are my experiences with the Department and I feel quite antagonistic....

Q: The AAFSW Board?

KEELEY: Yes. But twenty-five years before, I had been on the Board, not elected but a wonderful woman named Nene Dorman had asked me to be her substitute. She said, "You'll never have to do anything, I'll always be here. We play bridge once a week so anything I need you for, I'll tell you then." And then she went away for the whole summer. And I was suddenly left as the secretary of the Board with all these senior wives who were perfectly adorable to me and nice. So I felt when I was told by Leslie Dorman that they had absolutely nobody for the Board in their 30th anniversary year, I said, "Well if you give me the least important and least busy job, I'll be glad to do it." But I wasn't too glad to do it. I didn't feel like participating. I can't explain it, but I had just had enough.

Q: You just felt burned out.

KEELEY: Yes. But I had a wonderful person to work with, Carolyn Reagan, who is still on the Board, and I enjoyed working with her. But anyway, we went to Stanford in 1965-66. These two university assignments including Princeton 1970-71 just added to insecurities changing schools, houses, etc. after 10 months each. But they were very interesting. We had a most fantastic time and met fascinating people. But it was difficult changing the children from school. And the Department, you know, never would take that into consideration at all. When we were in Stanford, suddenly we were told that we weren't to have a furnished house at all at our next assignment in Greece. No, I don't think we were told that until we got to Washington within days of departure. And you know, our furniture was in storage -- what had not been ruined coming back from Mali. Almost everything was ruined. We weren't indemnified in those days.

Anyway, we went off to Greece where we had to find housing and furnishings including about 30 light fixtures unexpectedly. Eventually, after two years they really couldn't justify the fact that people in Admin were having government houses and people who had to do political entertaining were not, so we finally had a furnished house, a small little house after two years, a lovely little house.

Q: And then I look at the decade from '71 to '80. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven moves in ten years.

KEELEY: We moved. And each time we came home, we moved back into our house which was good in a way for the children, but which was. . . .

Q: Hard for you.

KEELEY: I think we had almost twenty-five moves just in the Foreign Service period.

Q: You must have, because every post was two moves in and out.

KEELEY: We moved twice in Athens. We moved from one house to another. We moved twice in Uganda for reasons of security there. In Athens we had a person I would consider the most difficult wife and that was Mrs. Phillips Talbot.

Q: That was the first time in Athens?

KEELEY: That was our first time in Athens. Fortunately there was a very nice DCM's wife, Roberta Anschutz.

Q: Now Henry Tasca.

KEELEY: We had them too, afterwards. She was, I would probably say, worse than Margaret Talbot but I was only there a year with her. And that's about the time... I mean

people of that ilk were what brought on the Directive of 1972. But these same infractions and infringements occur particularly with political wives, political ambassadors...

Everyone in the Foreign Service is terrified of political ambassadors so they never speak up. I mean it would take a whole other -- I don't know what -- book, to talk about the things that people have told me about some of the things that have been going on and are going on.

Q: With political?

KEELEY: To take one small example, when we were in Athens there was a swimming pool which of course had been put in for the use of the Ambassador and his family and his guests. In the past the pool had been opened usually to the members of the Embassy at certain times.

Q: Now this is the second time you're in Athens? Let's keep this straight.

KEELEY: Second time. All right, do you want me to leave that for later?

Q: No, no, that's okay, go ahead with it now.

KEELEY: No, I'm just giving you a small example.

Q: I'm just putting on the tape that it's Athens Two and not Athens One.

KEELEY: There was a swimming pool attached to the Residence and a tennis court that had been built at some stage. Neither Bob nor I played much tennis in those days so the tennis court was usually always open to members of the Embassy. It was very convenient because they could go there and play at lunch hour, a block and a half from the Embassy. And you know, once in a while we reserved it for house guests, but it was always open.

The pool was another question. The pool was really made for a -- it was a big pool, but it was not for fifty people. Nonetheless, that pool was open three days a week and it did take the filter system a couple of days at least to recover. But I was always being pressed, particularly by FLO, to open it at more times. But with only one person to take care of it and having to use the maids from the household to clean the bathrooms was another undertaking and it wasn't practical. We kept it to three days a week. I discussed it with Toni Stearns who had done the same thing with Bonnie New. We added an hour or two because the grown-up people like to have an hour or two without the children jumping in and out. But all the time I was in a sense pressed to feel a bit selfish that I didn't open the pool on the Tuesdays and the Thursdays. Anyone with their eyes could see that the pool had to be filtered and Tuesday and Thursday we couldn't even entertain in the pool because it took a while for the pool to come back to a fresher state after so many people had been in it. Anyway, that's, excuse me, a long way of saying it.

But when our successors came, political appointees, they immediately closed the pool

and it is still closed to the Embassy personnel on a regular basis. Has there ever been a complaint? Has anybody there ever noted the fact that during the professionals' period there, and I don't mean just ourselves, I mean the Stearnses and the Kubisches and whoever, it was open three days a week? It was only under the Tascas and the present political incumbents that these resources were not shared. And yet when the professional spouse is there, they're made to feel that their entire life is to be devoted to the professional's job. I was the one unpaid person to supervise a lot of government property and service. And we've all had this experience. I don't mean I, "I", The Chief of Mission's wife.

And you also have to deal with these situations where you're constantly being. . . I mean one day the CLO or FLO person said, "I hope you'll come to the first opening of the camp, of the summer camp." And I said, "Sure, if I can. Where is it?" And she said, "It's in your pool." I mean, I had never been told.

Q: (laughing) You hadn't been told. In your pool. Was the pool a little apart from the house, or was it really just right there?

KEELEY: It wasn't right on top. Of course there was quite a bit of noise which could be quite excessive between when it was 9:30 and 1:30 or whatever. It was quite noisy. I worried a little bit about noise because there were big apartment buildings around it. I also worried about security at certain times because it was quite exposed.

Q: So what did you do for your entertainment? If you knew people were going to be in the pool at one point. ...

KEELEY: Well I didn't entertain in the pool very much in general.

Q: Or even having a luncheon outside with all this great . . .

KEELEY: Well if I had a luncheon, I'd try to have it on a Tuesday or a Thursday. And luncheons in Greece, you could manage with the hours. Very occasionally the pool could be closed, for instance, on the Fourth of July or when you were having a great big reception, then it would have to be closed. And the pool wasn't any big deal. All I'm saying is, now they go out and I think they hire a pool that really should be used by Greeks in order to put the Americans in because no one will go to the Ambassador and say, "Now see here."

Q: Oh I see. So now we've rented a pool.

KEELEY: We've rented facilities at Athens College which is a Greek school run by an American who can't very well say no. Or the Americans, the official Americans. And of course Athens . . . There never should have been such a to-do about the pool because Athens is after all at the sea and there are other ways. There are also clubs that people can join. There were, I don't know what there is now, military facilities. Anyway, that was just a small example and I don't particularly care to get into it. I mean I solved it by

having two sets of cushions, for instance. One set of cushions for all that came because they were allowed to bring food and lunches and, without going into detail, no one was supervising. Sometimes there were one or two adults to supervise a lot of children. And it became almost a babysitting thing.

Q: I think I would have drawn the line and I would have said, "No children without adults. "

KEELEY: You try to draw the line, but when you are put on the griddle of being unfair to these dependent children of which your own were once.... I'd just like to see a general standard apply. I feel the pool should still be open at the convenience of the people who live in the house. I feel the tennis court if they're not using it -- I don't think they are -- and I think that when people's children come home, well that is perfectly understandable to anyone. But I don't think there should be such huge gaps between what is done when there's a political person and when The facilities of the Residence are just one tiny, tiny aspect of things.

Q: I want to get back to your That had to be unsettling from '71 to '80 to move all those times and, as you said, to move from Kampala to back here and then to Cambodia and then back here and then to Mauritius and then back here. How old were your children at that time, '71 to '80?

KEELEY: Well in '71, our daughter was seventeen, finishing high school and getting ready for college. In other words, we had to leave Athens at the end of her junior year. There was no consideration given to us that there was one more year of high school. That's another thing that I think is unfair because I have good friends who left their Service because they just felt after all the difficult posts they had, far more difficult than we -- this is a younger wife -- her husband is not out of Foreign Service. It wasn't our Service anyway. But nonetheless, after all they'd been through, all the danger, all the difficulties, to be told they couldn't extend a year in their last post for their daughter's senior year in high school was the straw that broke the camel's back. We had a very difficult time with our son and I blame that in large measure on the Foreign Service.

Q: Five evacuations. When did they start? From Jordan?

KEELEY: Our first post. Three months after we got to our first post.

Q: So you were evacuated five times from Jordan?

KEELEY: No, once from Jordan.

Q: No, but I mean from Jordan, not from Mali, not from Greece, Uganda.

KEELEY: In Greece we received evacuees and I wrote something up about that because I felt that was interesting in the way that that was organized by... I would give large credit to -- of course the business people were evacuated, too, and lots of those people helped a

lot, but I think one of the people who did such a good job has recently died in the Foreign Service and that is Roberta Anschutz.

Q: And this was about evacuations.

KEELEY: In fact she asked me to write it up for The Foreign Service, whatever it was, our AAFSW Newsletter, which I did, but they left out a paragraph -- this was years ago. I don't even have a copy. But unfortunately they left out the paragraph at the end where I said that Roberta and whoever else -- I don't even remember now -- deserves such credit for the help and the organization of help that they did. That could have been done in any embassy, that was my particular point.

Q: So you were evacuated from Kampala once or twice?

KEELEY: Kampala, twice.

Q: Well, let's just start with the first one, Jordan. I mean three months. Did you have the children then?

KEELEY: I had the children, but I didn't have the household effects or even the air freight because the air freight was embargoed.

Q: So you just went in and out.

KEELEY: No, we were there three months and you know you arrive in a place. At least we had a house to go to, but the people were still in it. And the people -- the wife who was most interested in taking me to call on other people and introducing me to people which was very nice, but on the other hand I had to leave the children alone in her house. My son climbing out of a crib falling onto a stone floor on his head, I kept thinking he might be doing, while I was making all these social calls. I had to bring in my luggage things that Mrs. Wright had asked me to bring. That's what we did in those days. I had to call on her within 24 hours in my white gloves ...

Q: And hat.

KEELEY: And hand her over the package of blue jeans or whatever she had asked for, a hat. In fact, after evacuation, Mrs. Wright said that she liked to wear hats but we no longer had to wear hats. She had perhaps asked other wives. That made a big difference to us. Think that this was a tropical climate at certain times of the year and hats were just not worn by any of the other people. We didn't want to look British. Anyway, we were living in a hotel in downtown Amman. Terrible things were going on, let's say, around, and that's why an evacuation was conceived of. I mean there was a coup in Iraq, unrest in Cairo, there was unrest in Amman. They said that someone had been hanged recently in the square that the hotel overlooked.

The food, the water, of course, wasn't clean. I had to get boiled water from people and all

the food to me tasted of this horrible -- to me horrible fat -- lamb fat, ghee, so we'd order from room service but it was very hard to eat the food and it was very hard to feed my ten-month old son for fear that I'd give him some terrible disease.

Anyway, after a couple of weeks because of security reasons, they put us -- I don't know at what depth you want this.

Q: I think that evacuations as you said, did affect you.

KEELEY: Well they've affected me now. (laughter) I won't go into that. When I get back to talking about it, I almost have a nervous breakdown again.

Q: I looked at these ten years where your children were growing up and I thought, "Good heavens, what was that like?"

KEELEY: Here we are, three months in Jordan, living in a hotel, not even getting our air freight. Anyway, they moved us into the AID Director's house which was a huge house and the reason I describe it is it had a lot of glass windows and it was somehow near an army encampment so there was a lot of noise, marching, army things going on, and Bob was always in the Embassy and some nights he even slept in the Embassy at which point I would take the children, the radio, powdered milk, cereal, boiled water and lock myself in the room. I was terrified because of course with these glass doors and things there were lots of shadows, strange lights, strange noises. After a week or so of that, these people, the Merriams left, and we moved into their house and I never felt another minute of anxiety in Jordan.

And I never felt that the Jordanians had any desire to hurt the Americans in any way and this is something that continued through several generations, maybe even to this day? It was in 1967 when the Middle East was again evacuated. People in Jordan, because that's the way the people felt who were evacuated, people like Anne Murphy felt, in the evacuation that I met. The Lauders, the Eddys, all those people who were evacuated from the Middle East in '67 felt as we had in '58, that we were not [in danger]. We felt it was something political with Mr. Wright. We felt that Mr. Wright -- he was the chargé, not really the ambassador, the chargé. Mr. Wright wanted to get rid of his wife and child so we were going to have to go, too. We didn't want to go at all. We felt safe by this time. We, the mothers of young children particularly. But we all had to go. Once the Department made such a decision, we had to go and we eventually did. We were amongst the last out.

Q: Where did you go?

KEELEY: We went to Italy on a boat and Betty Johnson -- I don't know if you know her, the wife now of Mac, G. McMurtrie Godley -- Betty and her mother were on that boat. If you want a little anecdote, we went to Jerusalem and we were greeted by Marjorie and Andy Killgore. He was the consul in the Consulate General there. And Betty was dressed in a beautiful yellow crisp dress and I was dressed in I don't remember what with the two

children and I very shortly sat on the couch, I put my feet up like this. And Marjorie Killgore said, "Please don't put your feet on the couch." And I've never forgotten that. (laughing) She's one of my best friends and she's been my Foreign Service big sister.

But anyway we had to walk across the Mandelbaum Gate, were taken in a bus across Israel and put on a boat at Haifa. The boat was very rough, Betty was very seasick. As much as she could, she helped me with the children. We've been very good friends for many, many years. In fact I always think of her wanting to take this messy child and I was worried it would spoil her dress. I must have gotten some kind of a bug, I was very sick in Naples. I went to stay with the Hendersons. Did you ever know the James Hendersons?

Q: No, but you know I talked to her.

KEELEY: Well she's been gone for quite a while. You may have talked to her daughter, Katsy.

Q: Maybe it was another. ...

KEELEY: This was probably another Mrs. Henderson.

Q: When did this Mrs. Henderson die?

KEELEY: Elizabeth Henderson. She died at least ten years or more ago.

Q: No, this would be friends of your parents, Bob's parents?

KEELEY: Friends of Bob's parents.

Q: No, it would be the next generation.

KEELEY: They took us in and she helped me a great deal and treated me like a daughter and I recovered from whatever it was I had. And she took me to the PX and I bought a lot of baby food supplies, the first I'd seen since I'd left the United States. And I went to Palermo to spend three months with my in-laws. As I say in this -- I found this and you'll just have to forgive the emotional quality of it -- I found the original that I had written. There was a mimeographed version which is what somehow got into the hands of Mary Lou Weiss who was the person coordinating that aspect of the Foreign Service wives evacuation for the Forum Committee. And with many of her -- not remarks, but just -- she edited it. She should have, of course, she had to tum it in. But it was so hard to read that I brought you this less well-typed version and a final, I assume, I can't tell, but I assume this is the final thing that I took from her edited version.

Q: I can give those back to you.

KEELEY: Whatever you want to do. Anyway, so I spent a very interesting time in a way.

It was very difficult with the children, however, because... You knew my father-in-law.

Q: I met them once.

KEELEY: A wonderful person, but a very hard person. I mean it makes me cry when I think about it. My daughter was not allowed to have a light on in her room. You know, she had these terrible nightmares but he felt that that was giving in. That's the kind of thing you go through when you take two children to a faraway place and you go and you stay, even with your own in-laws. You have, and especially in that generation you have imposed rules which under normal circumstances a mother would suspend because of the type of life. And you don't know what's going to happen. You never know when you're going to see your husband again. My father-in-law thought that Bob was in grave danger. He kept wanting me to write. And I was sharing all the letters I would get from Bob. And so anytime Bob said, "I went to Jerusalem today," or something, my father-in-law would hit the roof and say, "He should be learning to say in Arabic, "I am a friend of the Arabs." (laughter)

But it was very interesting to be in Palermo and the people were wonderful to me, really, all of them. And they allowed me to take Italian lessons at the Consulate General. And the Sicilians were wonderful to me. I don't really know why they were so wonderful to me, except that my in-laws were older, didn't like to go out that much and maybe they used me as a substitute, but I was invited everywhere which was a great stimulus for my Italian. I hired a nursemaid on my own, you know, so I didn't burden my mother-in-law. My mother-in-law had two wonderful maids. We were there for three and a half months. It's too bad the children don't remember it, really. Christopher wouldn't be able to. Michal really doesn't remember it but she learned Italian, too. I put her in a Montessori School. They were so beloved by everybody. You know how the Sicilians and the Italians are. When we left, the women were shrieking on the dock. We left also by boat and the two maids and the nursemaid and I forget who else were there. It was as if I were ripping the life blood of them by taking these children away, so you have to say that that was a positive experience, at least for the mother and at the time for the children.

And the Department diverted our air freight so I had the baby crib and all that kind of thing. And it gave Bob an R&R visit which was pretty good considering, after three months. He got to come visit us. When I went to Rome, as I had to at some stage, I saw that the evacuees seemed to be -- some of them complained. I mean there are always problems. But they had set up something in the Embassy to help them. And basically the ones I knew and the ones I ran into in the brief moment I was there seemed to be feeling as if the Department cared about them and they were part of the team.

We went back to Haifa by boat. An officer was sent over to meet us which was Bob as it turned out, and brought us back to Amman. We still had no furniture or anything, but a kind person in AID gave us some AID storage furniture and we were there and the Department allowed us to be back in time for Christmas which I don't think they would even think of such things now. And we had two other Foreign Service officers and their wives, Anne and Nick Heyniger and Charlie and Gretchen O'Hara for Christmas lunch

because we had gotten into Amman. Gretchen and Charlie had dabble-dabbled in Europe so that by the time Charlie got to Amman, Gretchen was not allowed in. And the same thing. Anne and Nick were on their honeymoon. The same thing applied to Anne. So this was the first time Anne and Gretchen were able to actually come into Amman. They were not evacuated and I was because they were held back in the States.

Q: They never got there in the first place along with all your household goods. (laughter)

KEELEY: And you know two years later I think, they blew up the Foreign Ministry. It was a miracle that some of our husbands were not in there and we had a different ambassador. We had Ambassador Mills who thought that this was not against the Americans and we were not evacuated the second time. Then, as I say, we went back to Washington. We were there for about a year not exactly knowing where we were going because they were going to send Bob to Elizabethville and they were having troubles in the Congo. Eventually we went to Mali. He went ahead and I came some time later. We went to Bamako.

Q: As a matter of fact, you were in Bamako part of the time that we were in Freetown, but by the time we got up to Bamako, you had gone because we didn't get there until early in '65.

KEELEY: Yes, we left in '63.

Q: But it didn't look like it could be a very easy post. It was so isolated.

KEELEY: It was our most difficult post. They were fighting with all their neighbors, borders were closed. We literally had no fresh milk. Our children had to live under these circumstances. The only reason that I had hot water in the house after a year is another AID director, Charlie Myers, who had no children and used to make ice cream for the whole post. We had no eggs. He got an egg man and he set him up in the egg business to help. And the military -- there was a small military mission -- when they would fly away to do whatever they were doing, they'd always bring fresh milk back to the American children. I mean it was something unbelievable. Our children -- I mean our daughter -- our son wasn't old enough, had to go to school just going to the Malian School System. There were not that many Western children. After a certain time, the Malians said, "You know this is destructive. These children don't speak French. So we're going to give you a teacher and a broken-down classroom." They didn't say broken-down. "We're going to give you a classroom."

Q: But it was broken-down.

KEELEY: The reason I want to say broken-down is because so many times since I've had to try to convince people that it's not the classroom, it is the teacher. This was one of the best teachers that one could imagine. She's kept in touch with us all these years. And we're not the only people to say so. A perfectly extraordinary couple, Lucienne and Claude Chalmeau, who have been known to a number of Americans. I know they're

friends of the Quaintons, they were together at another post. Anyway, she taught 30 children of thirteen nationalities the French curriculum in a broken-down classroom. Our daughter, when she went into Princeton, did not have to take a language. I mean she got such a good start. Of course it was many tears and very difficult on her to learn trigonometry in the third grade.

But after a year with this wonderful person, there were a few Americans who didn't want their children to study in the French way. They had no French of their own, they couldn't back up. So we had to start an American school in the Embassy classroom. We were sent a teacher named June Gills from Washington, DC. And June Gills, had never been in Africa before. We had to go over and change her light bulbs. I had to go over all the time and tell her servant to take a bath. We would do anything for her, of course. But she was another, absolutely magnificent teacher. For years she sent resource materials to our daughter, things that she would get from the "Illustrated London News", etc. She thought perhaps Michal might be back in the boondocks. In Mali we were not able to be close to the people of the country because of the political situation. Any Malian who associated too much with Americans with a few exceptions in the AID [mission] was sent to jail. It was very unfortunate. So therefore you have a different life there. We had this wonderful ambassador, Bill Handley after Ken Wright left and we had this excellent Tom and Claire McKiernan. Later came a DCM who wasn't quite as close, but I know that we had one of the first R&Rs ever given in the Foreign Service. Tom McKiernan and Claire should have gone and they said, "No, people with young children should leave first." So we took our children to my old nurse in France and Bob and I had a wonderful month in Spain, staying in every best place and eating at every best restaurant.

Q: Wonderful!

KEELEY: Because really we had trouble with food in Bamako.

Q: I cannot imagine being there.

KEELEY: People in the Foreign Service today cannot imagine what we put up with. When Charlie Myers came into my house and said, "You don't have any hot water in the kitchen?" And I said, "No." He said, "I won't allow someone in AID not to have hot water," so we got a hot water heater. We had one air-conditioned bedroom where the four of us would huddle in 110 degrees heat. (laughs)

Q: At least you can laugh about it. You must have spent all afternoon in your air-conditioned bedroom.

KEELEY: We had strange fevers. Luckily because of playing bridge, which has more than once helped me, I was very close to the French doctor's wife and the French doctor. You know they expelled all the doctors, the Malians, and luckily they hadn't expelled him. If you had a serious thing, you went to this terrible hospital where a North Vietnamese medical student would be your doctor. Judy Irons, I don't know if you ever met Judy, but she had her baby in Doctor- this beloved doctor Alain Rivoalen's office.

And Mary Lee Handley, the ambassador's wife, a nurse, went home with her to nurse her. Her husband got hepatitis about this time and Mary Lee had to keep father and mother and child separated.

But of course you make very good friends in such a situation and we became very close to some of the French, the French that were serving there, because it was such a difficult post. The cream of the crop in many ways. And we have kept friendships, all of us, with some of these people for years afterwards. And you know occasionally we had wonderful meals because the French would always somehow figure out a way, especially the business French, to go to France, come back, and bring a barrel of oysters and things like that. Anyway, we did get out alive.

Q: Just about two years after your arrival. (laughs) I think back. What did we do all day long?

KEELEY: I mean I used to play bridge.

Q: But what did we do to fill up that time?

KEELEY: Well, we tried to find food. I always worked, you see, in some kind of children's home. I did a lot of volunteer work. We brought all our books there. I catalogued them all. Not too many people wanted to bother in that small post, but anyway that was something I did. There was quite a lot of time needed for the children. Bridge was certainly a great thing. It was too hot for sports at some seasons of the year, but I learned to water ski in Mali.

Q: Yes, I saw that middle of the river ski jump, water ski jump. I remember that.

KEELEY: And you never fell down because it wasn't too clean.

Q: Now we were told that the Niger had Bilharzia but it was fast enough flowing out at the center like that so that you were safe.

KEELEY: That was safe, but many of the places where people swam were not. And there when we needed a blood test, when I had this mysterious disease, I had my blood tested at the leprosarium. That's one thing I used to do, for instance, is take new Americans to the leprosarium and see the doctors that I knew through the French community because people were so terrified of leprosy as a disease and because they had a very interesting research center there. To be able to learn helped you overcome your fear of seeing and in fact even being with some of these people, helping or touching. We were not allowed to do read welfare work -- we'd try over and over again, especially Mary Lee Handley who was a nurse -- to get some kind of a thing going that would allow us just to be helpful. But in Mali, unlike other places, this was really not accepted.

But it wasn't boredom that bothered me so much in Mali. It was the worry about food and the worry about health. Having the French doctor as such a close friend, I could usually

always reach him not only for ourselves, but for others. And there were swimming pools on either side of us the AID directors, station chiefs. And you know the children had a good time because there were some darling children, the Kim family next door -- we're still in touch with them. A wonderful couple named Adams who was the AID director, had no children, and was so generous and kind to all the children on the post. So as you can see, when you have a small post like that, a difficult post, everybody puts their best foot forward.

And once the Adams had a Christmas party. And we went with a couple named Haney of USIA whose children were friends of our children, Bob and Mary Haney who are still in Washington and good friends to this time, to find a Christmas tree. And because Mali was such a desert, such a deprived area in many ways, we couldn't find [any]. There were no wildflowers in Mali. We couldn't find even a tree that we could take to use and we each ended up with kind of a jerry-built branch. And the Adams had a Christmas party which was very luxurious. They had a centerpiece of green and red apples. And the children were so starved that without a word to their parents, they all ran to the table and grabbed the apples. And of course they didn't mind at all.

I mean that's something you just don't experience nowadays I don't think. I mean of course you experience seeing it in some of the very tragic things that we live with overseas. I mean you do see children who will never have an apple. But when you have your own children in that position, you remember that. But you know, they survived. And we came home.

Q: Were you the first people there after independence?

KEELEY: No, we were about the second group. Maybe one and a half because John Dean had been there earlier. He'd bought, fortunately, the U.S. Mission. I think independence was in '61 and by the time I got there it was about September of '61. Another little problem I might point out is -- my children happened to be born in September and October and every time we moved we would get to a post and then we'd have no friends for birthday parties. And that was something very worrisome for all people in the Foreign Service as well as for Christmas presents that would be sent from home which would never arrive because of the pouches. Other small strains of the Foreign Service life.

But of course as we know, the cultural openness both my children have and I'm sure yours, and most of our children are very open to all cultures and prejudice doesn't come into it. Languages were learned, cultures appreciated, and they never have had a feeling that our culture is so much better than everyone else's. They really understand, as I think we all learned, that you can meet a man as I met in Mali. I met a gentleman who had never been in a car before and he was one of the most gentlemanly people. He was the head of -- you know the Dogon tribe? He was head of that particular community as his father had been before him and he's the one who took us down the Falaise into the Dogan area.

Q: You did go down? I've always wanted to.

KEELEY: And then climbing back up, you know, I could barely make it and he kept telling me how this man had made it and most people were not willing to go on and here he was boosting me along. And although I was only thirty-something years old, it was the toughest climb I've ever seen.

Q: I've always wanted to go.

KEELEY: It was very, very interesting.

One of the people who was most inspirational in Washington was Mrs. Dean Rusk, wife of the then Secretary of State, who seemed to really love the African community and we could always count on her to come to things and show interest. I go into these details only because I think they won't be said or it could be that they won't be remembered by interviewees, or you wouldn't happen to be talking to someone else who saw this same behavior. Mrs. Rusk had decided that when the African wives, some of them very new and very young, came to call on her, that she would ask some wives from the Department to volunteer to be the interpreter if they were French-speaking. So that they didn't have to come in a big limousine, we picked them up in our own cars. And so you can imagine how this started out the friendship and the impression for these wives.

But the first wife I took was the wife from Rwanda and she was pregnant and I was just terrified. You know, I had my own car but I drove over the curb and I jolted her and one thing and another because I was so scared as was she. And we went in and Mrs. Rusk was so sweet. She asked this lady in detail what she would like to drink. I translated what kind of coffee she liked and how she liked it, etc. She went out in the kitchen and made it herself. And this lady from Rwanda never forgot that. I mean she later became one of the most popular wives in that group. She became one of the most open to the American way of life. She had parties, she had a turkey in her neighbor's oven. I mean she was just a joy to all of us. I think she became the head of the African wives' group. Anyway, it all started out with Mrs. Rusk.

And Mrs. Rusk was often at African receptions. For some reason the middle hierarchy would not necessarily go to these receptions, but she would go and the Desk Officer and his wife, that level, would go. She'd always be asking, "Please point out. Remind me of the names. I love talking to these people. I've had an invitation. Do you think it would mean anything to them if I went?" It could be a christening or anything. And the husbands would say how much it meant to the whole African Diplomat Corps. The attention that Mrs. Rusk gave to them. Anyway, she was very good. She was a remarkable person. And when we left Washington, Mrs. Rusk's secretary called me and asked was there anything they could do to help in California.

Q: This was when Bob was Desk Officer for Rwanda, Burundi and Congo Brazzaville?

KEELEY: Right.

Q: What's NIPA Fellow?

KEELEY: Oh the National Institute of Public Affairs. This was a group that gave at that time a fellowship to each -- perhaps not each government agency, but let's say someone from State, someone from CIA, someone from USIA, someone from the prison system, someone from -- I don't know -- I don't know how many. And they had a choice. There were about five colleges in this thing. And you could ask for a choice. We asked for Stanford across the country. We thought it would be interesting to drive across with the children so we did have that very wonderful experience because we could stop at the Grand Canyon and many other places. And it was a year when the husband or the spouse could choose whatever he wanted to study.

Bob had never done any economics in college so he decided to start with Economics I or something. And Jacques Reinstein came out to visit economic students and you know he was very annoyed at Bob for wasting [his time]. But Bob did very well and Jacques Reinstein quite changed his mind, that yes it was a good idea considering he'd never had any of the basics.

But they had some brilliant people there. They had Bailey. Bailey was one of the key writers on diplomatic history at the time. And it was fascinating to be just outside of San Francisco. The opera season was at hand and everything else close by. My friend Katsy Henderson's father had been in the Foreign Service and she found us a little house. Her parents had retired by then to that beautiful place with the balconies.

Q: Pebble Beach.

KEELEY: Yes, that area.

Q: Carmel.

KEELEY: Carmel. And so we had all our holidays together. Jimmy Henderson was a gourmet cook and he recently died. He was a well-known Foreign Service officer in his day. I think he died about four or five years ago. Anyway, that was a very nice year. We spent a lot of time going around California. So many wonderful parts. It was really a boon. And then to be assigned to Athens. We got our tutors, paid them, for Bob to brush up his Greek. I needed to start learning some Greek. The Department wouldn't pay for me naturally but because of some technicality they wouldn't pay for Bob.

Q: Some technicality like the money aspect.

KEELEY: No it wasn't that. Maybe because he wasn't physically present in Washington or it wasn't the Foreign Service Institute. I mean, anyway, it didn't matter. We did it.

Came back to Washington. Got ourselves organized back to Greece. Of course that would take another book to tell you about Greece under the dictatorship with a ghastly

American policy. It was the first time in my life I had ever had friends who were taken off and tortured. I couldn't get over the fact that our government was denying this was happening. I think it was an event that deeply colored our lives. Bob fought the policy and was, I would say, treated quite badly for doing so. He wasn't promoted for seven years. And so it was rather interesting to go back to Greece as ambassador after having been told you would never be an ambassador because of your behavior. But anyway, that's another long thing that's not perhaps pertinent except. ...

Q: Well I think it is pertinent because it certainly must have affected your attitude toward the Service.

KEELEY: Well it affected my attitude toward the Service, particularly since -- the tragedy was -- there were only one or two people in the Embassy who seemed to care what was happening during this time. I mean it was the time of the death of Robert Kennedy and the Canon of the Anglican church where we went complained that an American tourist had asked him to -- you know this is just incredible, but it's true -- had asked him to hold a memorial service and he was a bit resentful. Called the DCM, the DCM said he wasn't going. And Bob and I were the only Americans there from the Embassy. At the memorial service for Robert Kennedy!

Q: Were people afraid to go?

KEELEY: People didn't care and of course the military were delighted that he was killed -- a lot of the military. I don't know. I couldn't possibly explain to you. There may have been one or two who would have gone had it been possible for them to go. I don't remember all the facts as vividly. Maybe they didn't go to the Anglican church, maybe they didn't feel; maybe there was someone who sat in the back whom I didn't see. I mean I don't really want to say out and out categorically that no one went.

But the Martin Luther King was something quite different. I was in a group of ladies who were being taken by the CARE person to distribute some Easter things. We stopped by the Embassy and I ran upstairs to get something from Bob. Bob told me this terrible news. I came down and told the people in the car and the CARE man said, "Well, he never should have mixed himself up in the Vietnam War." Well by this time I was becoming more and more and more political to say the least. And then the East African students -- there were some East African students there -- some were married to Greek girls -- they went to the DCM who had served in Africa and asked him to come to the service that they were having in the Greek Cathedral, although of course he didn't really believe them. So he told Bob and said, "Why don't you go?" And we asked around. Again, nobody was really interested. The only couple were the USIS couple, the Sirkins, who would have come and wanted to come and were unable to come because there was a Gymkhana or something going on for their children. Anyway, we went there and we were again the only Embassy people. And we took a few pictures which I sent to Mrs. Martin Luther King and it was in the middle of the Cathedral.

Of course several things can go on in a Greek Cathedral. It can be a wedding here, a

funeral there, but the East African students certainly did have a connection with the Greek Archbishop and a very serious service was held for Martin Luther King. But that was the atmosphere at the Embassy in Athens at that time. And I'm not saying that there were no people who saw the danger at that time. Most people, however, went along to get along. We did not.

Q: The Ambassador. Really, it cost him his career.

KEELEY: Well I don't know if it did.

Q: I don't think he went on.

KEELEY: He may not have gone on to anything else, but of course he'd had two or three ambassadorships by then. And the tragedy in Ambassador Tasca's case is that he did see the light but too late. He kept referring to that when he'd go up for the Senate he was asked. Of course I have to say truthfully, we spoke to a lot of Senators. A lot of people were given information by us, news people. We did what we could. And there's no question we went beyond what we should have done, but we did. These were not Communists. These were people who were Eisenhower Fellows and Fulbrights. You know, we're paying for it still. No one will accept the facts -- they don't want to accept the fact really that our policy is so bad. They won't realize that we created Andreas Papandreou. They blamed everything about Greece on Andreas Papandreou. In a way, we pushed Andreas Papandreou.

He had some very good qualities and he did something for his country and had we realized, as Bob did at that time, 1967 and 1968. We said, "We have to take this man into consideration because he will be Prime Minister of Greece someday." No one else ever said that. Everyone else was trying to show how anti-left they were, how anti-Papandreou and they are to this very day. And there are plenty of things wrong with Andreas Papandreou, etc., but that's a whole complex evolving.

Q: Well and that sort of thing also is on -- it's been recorded.

KEELEY: Bob has it in his book. Oh it's been written up a little bit, but you know the very best thing that was written about Greece at that time was a report by Dick Moose and Jim Lowenstein who had never been in Greece before, or if they had, it had been as tourists. Now Dick had the intelligence -- Bob was back here by then -- to ask Bob and together we made a list of all the people he should talk to, and who spoke French and who spoke English and what their phone numbers were. And these were all people who later became members of the government. Most of the opposition. Very important people in the country. I mean twenty years later when we went back, there they were. Andreas Papandreou was Prime Minister, so-and-so this, so-and-so was that. And even now with a right-wing government. I mean there are three or four in there that I helped.

You see I used to help the prisoners, I used to send them things. I used to get out their

stories. I helped start a group, in fact. And we had General Maxwell Taylor on our committee and a Senator, what's his name, from Connecticut. An English girl -- she had worked for the British Council -- and I started this group inspired by a man named Peter Calvocoressi, he's a professor at Leeds London. Anyway, I took a very deep interest, let's say, in political prisoners and human rights from then on. And I don't mean to say that we were the only people in the Embassy who felt this way, but really no one else put anything on the line.

Q: Was Bob in the Political Section?

KEELEY: Yes, so he was Political Officer. He wrote memos nobody paid any attention to. Sometimes he'd write something and it would be stolen. That was another whole can of worms that we won't go into now.

Q: Let me just interject right here that after this is transcribed and you look at it, anything that you would like to restrict for ten years, twenty years. I mean you may. Sometimes you think, "You know I really shouldn't have said that," and then you look at it six months later and you say, "You know, that's all right. That wasn't as sensitive as I thought it was." But one thing, having served with Lina Tasca, and I don't mean us to do this in a gossipy way, but I would like to know. No woman who we have interviewed who has been considered somewhat of a dragon lady is aware that she's a dragon lady and you don't confront her with that.

KEELEY: You see she didn't care whether she was a dragon lady. She was such a dragon lady that when I later -- when I was the ambassador's wife in Greece and went to a party at somebody's house and someone said, "I have an old friend of yours," and they took me around the corner, the ell of the living room and there was Mrs. Tasca and (laughter) I recoiled in terror. And when she said she was going to come and visit me for the weekend or something, I was distraught. She never did, of course.

Q: Weren't there enough people? Of course there was the DCM layered. You see when I was with her in Morocco, I was so layered from her that she really didn't affect me at all.

KEELEY: Yes, we were somewhat layered, obviously.

Q: But I just watched her. This was in 1965 and Guido was still a young officer as was Bob, and I watched her and I remember thinking at the time, "If what I do is important to my husband's career, how did Henry Tasca ever get to be ambassador?" Naively.

KEELEY: You know I tried to find out, not very hard, but I did try to find out because you see he had been Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs before we went to Greece and you know I was very much involved with the African-American wives' group and other people were working together with the Africans in that whole group of people. And I never heard of her. She never came to anything. She wasn't visible in any sense of the word.

Q: In the United States.

KEELEY: In the United States. So I mean we'd heard some bad things from Morocco, to say the least.

Q: Imagine! (laughs)

KEELEY: But we had no idea. And I just remember that first cocktail party when we were all introduced to her and she said things like, "Greece is a land of stones and nothing else," and things like that. Anyway....

Q: She wanted him to be ambassador to Italy.

KEELEY: We were somewhat layered whereas with Mrs. Talbot, I think she singled certain ones of us out in a way.

Q: She was there before the Tascas?

KEELEY: Yes. And Phillips Talbot, you see, would not listen to what Bob was saying about the junta. I mean I don't blame him. He was the ambassador and who was Bob? But still, Bob had the backing of Bruce Lansdale who was the head of the American Farm School and someone whom Tasca really respected. Bob will have to tell that story. Bob has written a book which can't be published for probably -- if ever -- telling the whole story. Because I had such "ins" -- my brother-in-law was married to a Greek, her parents were there. He was a retired admiral, very close to the then Foreign Minister who became a good friend of ours. We had close friends in the literary world because of my brother-in-law -- you know we had contacts that nobody else had.

Q: Built-in entrees.

KEELEY: And even between our two postings in Greece when we'd go back to Greece, smart political officers would say please let us have a party. I mean because they didn't know anyone from PASOK when PASOK was the upcoming party and they didn't have ... They hadn't done their homework. They'd burned all the bio files. Bob of course always wrote bios and he was really taken aback when -- I forget whether it was Ambassador Kubisch or someone. I don't mean the Stearns who knew everybody, too.

Ambassador Kubisch, I think it was he, was having a certain minister, Minister of Transport or whatever he was at the time, for dinner and said it's so hard to have this man because he has a wife who doesn't speak any language and this, that, and the other thing. And Bob said, "But he's certainly a person easy to [talk to]. You put one of your Greek-speaking people next to her. He's a very valuable person, he's a NATO officer, he led the Naval coup, he did this, he did that. And the ambassador said, well he never saw anything like that. Well he was somebody that I always used in my writings up of people who were so badly treated. He was a guy that we'd spent all this time and money and effort on who would be a leader, whose father had been -- of course the father had been a very right-

wing general during the war and there was a whole problem there, but the father nonetheless was a great patriot and he was the son, and he would be a leader in the future and what were we doing? We were allowing the junta to torture him.

Q: And pretending that it wasn't so.

KEELEY: And pretending that it wasn't so. And none of this. The ambassador had access to none of this. And Aleko spoke perfect English. I mean I even forget now all the different things that Bob would be able to bring up or had brought up. And it turned out that all those files, all those bios, had just been dumped by somebody, not even put on microfilm.

Q: Did you ever feel threatened while Bob was . . .

KEELEY: Well we were certainly threatened from the point of view of promotion and all that. I felt very threatened by the CIA who followed me. That's another whole story. The man is right here in Washington who threatened me. Harris Greene, who was a member of the Cosmos Club, and we've had this out. I've argued with him ever since. But you see Andreas Papandreou by that time was out of the country. Margaret Papandreou -- before that happened, let's say, when he was imprisoned, Margaret Papandreou came to the Embassy and asked to speak to an officer. She was an American citizen, four American children. He was an economist, he'd been at Berkeley. All the economists in the United States were agitating to do something for Andreas Papandreou. Grudgingly, Kay Bracken, the political counselor, was assigned to talk to Margaret Papandreou and she assigned Bob and she said, "Would you meet with me? I have to speak to you. I am terrified. They're threatening my husband in jail." She was going through a very, very difficult time.

We became friends. I used to give them a turkey for Christmas and things like that. She always pretended to Andreas that this was the American way of trying to look after things. It was just Bob and me that did it and it caused us a lot of grief, both in the Embassy and out. Though we didn't go around saying it, but of course anything we did, Bob told Kay Bracken. Margaret Papandreou wrote us in her book about the Greek dictatorship. She did not use our names because she was afraid it would ruin Bob's career.

Anyway, here were these children, ten years old, eight years old. I mean they are now gigantic young men and one daughter, but they were little children, four little children. And they were just treating her so terribly. They wouldn't listen to her worries. They had somebody, and this I would have to take out, I suppose, but between you and me, they had somebody living next to her who was probably taping and reporting. And I know that because after he had left the country and Margaret had gone, an American friend of Margaret's came to Athens and said, "Can you come and see me? I'm in her house packing some stuff for her and I don't have much time and I'd like to talk to you."

A common friend of ours had been almost killed in a car accident. Someone that was very close to the Papandreous. Greek. And they thought perhaps it was a junta assassination attempt. And so I went over there. I parked my car in front of the house. There was no reason for me to hide anything. And it was apparently reported. And so in the cafeteria, Harris Greene says to me, "What was your car doing in front of the Papandreous?" and I said, "What business is it of yours?" He said, "Well I think it's rather controversial to be there." I said, "Well, I wasn't trying to hide the fact. Margie Shachter came to pick up some things for Margaret and I went over to see her. Is there anything wrong with that? And how do you know about it?" And he said, "Oh, a police report crossed my desk." Bob was called in. "Your wife is just getting beyond the bounds of too much controversy, etc." But you see we were very valuable to Henry Tasca because we were the only people who had contacts with all those people.

Q: He's smart enough to realize that.

KEELEY: He did. For instance, we had a party for him and we had what I always call the "goodies", none of the "baddies", and these were all very important people including a Nobel Prize winner, including the grandmother of the present Foreign Minister who's just been fired or resigned, according to whatever you believe in Greek. We had a party of that kind for Ambassador Tasca. And Ambassador Tasca came to dislike me because every time I'd see him, I'd come up with someone and I'd say, "Ambassador Tasca, this is Mrs. so-and-so and unfortunately her husband is in prison but he had these connections with the United States." And that's what Dick Moose, you see, and Jim Lowenstein had all those people to look up, all those prisoners' wives.

And these were well-chosen people. They were not the terribly abused people from the Communists, but the American Embassy never had contacts with those people. Years afterwards, the Leftist leader, Mrs. Eliou, got in touch with us because she wanted to thank us because just knowing that there was someone in the Embassy who cared about human rights. In fact she asked Bob to his funeral, Bob the Ambassador, and he never got the invitation. Somehow it was removed from [his mail]. And Mrs. Eliou had asked ahead of time -- it was a memorial service, I think -- a common friend who had been a great war heroine of the Americans and the British asked would Bob go? And I said to Bob, "Would you go?" And he said, "Of course I would go in respect for Mr. Eliou." And we never knew until quite later. We never got the invitation for Bob or the message or whatever it was when the ceremony was to be, and this was after Bob was Ambassador. We never knew that it had come. And she was hurt that Bob hadn't come. And then I learned that through her friend and we spoke to her and we explained that unfortunately there had been some mix-up. We hadn't meant disrespect, etc.

Q: Before Mrs. Tasca, how was she difficult?

KEELEY: I just want to finish with Henry Tasca. We had that party when he first arrived. He met a number of people. I don't know that they made an impression on him at that time, but he filed it back away and he kept bringing up that party over and over and over again in Senate testimony to the point where I said to Bob, "I'm sorry we ever gave that

party.” We gave him this out. And when we were leaving of course, we had a lot of things given for us and our own farewell party. He asked to come -- you know the Athenians hated him, the good ones, most of the good ones -- I mean there were parties at which the Nobel Prize poet George Seferis, who was a dear friend of ours. Bob smuggled his statement against the junta out of the country to the BBC. We were broken-hearted that it couldn't go on our VOA. Our VOA mis-represented Andreas' father George Papandreou's funeral which was another whole story. Anyway. It just sounds so anti-American, but you have illusions of your country and your commitment to certain things.

Q: Now having served with Henry Tasca and knowing the type of person he was, he is canny, he was I should say, a canny and clever enough man to realize that Bob was invaluable to him.

KEELEY: But you see he came, let's say, in February, we left in June or July and we were back passing through Greece -- it was our R&R every year after that from our hardship posts -- he would invite us and Bob wouldn't go. Eventually, maybe the third year, he did go. No one would come to the [residence]. He had very few friends that would come -- Greeks -- because he was really being boycotted by them. But you see he had an opportunity to change things and he didn't. And as Bob had said at the beginning, this dictatorship could have been overthrown with the flick of a finger. And you know a man I heard recently at the Women's National Democratic Club talking about Haiti. He said the same thing. The same thing has been said many times over certain things and the United States has huge power. Very often, they could keep these situations from going so far. They don't think so. Or, I just can't believe so many people in a way can be so wrong.

Bob would sit at this task meeting and there would be a congressman there or somebody and he'd ask around the room. A famous one in our case was Congressman Findley from Illinois who came to Athens and he was on the Atlantic Council and he was on this and that. At the staff meeting he asked different people, “What do you think about this?” And they all said one thing and Bob was the only one who kept saying, “I don't agree, I don't agree.” He said to Bob, “I want to talk to you because you seem to really [have opposing ideas].” And we changed his complete attitude. He became very against the junta and he saw it for what it was. He was a man who could get down to what was important. And he said, “I've had two or three days, I don't remember, of this or that. I'll give you one night. If you can give me one person who can give me back-up of what you're telling me.”

So Bob called me up and said, “One person, one person. Who should it be?” So we decided it would have to be John Pasmazoglou who was an Eisenhower Fellow. He had not been tortured but he had been jailed by the junta, exiled by the junta, etc., but from a very old, prominent family and a hater of Andreas Papandreou so we thought that would be very good. (laughs) And so I went to John, he'd had his phones tapped, everything else, and I said, “John, I have to come and see you because the sweater you gave Bob for his birthday is too big.” And he said, “What?” And I said, “You know that sweater. Do you mind if I bring it back? It's so lovely, but I know it's too big.” I think he thought I

was attacking him or something. You know, that I had designs on him. He opened the door and looked at me in sheer terror. (laughter)

And I was able to get across to him, "Could we all go out to dinner to Turkolimano with a congressman". John talked to him all evening and that was one example, one of many. So I don't say that the entire American spectrum was bad, but I feel that Henry Tasca could have done on the spot what certain other people did. There were many, there were very many others.

Q: Of course I don't know Talbot. How did he view all of this?

KEELEY: You see Talbot was there at the beginning of the coup which is another thing. I mean it just sounds so unbelievable. It sounds like I'm just making it up.

Q: Yes.

KEELEY: I will tell you this. (laughter) The coup came. We were there. That again could be another thing. But let's just say the coup came. And it was very interesting later to live in the house and to be with the very man who was the nephew of the Prime Minister -- I mean to become friends with this man at a later time -- who was explaining how he came to the then Talbots' house and then our house to see Talbot to beg because his aunt, the wife of the Prime Minister, had asked him to come because the Prime Minister had been arrested. It was a caretaker Prime Minister named Kanellopoulos. And he came to Talbot who was in his bathrobe and he remembers speaking to Talbot in the kitchen. There was a black man in the kitchen, a steward obviously, and I thought I'd really gotten down to history because I thought it was our beloved Cyrille, but no. Cyrille had come there with the Tascas, I know, from Morocco. Half of what I know about her bad behavior comes from poor Cyrille who used to have to sit behind her door with her tisanes and yoghurts or something.

Anyway, so I saw this whole thing through the eyes of this deputy, the nephew of Kanellopoulos. How Talbot couldn't quite believe what was going on and how he said he had to go to the Embassy. He couldn't go and see the aunt or reassure her at that moment, he had to get to his Embassy and he had to meet [someone]. The other guy asked him for some communications which of course he couldn't offer. And I won't go into all that because that's really more of the man's thing. But I did happen to be present about maybe six months after the dictatorship had arrived in Greece, and remember this is a dictatorship that lasted seven years and has put scars on many, many, many things.

In any case, six months later, after the coup of April 21, 1967, we were invited by a very old friend, the aunt of the present Foreign Minister, to talk to some very important people. Bob was a symbol of someone that these resisting Greeks could talk to. And Bob thought it would be nice to bring along Bruce Lansdale, the American Farm School director who knew Greece so well and who'd lived there his whole life. So we went to this friend's house and there we saw the head of the Center Union Party amongst other people including John Pasmazoglou and other people. And this gentleman explained to us

how there was going to be a King's coup. The King was going to have a coup against the Colonels. And it was a small group and we could sit there saying, "But what if this, but what if that? What if whatever?" And all questions were answered. Obviously they were sending a message to the American Embassy.

Bob went back and wrote it up in detail. CIA said it was just one rumor amongst others. They even gave us the date. They said it was going to be December 13th. This was in the fall. Bruce Lansdale was our witness. I mean you might have thought, "the kooky Keeleys", but Bruce was there, too. And he also talked to the ambassador. Bob put it all down in every detail. I mean Bob was a loyal officer, he never went off and did things or heard things. I was the one who snuck things to prisoners and everything, but Bob didn't do that. I mean he didn't lock me in the closet to keep me from doing it, but you know, what was illegal, I did. What was correct in reporting or in whatever, he did.

And so Bob went back and wrote this whole thing up and Bruce backed him up, etc. and Talbot had it all and Bob said, "Plan. If the King is having a coup, do something." This changed history. "If the King is going to have a coup, either tell him not to do it if it's not wise or if it's not well-organized or help him do it because these Colonels are going nowhere." Nothing was done. The 13th of December, I happened to be in the PX. I looked around to see if there were any sort of signs of anything on the streets. Nothing, nothing. It was the King's coup that day. Afterwards, Ambassador Talbot said to Bob, "What I don't understand is how you picked the date." And Bob said, "They told me the date." Nothing was done. Now does that sound unbelievable?

Q: It does in a way. Well, yes and no.

KEELEY: I mean even if you want to help or you don't want to help the King, at least you could discuss, you could say, "There is this strange rumor." Two people with some reliability.

Q: Had there been a lot of rumors?

KEELEY: Well there were always rumors. There were rumors of the original coup which we paid no attention to. I say "we" in the American Embassy. I think Bob and I paid more attention to it because some of the people who were snatched and grabbed and had to flee the country or one thing and another were people who were worried about those things and telling us those things at the time. But this was something very, very concrete where the people who had mentioned it were not just our lower level contacts because we did have quite high level contacts. This was the head of the party, this was the so-and-so, and I don't remember all of the people there. But it was obviously trying to send a message.

And you know, somebody who is the political officer, not the political counselor, not the this, not the DCM, can only hand in as much as he can hand in, has already been rebuffed. Bob was writing a piece saying we must tell them not to have a coup at the time the coup happened. In other words, six months of being rebuffed, of being treated as a

pariah, etc. You go so far. You hand in what you can hand in. You do what you can do. But when I say history could have been changed, I don't have great respect for King Constantine and I don't think the Greeks do either, but they would have had more respect had he either done the coup right or not done the coup, had gotten rid of the Colonels with the help of the United States. There were ways, but we never did it, so now where is King Constantine? Sitting off in London. And where are the Greeks. They're in the middle of yet another very difficult political situation.

Q: How did you reach the prisoners? How did you help them?

KEELEY: Well, through Amnesty International which of course was a dirty word in the Embassy at that time, but we had a numbered bank account. We also had a committee of women including a wonderful woman in the Embassy. Of course she thought she had to tell her husband. That was during the period when we actually stole food from the Greek Red Cross that we were being given to help another thing and gave it to those Leftist families in Piraeus. I mean many stories have to go untold. There was a wonderful priest that we tried to help and that caused us all to be expelled from the Welfare Committee by Mrs. Talbot. The Welfare Committee of AWOG, the American Women's Organization of Greece of which I later became the honorary president. Different ways, but basically we got money, we got stories out, we got articles we smuggled out. There was something we smuggled out from a man called George Mangakis called "Letters from the Underground." George Mangakis was later Minister of Justice under the PASOK government. There were many different things that we did. Virginia Tsouderos who later was the number two in the Foreign Ministry. I used to smuggle letters out for her. She was in prison. She was under house arrest. Her father was a former prime minister. Things to friends on the outside to try to help the children. I don't want to go into detail about all these things, but I'm just trying to tell you that when you have such a small country, these people don't go away, especially if they're people who have a history of standing up to dictatorship.

You see, a lot of these people had stood up in the Second World War and had stood up to the dictatorship. And they couldn't understand, as one woman said to me when her brother was arrested, "What do you want me to do? My mother and father started the Red Cross, they started the Girl Guides, they started this and they started that. Now my brother's been arrested and I don't know where? I'm afraid they're torturing him. Should I go to the Russian Embassy for help?" She was told by the Office Director: "It's an internal affair".

Because I'm thinking of too many more recent things than Greece. Let's leave that aside. It was a difficult period, but it was a wonderful period.

Q: But let me just dwell a moment on Mrs. Talbot who interfered.

KEELEY: Mrs. Talbot, you see, had not been an ambassador's wife before. He was a newsman who had then become Assistant Secretary for Near East and South Asian Affairs for five years and then he came to Athens with a very plain Jane wife, but the

kind of woman who has run things. She later became head of the Women's -- whatever that thing is in New York -- one of the women's organizations in any case. I mean she was a person who would not take advice. His secretary, Marilyn Jackson, is still a great friend of ours today. She's become an officer in the Foreign Service. She tried to tell Mrs. Talbot things about dress and everything. Mrs. Talbot would never really listen. And she kind of ran us with an iron hand, you know. "You will all work on this tea, you will all do this, you will all do that." And I don't know why we resented her so much, but we really did.

Q: I mean she wasn't career.

KEELEY: First of all she had the senior wives in a tightly knit clutch. They took it out on us because she was taking it out on them if you see what I mean. And we had things. For instance, I remember a wife coming to Bob and saying, "You didn't say 'Good evening,' to me last night." And this was a USIS wife or something. We had very strict rules of protocol and politeness. My resentments with Mrs. Talbot were almost worse than with Mrs. Tasca because of the Welfare Committee and because of a long story I won't go into called "Father George," a priest who had been very much helped by all sorts of very reliable institutions. The CIA said he was a Communist. You can find a Communist worker priest. He was a follower of Abbé Pierre. So that's been one of my disillusionments, let's say. I couldn't expect that kind of dissension. Up to that time, you know, in the two posts we'd had before, all the agencies had more or less worked closely together.

(End of Tape 1 Side B)

KEELEY: . . . myself because I've always been politically minded, even as a very young wife when Bob was in the Foreign Service, I did liberate myself even then in the 50's. I worked for Stevenson in Arlington County. I ran the office there as a volunteer. They integrated a hall there in Arlington with a black librarian and I was there in my Stevenson uniform selling jewelry, whatever it was -- buttons -- and Bob was just beside himself because a Foreign Service friend of his father -- who has now died -- Cromwell Ritchie -- was sitting in front of us. Bob was saying, "He's going to see you in this uniform. You've gone too far."

Mr. Ritchie turned around and he said, "Young lady, I'm so proud to see you in that uniform. And I would like to be the one, I applied to be the one, to take Mrs. Whatever-her-name was down the aisle on my arm, but there were too many suitors ahead of me, so." This was a man who died only a few years ago, a wonderful senior member of the Foreign Service.

So I can't say that Greece politicized me. I was already politicized. And I was criticized for dividing the Embassy into people who supported the junta and people who didn't. In other words, I wasn't friendly, let's say perhaps, or I stuck with the people who didn't like the junta.

Q: And Bob just went ahead and let you do this?

KEELEY: Yes. He criticized me a lot, but on the other hand, he never forbade me. He couldn't have forbade me. Obviously we had some arguments on the subject, but I always had the feeling that he was secretly pleased that at least I had a will of my own.

Q: That you had a mind of your own?

KEELEY: Well, no, also because he felt so strongly about this. Bob, as you know, didn't grow up in Greece but spent several formative childhood years there. It's his second country. He deeply loves his own country and he couldn't stand seeing our country allowing Greece to have a dictatorship. (short conversation concerning tapes, recording of elderly relatives, writing Greek names).

I became one of the experts on Greek names. It's a funny thing, but it took me a year to learn how to pronounce the names. For instance Papandreou. I don't know why. It doesn't seem difficult to me now and Pasmazoglou and so many names that I knew that I became really one of the greater Greek name sayers! (laughter)

Q: Well then it really did help Bob to have been in Greece before and to have had the Foreign Service background.

KEELEY: I think it did. It would help anybody. We had a very difficult time in Greece. But in some ways, it was to me heaven.

Q: Are we now Greek I or Greek II?

KEELEY: We're now Greek II. Do you want to go to Greek II?

Q: No, I am fascinated -- we'll get to Greek II. But it's your story.

KEELEY: No, we don't have to go into Greek II now, but just to answer that question, it did help a lot because we knew an awful lot of people. A lot of people trusted us. But it was not easy. A conservative Reagan administration in Washington, a Leftist Papandreou administration there, a man who wanted so desperately to be Prime Minister that he tried to get Bob to see him before he even presented his credentials and he started a terrible attack in the Greek press on Bob before he even got there and attacked both of us through his right-wing newspapers all the time we were there. But in spite of that

Q: Did you save some of those?

KEELEY: We have them all. Lots of them haven't been translated because Bob didn't ask the USIS to waste time. Only when there was a real [reason]. But I have a lot. And what Bob said (at his Senate hearing). Bob had his hearing and, I mean I really have to say this. I think it should go down. When Bob had his hearing -- they're open hearings and all the Greek press was there -- some questions were planted by this right-wing Prime

Minister with a certain sentiment. Questions that might cause answers that could elicit problems later on. Years later then Senator Pressler boasted to us that he was the one who asked those questions.

After we left that hearing, Bob had made an arrangement to take the Greek Ambassador home -- he said watch out. Earlier had come the young, then Foreign Minister just fired, Antonis Samaras -- we had known him since he was a student at Amherst or even before that -- to ask Bob to meet with the now Prime Minister Mitsotakis. And Bob said, "I can't do that." He then sent another young friend of ours, Alexis Phylactopoulos who had been a graduate student at Princeton when we were there to ask us to meet Mitsotakis and Bob said, "No." And then he sent the man who is now the Ambassador in Washington, a friend of ours for years, who is now the man probably taking over from Antonis Samaras, John Tsouderos.

You see, all these people I've just mentioned are people from the right and there are good people from the right. But nobody can be in politics today who had anything to do with the junta. You see, that's how important it was that Bob have the views that he held. He could never have been criticized in that respect. They found other ways to criticize him because in his hearing he said, "Ever since, let's say, the second World War, we have had a client-patron relationship with Greece which I hope will not have to continue. Now that we've come to this period." I don't remember exactly what he said.

After he left that hearing, a third person who was coming to him to ask him please to meet with the opposition leader, Mitsotakis, said, "Bob, we have a transcript of what you said. Something is going to be used against you. I don't know what yet, but something. You've got to meet with Mitsotakis." And Bob said, "You cannot meet with the opposition leader before you've even gotten into the country and presented your credentials to the Prime Minister of the country you're going to represent. It can't be done." That did give us trouble.

But certainly during the period of George Shultz, Bob was backed up and people understood what a difficult position he was in. On the one hand, bases were being discussed, the military was extremely anti-Papandreou, with probably good reasons from their points of view. On the other hand, having to keep access to a Prime Minister who everybody wanted to see and who saw very, very few people. No other diplomat in Athens had that access. That could cause some jealousy, but you had so many Americans coming and so many Greeks to deal with you really didn't have time to worry about it.

Another big thing was Rashid. I'm giving you two examples of how the government -- our government -- behaves. Rashid was a terrorist and we wanted that terrorist to be given to us to try. And daily almost Bob was pressed to get the government to give up Rashid. The minute the government changed, we paid no attention to Rashid anymore. The military told us privately at the time that they didn't care. They didn't want those bases anymore in Greece. Of course we could never say that. We knew privately. So there was always this constant [irritation]. The base negotiations went on for months. Every month they met either here or there and in teams.

But other things were done, I think. A lot of people came to the residence who wouldn't come before. A lot of people in the arts came to the residence. We never had any -- to us -- anti-Americanism. We had a great many visitors from the U.S. We always got out the people that needed to be there whom they needed to see. We had a wonderful time, too. I've never had a post, and few people do have a post, where they have to make up the guest list and most of the people on the guest list are dear friends. Can you imagine having people of a country and they're friends of twenty years? Because they do happen to be the Minister of Culture or whatever. So you're perfectly legitimate in asking these dear friends over. So that was a big thrill, and it was a thrill to live in a house that my father-in-law had bought for the U.S. Government. It was a big thrill. And it was just in general.

Q: A nice cap to your career.

KEELEY: A nice cap. A thrill to be able to get myself in Greek to the point where no Greek dinner party would have to speak English or French because of me. And that was a big thrill.

Q: And quite an accomplishment.

KEELEY: Well I wouldn't say that.

Q: Well I would.

KEELEY: Time, you know. I mean, I didn't have plenty of time, but years.

Q: I still go back from 1971 to 1980 with all those moves and all that. I remember Bob bringing down the flag in Uganda, don't I? Was he DCM?

KEELEY: Yes, oh gosh. (brief pause)

Q: We're talking about Francesca Mills. I thought she seemed like a very nice person.

KEELEY: She was a wonderful person. You know when he first came to Amman, Bob was sent to Lebanon to meet them as the Escort Officer. And he said to Bob, "Bob, I'm going to stay here for a couple of days and in a couple of days we'll leave for Amman. You go about your business, and I'll see you in two days." But the ambassador there was a friend of Bob's father's, Ambassador McClintock, and he tracked down Bob and invited him to a dinner that was being put on. Ambassador Mills was a little taken aback that this Bob Keeley had pushed his way into this.

They started off the next day and they stopped in Damascus and Ambassador Mills said in effect, "Good-bye Bob. In two days we'll leave for Amman." And J. Borden Reams, the then dear Consul General or the dear Chargé said, "Oh no, no, no, Bob is going to stay here. This is Bob's house. Bob's father bought this house and is still a member and

no, Bob's staying right here with us." By the time they got to Amman, Ambassador Mills was not pleased with Bob at all, thought he was very pushy, and started calling him, "Bill." And for some reason, in the beginning, Bill Bromell, another person in the Embassy, rubbed him the wrong way so he would call Bill Bromell "Bob" and Bob "Bill."

In the meantime, Peggy Bromell, Anne Heyniger and I had started a group to help children called "Friends of the Children." And you know it was one of those ideal groups of idealistic young people. We said, "Never any pictures taken of anybody giving out anything. Everything must be cheap enough for the people of the country to attend. We'll try to pay for everything out of our own pockets or get it from somebody and we'll spend all the money on the children. We'll help do this and that." We had no compunctions. We walked into the Minister's offices and asked them for this. We heard that King Hussein wouldn't let "The King and I" be played there, so we went right up to him and asked him, "Could we have it for a charitable thing?" We were very young and very bold and everything and we had quite a lot of success.

In the beginning, Mrs. Mills took a dim view of these goings-on, but she quickly came to realize that we did have good aims. We were not having our pictures taken, we were not publicizing ourselves, giving a good name to America, and she became one of our biggest boosters. I mean that's typical. I give those two little examples.

And also we were very close friends of King Hussein at that time. That's not something that an ambassador would necessarily easily accept. That two of the people in his Embassy would be at parties with the King until the wee hours, even though they were very correct parties. And being with the King and so and so. And there could have been a certain resentment. And not at all -- as he used to say to Bob over and over again, "Thank God there's young you to be with this young King because I could no more do that than fly to the moon and go to work the next day. And I'm sure you'll always tell me if there's anything that I need to know about anything." Bob said, "Well you know, when you're in the presence of a King, you don't feel like you can report on him or even bring up anything. So I don't know that anything is ever going to come out of this." And nothing ever did. I mean if anything came out, I'm sure it went to Ambassador Mills as it should have.

And Bill Bromell and Peggy also became friends of the King and it was a very correct relationship and the Millses highly approved of both the charitable endeavors and the friendship. We never in the slightest way felt that they felt we were trying to step out of our position or anything else. And we kept always in touch with them, forever after, because they were just wonderful people.

Q: Is she still alive?

KEELEY: I think she just died, too. But they had at least one if not two children in the Foreign Service.

Q: Dudley Sipprelle is their son-in-law.

KEELEY: Yes, I guess that's it. Anyway, that digression I would just like to go on record because I think it's quite unique. I've heard of too many instances. The present incumbent in Athens, for instance, won't let any of the people, even very senior officers, talk to any Minister. They were just unrealistic because it's to the benefit of all that these friendships continue.

Q: Before that digression, we were on our way to Kampala. That couldn't have been an easy post either.

KEELEY: We were in Princeton for a year. A wonderful political ambassador, now dead, named Clyde Ferguson whom I never called anything but Ambassador Ferguson until after we served together, although I said everything else I felt like saying to him. I mean we had fights -- not fights -- discussions about feminism, about everything. He was the most wonderful man. Anyway, he called Bob and said he would like to interview him for DCM. Washington said he could come back.

Q: This is while you were at Princeton?

KEELEY: And Ambassador Ferguson said, "Now I'll be perfectly happy to go down to Princeton and see him. I like Princeton." And Washington said, "How dare you make this Ambassador come to see you?" And Bob said, "Because he wants to come and he wants us to have his friend", a very famous leftist professor, very well-known from the Vietnam War protest days, another whole story. I was a Vietnam War protestor. And I have a letter from Senator Fulbright to prove that my habits did not go unnoticed. Ambassador Ferguson came down and he said to Bob, "I applied to Princeton and I didn't get in. So it would be kind of nice to have a Princeton DCM."

Anyway, he took Bob and he went out to Kampala. A week after we got there, we replaced a couple named Beau and Sheila Nalle. Sheila just died. I talked to Beau this morning. His daughter and grandchild are staying with him and he sounded like just the most wonderful man in the world. And Sheila and Beau, we were together for about a week or so and they did everything they could to help us get settled and get organized. And a week after we got there, these two Americans disappeared. That was the beginning, perhaps, of some troubles. And a lot of Bob's time was spent on trying to get the government to admit what happened and that's just a whole other story because they did finally track down what had happened to these people and in fact got the government to make a report which was published. It was published, they paid indemnities to the widows and gradually anyone who had worked on this whole thing had to flee the country. Bob was one of the last. I always thought Bob was in special danger for that reason.

I'm trying to think now about the third evacuation. I guess it was about the summer of '73. We went to Greece for R&R. We were going sailing and we weren't planning to do anything dressy. We just had simple clothes with us. And something happened in Uganda

I guess. I forget which of the many events happened. Things had been happening. People were disappearing that we knew. Again we had an ambassador who knew some of these people from before and who wouldn't do anything about it. Clyde Ferguson had been replaced by a man named Thomas P. Melady and you'd just better not get me off on him or her. I'm sorry to say he was later the person to the Vatican.

Q: Oh, so he's career?

KEELEY: No, no, he was pure political. But he was in Uganda only five months. Of course he's lied about it and said he was there the whole time. He was an apologist for General Amin. I can't, I can't go through that whole thing. I can just tell you that the man who introduced him to his wife, a leading banker disappeared forever, Joe Mubiru. The priest that he'd known, Father Kiggundu, was murdered and cut into little pieces and he wouldn't let be tried. And when nuns and priests were risking their lives to even attend the funeral services for Father Kiggundu, many unpleasant things happened.

But anyway, the summer of '73, because things were kind of heating up. It's too difficult to go into all the troubles with our son, but if you want me to.

Q: No, if it's in here.

KEELEY: Some of it is in there. But that's one reason I left. Our son... Oh no, we had an earlier evacuation, wait a minute, that comes later. Okay.

Q: If you want to stop, we can.

KEELEY: No, I'm just trying to get the sequence of events sorted out. Yes, Clyde left in the spring and we went on R&R to Athens in the summer. And suddenly Bob was called back to Kampala because of troubles and Chris and I were left in Athens. Now it's true we had lived in Athens and we had friends in Athens, but we were sort of stateless evacuees in the sense that really only the people who were to come to Uganda at that stage were not allowed to come. And the one or two wives who happened to be out of Uganda were not allowed to come back. All the other wives were still there. The school closed, but they were not evacuated. So I had no warm clothes, Chris had no warm clothes, it was difficult to get through to Bob to even find out what we should do.

Q: Where were you staying?

KEELEY: I was staying in a hotel in Athens. Bob told me to call [a friend]. All of this was at our expense. I couldn't have any communications through the Embassy. I went there to beg them to let me cash one big check (the only one left in my checkbook) so I could buy our passages home. Oh, first I put Chris in the American school. I had to pay for it, of course. Because it was September, school was starting, they didn't know what would happen. I kept thinking surely since we were so few people, they'd let us go back, but Melady never let me come back in. Even though they were all there. His own wife and children were there. The Department just acted as if I were not attached to them in

any sense of the word.

Q: You were just an isolated case.

KEELEY: I was an isolated case, you see. So I did what I could and I did have some resources there in Athens and people to help me. But not necessarily in the Embassy and that's what I needed. Of course the local authorities would help me, but what I needed was money and help with the school and that kind of thing. And I hoped to have some kind of an evacuation allowance. We didn't have any clothes. So anyway, Bob finally got through to me and he said, "Put Chris in school in the States, in a boarding school, " a boarding school we'd looked into, Mount Hermon.

Q: Where was Michal?

KEELEY: Michal was in college, in Princeton, beginning her sophomore year. I wasn't so worried about Michal because she was in Princeton where my brother-in-law and sister-in-law were living. Soon thereafter I went to Princeton to see her when I got to the States after I had got Chris in boarding school. But anyway, finally getting through to Bob again, and the Embassy did let me cash this large check in my checkbook for a big sum that could pay our way to the States and get some traveler's checks and pay the school. I went to the States. I didn't have a car, my driver's license was in Uganda. I was treated so badly at this school because I came by bus. I mean I had no other

Q: You mean at the boarding school?

KEELEY: At Mount Hermon, yes. And Chris was several weeks late for school. He had none of his own things. I had to buy him some curtains and the things that you take to school late. I feel the school was very wrong in putting him together with a real troublemaker, a boy that had changed roommates just in that short time several times. His parents were in Latin America. I think he was Latin American.

Q: He was also Foreign Service?

KEELEY: No, I can't remember. I don't think he was Foreign Service, because I think if he had been Foreign Service, I would have felt more at ease in a way or I could have somehow communicated with his parents. Anyway, there were two campuses and somehow we kept having to go back and forth, and they couldn't understand why I didn't have a car. And I don't even think I had my driver's license, so I couldn't rent a car. Everything was back in Kampala.

I put Chris in boarding school and I think he was bitter, bitter because he had nothing. He had no records, no pictures, no anything. He wrote his father and said, "Please send me my Mykonos sweater," and Bob sent it to him. And it was sent back to Bob with a letter that he'd abused the pouch. I mean it sounds so idiotic now, but that just was a big thing to us at the time when really, because of the government, we were living without anything in a situation that was patently unfair. I mean if it was too dangerous to be in

Kampala, why was everybody in Kampala? And if we could not be in Kampala because of some arbitrary decision of this political ambassador, then we should have some allowances, we should have some means of communication.

Q: And you had none of that.

KEELEY: You know it cost us hundreds and hundreds of dollars. And you know the lines were difficult. You can imagine what it was like. Anyway, whereas one's instinct was to stay around the school and make sure, Chris didn't want me around the school. You know what a person of that age is like. So I left and I went to Princeton and then went to Washington and I just couldn't get any information. Except we had a wonderful Desk Officer, whom we'd served with before, Gene Schreiber, whom we'd served with in Kampala, who by that time had been transferred. Gene found out everything he could and he got some little messages to Bob.

And you know all through this, Bob always abided by every single law. I have seen time and time again many people use government lines to call and they arrange for that, but Bob would never do this. I mean he'd been brought up by his father in the very old-fashioned way of government.

Q: His service.

KEELEY: His service. Also government facilities are not for private use in anyway whatsoever. So after about three months, I think, I was allowed back into Kampala and we had a very wonderful Thanksgiving with the Lukens in Nairobi because they knew we were just coming back.

Q: That would have been Susie. Alan was DCM in the '60's, wasn't he?

KEELEY: Alan and Susie and their children. He was a wonderful resource and I wish they had been there when we came for our next assignment, but they had been transferred. We were back in Kampala and in about March of that year, our son was expelled from Mount Hermon for smoking pot. And in two months we were going on -- I guess on R&R again, or it was our home leave, I don't remember. Well it just seemed that some friends of ours in the States were sort of coping with the situation of Chris and a friend of mine in Princeton, he loves Princeton, let him come back and finish these not quite two months at the junior high or ninth grade, said he could stay for six weeks so we could meet in Greece.

I mean just financially we had no way of doing it. I mean we had Michal at Princeton, we had all those expenses all those months because eventually after a year of fighting, they finally gave me \$200 a month for those three months for the two of us.

Q: \$600.

KEELEY: Well I'd had to pay the American school which would never pay me back. I

tried to get the Embassy to adjudicate this before I even paid them because I didn't know how long it would be. I had to pay the hotel there. Once I'd got to the States, I had plenty of expenses. I had to buy clothes for both of us and all sorts of things which you normally would do. But I had to pay my way back to Athens, home to the States for both of us and back to Athens for me. I couldn't pay another way to the U.S. after Chris was expelled, but I still blame myself for not doing it, but in a way I thought it would just be what happened before. I'll be there with Chris, trying to get him organized, and he'll want me to go away. You know, say, "I'll be all right now," etc.

So anyway, in early June, I met the two children in Athens. I kept them there in a small apartment that was loaned to me by a really kind Greek friend also because it was dangerous in Kampala by that time. Bob came for his R&R and I guess at the time when Michal went back to Princeton, Chris and I went back to Kampala. I decided it was better to have Chris with us with whatever was available in schooling. The school had re-opened on a jerry-built basis with not very many students and teachers. In fact, we all pitched in and did what we could. On sunny days, I taught the kids badminton after school. On rainy days, I taught them bridge. (laughter) When asked, they first thought this was terrible, and then they thought it wasn't bad at all.

Q: Not a bad idea at all.

KEELEY: And Bob once really angered me. Oh once in Princeton, before we went to wherever it was we were going from Princeton – Uganda -- I'd heard something on the radio about Laos and I had just absolutely gotten very, very upset and Bob said, "I wish you would just stop talking about things like Laos. Why can't you just stick to your cooking and stick to your [babies]?" And that was something I never, never let him forget. And so one day in Kampala he said, "I want to amend my Laos statement forever to say you should write a book about teaching children how to play bridge because these pages are really good." And I said, "Thank you very much. But I am still interested in politics, I am still fighting the Vietnam War, and I have much bigger things to worry about than teaching children bridge." But anyway, that's what we did there.

Q: This was '72, '73 and the Directive had happened. Did that make any difference in Kampala?

KEELEY: Well of course I was the senior wife by that time. When I say that I was the senior wife, Ambassador Melady had been removed and Mrs. Melady had stayed on for a while, bugging us all. (laughter) But finally she did leave. So that does make me realize how much work I had to do in a sense in the unpaid line, and beginning to realize, you see, the fact of this Directive. I never wished the Directive not to have been. But nonetheless, it did affect, as you well know, our generation, affecting us very much. And it was just from then on a question of, if someone wanted to volunteer. I mean sometimes you could have a wonderful bunch of people, nearly all of whom wanted to work together, and other times you had people that thought you should do it all because you had more servants. It was nip and tuck, so to speak.

Q: Now Chris stayed with you in Kampala?

KEELEY: Chris stayed with us in Kampala. Let's say we got back in September. Bob was called home for a month. We were there for a month. It was very scary. There were lots of shots and terrible things going on.

Q: You were there alone! First not letting you come back and then leaving you there.

KEELEY: Leaving me there alone. And you know by that time, the servants were very devoted friends of mine. I was a little worried about them in the beginning because two of them were Kenyan so I thought they could be in the pay of Amin's thugs. But actually since I was feeding them, trying to help their families, and doing many things, we were all in it together and I got them all jobs in Nairobi after we left. You know, there were those that wouldn't go. There's a whole other story about how we treat our servants, our black servants, but anyway, I still correspond with two of them. A wonderful maid who was too timid to leave and she survived; and the elderly gentleman, as I used to call him, died, but died a peaceful death. The others were saved.

The Kenyans went back to Kenya and at least we had no deaths in our immediate family there. And I was looking after the residence servants, too, because they were left for some months with no one to give them anything. Mrs. Melady had left them things like Saltines and I don't know what -- nothing. So they needed supplementary rations, so to speak. (And I think the cook was still there when Gordie Beyer came as ambassador some years later.) By that time, our time in Uganda, we had General Amin bringing down a plane flying for the Peace Corps. Of course the Asians and Israelis had all been expelled. I mean many serious things were going on. I don't mean to say that the only things that happened in Kampala were my own problems. American tourists, especially Jewish-American tourists, were being attacked.

Q: What were Jewish troops doing in Uganda?

KEELEY: No, this was early on. I mean they were just Americans, they weren't Israeli tourists, they were Americans. But their passports were being examined and in just the way they might do in a terroristic airplane. Bob, you see, in March of that year -- in other words four months after I came back from that first evacuation. I know you're interviewing the wives, but it's hard to separate. I have to say what Bob was doing to explain why some of these events would tend to embitter the wife.

Bob told the Department in March of that year, 1973, that he felt that Americans could not continue their work. The people in AID around the country were in danger and were endangering their counterparts, their Ugandan counterparts. The people in the Peace Corps and AID [were in danger] and he felt that the staff should be cut down to a minimum. Now back in Washington they didn't understand this. Why would a chargé try to make his embassy smaller and try to close it?

They sent an inspector out who wouldn't stay at the hotel. He felt it was too dangerous.

He stayed with us and we would watch Uganda television to see what General Amin would be up to. He'd always say, "I admire you people. They've just come down from the trees here and yet you can talk to them, you can live amongst them." This is the kind of inspector they sent. He took a vote in the Embassy, "Do you want to go or stay?"

Well a lot of the TDY people or the communicators -- and I don't want to put all this down, frankly, but let's say the people with less responsibilities who never would be out amongst the populace, would be more or less in the safety of the building, who were getting higher salaries voted that we shouldn't close the Embassy. And you know, the officers and the people with responsible jobs, I mean the Station Chief, the USIS Chief, the AID Director and Bob, would vote to close the post and that's what really should have counted, but it didn't, so we didn't close the post. That was March.

In June, I met Chris and Michal in Athens and kept them there all summer. Michal went back to college and I went back to Kampala with Chris. Bob went home for a month and came back in October. A couple of weeks later, I don't remember, at some stage, it was decided to evacuate us. But we must go out one or two by two so as not to alert General Amin. And so Judy Ringdahl who was pregnant would go first and the Admin Counselor's wife -- maybe she was pregnant. Judy had the youngest children. I can't remember. But we went out just a couple at a time, absolutely disciplined and [committed] to the U.S. Government. Left our things. So everybody was leaving things at our house for a bazaar, knitting and sewing and whatever. I smuggled all those things down to the British in the night. We made a decision amongst ourselves to not even try to take our welfare bank account, that I would just take the money out and we would get it to Ethiopian famine relief. And we did all these things on the Q.T. (quiet). I had to go and collect some bills for a book or something we'd made. We all, all of us literally, had to say we left on "our own". I think very correctly. And we went out to Nairobi. And while there we couldn't dial Kampala. We were told not to use the phone line so we never called our homes in Uganda. And unlike what we had done in Athens for the evacuees, few embassy people helped us. The Lukens were gone, some other people were there.

Our presence was really in effect somewhat resented. We were not very many people. I mean I was the DCM's wife so I was always going in and challenging the Embassy and acting obnoxious because I would hear this bad or that bad story from my different little group. We were a close little group. So I probably didn't help the cause by always asking for things, but on the other hand, I thought they should have been given some help and attention.

But no instructions were given in, say, the medical branch. We had one nine-month pregnant person, we had Judy who had lost a baby at one stage. I mean we just had a number of sad cases. And really, the only people that helped us were people we knew. And I was lucky that I knew a British diplomat and his wife who were very nice to me and Marilyn Jackson's twin sister was married to a Kenyan so I had them. And I had a happy experience in the hotel. They were very nice to me and Chris. And I want to name Marie Burke who was terribly good to us as well.

But it was the kindness of friends. It was nothing that the Embassy did for us. They wouldn't give us any information. As I say, they treated us like pariahs. The press kept trying to get in touch with us and we were told not to speak to the press. We were correct in every respect. I don't think the Embassy behaved well at all.

One night we'd all gone out together for a Japanese dinner and I went back, turned on the radio as was usual and I heard something about subversive American forces expelled or something from Uganda. I didn't know what it was. I waited until morning, stupidly, called the Embassy and nothing. Everything was fine in Kampala. So I went to have my hair done and I ran into [a friend] at dinner and I told her what I had heard and she said she'd heard something, too. And in fact she'd heard that our Marines had been expelled. Well this terrified me because I felt that this was Bob's last defense because he was so visible.

So I went out and said, "I'm going to the Embassy," and I was just walking along in a rage and I kept running into [people]. We knew some Kenyans who were exiled there and -- I mean some Ugandans and some Kenyans and some foreign diplomats. I kept running into people and this time as I walked along, they kept saying, "Is everything all right?" and I kept saying, "Everything's fine." With gritted teeth, I went out to the Embassy and I asked to know something and in effect they said, "It's not up to you to know anything." So I really was furious.

I went back to the hotel and about an hour later I got a call from the secretary of the chargé saying to come in for a briefing. And I said I wouldn't come in for a briefing. That I'd gone to try and find out something and I was now just too upset. I was having lunch. I was in bed and I was just not going to come into the Embassy at that time. That one of our members was coming. Maybe he said I had called. Another one of our group. And I said, "She can tell me whatever you're going to tell her." I mean I've never been so angry in my life. It turned out that the Marines had been expelled. Just a few left, a skeleton staff, Bob and a communicator and that wonderful Patrick Kennedy who was sent out as a young burner, you know, to burn papers. He much later became head of Administration in the State Department.

And so it sounds incredible, but there was going to be the Marine Ball. So our newly expelled Marines arrived which was nice because we met the Marines at the airport and they came to our hotel. And the Marines said that they wanted to join in the Marine Ball with the Nairobi Marines. And the USG were going to take out at the end the last people from Kampala, but before it ended, the Station Chief came to Nairobi. He'd been attacked at night. They didn't know whether any of his guards survived. He described all that to us, his wife and me in Nairobi.

Oh, Bob called me up, I guess, and said this had happened but don't tell us why because she was one of my great friends, the one who had gone to the Embassy to get the information, such as it was. And anyway, we were really scared. So it was I think a Saturday night and those three last ones, Bob, the communicator, and I think his secretary were coming out. It was the night of the Marine Ball. Bob felt very strongly about our

Marines.

Their Marines did not want to have our whole group. And we were not a very big group. I mean people were paying. And the chargé didn't certainly want a hero like Bob to be there. And our Marines said, "All of us or none of us." And so finally the Nairobi Marines gave in and said, "You can have your guests." Which really consisted of the head communicator, a really great guy, and that wonderful secretary and the Station Chiefs wife. We were not a huge group at this time. And Bob left Uganda. He was to get there not until 10 o'clock. The ball started at seven. So he left Uganda in his black tie, not to be a diplomatic black tie but because the Marines would be in uniform, and he to honor them.

Q: And he got there?

KEELEY: He got there quite late. We got there quite late and we sat all together with our group and we were very happy. So then we went back to the hotel. I guess we stayed very late with our group and we went back to the hotel. It was about 3 or 4 in the morning and the phone rang. That wonderful hotel had fallen from private hands, but it was the one right in the middle of town.

Q: The one where you left messages at the Thorn Tree?

KEELEY: Yes, that was the hotel. It was really wonderful to us. Anyway, they called up and they said, "Mrs. Keeley, if you have a man in your room, you're going to have to pay for him." (laughter)

Q: And you said, "With pleasure!" (laughter)

KEELEY: Isn't that funny? Again, so different from today, but "Time Magazine" wanted to put Bob on the cover because he saved everybody. I mean nobody lost their lives, most property saved as instructed, but Bob said no. There were still American missionaries in Uganda who wouldn't leave and shouldn't be endangered.

Q: This was the last time he came out?

KEELEY: Yes.

Q: Left in tuxedo.

KEELEY: Yes. Because of the Marine Ball.

Q: With the flag under his arm?

KEELEY: No, that was John Dean in Cambodia who had the flag. Bob may have brought the flag, but it was in his suitcase. You know what I mean. He didn't have it visible I'm sure. I can't remember, but I don't think he did.

Q: So he left as if he would be coming back?

KEELEY: No, he put the black tie on because he knew he wouldn't have time to go home and change. It was to honor our Marines who had laid their I don't know what's on the line to have our little Kampala group at the Nairobi Marine Ball. Our Marines had said, "They won the best Marines in the area, but their run was all on the flat." That's the kind of rivalry there really was. Our run was uphill and their run was on the flat. You see the Nairobi Marines had said that they would have a Chargé and a Station Chief and not the others. But our Marines said, all or nothing. And Bob -- it sounds stupid now -- but he wore his black tie because he said, "I honor our Marines and they're in their uniform and I'm in my uniform. I don't care how stupid they think I look."

Of course no diplomat except the French had the courage to come out and see Bob off. That's how dangerous he was considered to even his colleagues. So he left Kampala with Joe Chaddic this great communicator. And his wife was nine-months pregnant and having her baby in Nairobi and was our nurse. And that wonderful secretary. And they were the last three. The Station Chief was a Golden Gloves boxer, you see. I was counting on him to save Bob but because of the attack on him, they got him out soonest, which was a few days, I guess, before [Bob]. Anyway, so that was sort of the end of Uganda.

Q: So there you were in Nairobi, the three of you.

KEELEY: We were in Nairobi and Bob was sent off to several African countries because he was going to be the Alternate Director of East African Affairs or something like that. That was his reward for his wonderful work which was not a reward, as you can imagine. During this course, I then discovered that all of our things had been looted and when I tried to find out why, they said, "Well we knew you'd get upset, so we didn't tell you." And then I discovered that the things the secretary alluded to.

Q: These were still in Kampala?

KEELEY: Yes. Bob was told, "Save all the Government china, etc.," which he did. The china and silver and books. He could have, as chargé, had extra air freight and everything, but he would never apply for it because he didn't really think of those regulations. So we did leave everything behind and we did lose everything. All our clothes, all our children's stuff. I mean what can you take out in two suitcases? I was taking Chris's school books, I was saving some photographs. We didn't get extra air freight or anything. Again, because I can't blame it entirely on the Department. It's just material things.

But Bob was one of those people who went by the regulations. He didn't think the Chargé should get all his things out and the rest shouldn't. He could have put our stuff on the train, but how could he think of these things? And they were looting our things. They were looting them because really some of the silver was thrown back in. They were

looting to get papers with compromising information that could play up the United States against Uganda. But nobody else's things were looted, just Bob and this secretary's things were looted. I really had to fight with Nairobi to get her involved. She was on a TDY and I thought it was so unfair to have kept this from us for any length of time.

Q: Did you ever get any of those things?

KEELEY: We got what was left. You won't believe it. We just now got the things. Now the day before Bob left, his Justesen order came. Now he could have abandoned that Justesen order, should have, but didn't. Asked to have it amalgamated, let's say.

Q: So that's (laughs)

KEELEY: No wait. Some of the things came, but that caused me so much trouble. I got investigated plus I had ordered two typewriters. You know this was the Christmas that never took place. And I'd ordered maybe three things of face cream. And so the customs in Baltimore, when it finally came -- three of some kind of -- it was Elizabeth Arden -- they said that I was trying to import these things to sell them in Uganda. I spent the whole summer on top of everything else, the whole summer after we got back, fighting the claim after we got these things that were mostly looted, pieces of silver thrown back into.... They took Bob's suits, of course. They took all the clothes, but they threw a lot of things back. These things were in dregs. But then there was the justice involved. (laughter) And then I was called up by Baltimore customs about bringing all this order to Uganda.

Now I was in Nairobi, but I kept a very dear memory of that hotel and I have certain friends that were so kind and helpful. It was called the New Stanley. And because of Marilyn Jackson's twin sister, Carolyn, who was married to a famous new-world politician, she used to come and see me and he used to come and see me. All the staff who were mostly Luos treated me like a goddess because I knew Tom Okelo-Odongo. I mean I never even had to lock my room. Everybody else had to. Even then there was so much thievery going on. The streets of Kenya and Nairobi. So we had our good times.

And this one Greek friend of mine who was married to a British diplomat sent me flowers almost every day and told me her husband had said, "Please stop doing that, because people are going to start thinking that there's something between you." (laughter) She said, "I'm just trying to cheer up her life." Oh and someone called my room. You know I had to get Hotel Security involved. Someone could obviously see me somehow through one of the windows and that was a period when you get involved, but you get edgy. And the Press was always following us. And Bob didn't want his picture on anything. It would just agitate General Amin all the more.

There were some missionaries that we believed who had spent their whole lives in Uganda and there were some tourists and some business people who didn't pay attention. Of course all the British were staying over, the French. Everybody wanted to pick up all the pieces of American interests, were putting up with General Amin, and the British

finally had to close a few years later.

Q: And admit all the Indian community to the UK.

KEELEY: Anyway, so after Kampala, we went back to Washington. Bob became what was the Alternate Director to work on Ethiopia which was collapsing. He got malaria which wasn't diagnosed. He hadn't taken his pills properly, I think, because we'd had so much in the way of anti-malaria suppressant in our career that we sometimes didn't take it because it gave us such headaches. We had a lot of after-effects. He was at the Washington Hospital Center. They couldn't diagnose what he had. And luckily I heard over the loudspeaker they were calling Dr. Aaron Primack and I said to Bob's doctor, "I know Dr. Primack. We knew him in Uganda. He was a cancer researcher working on Kaposi's sarcoma." This was before the AIDS thing. All that was destroyed, all that research, by General Amin and lots of other good research at a good hospital for a great university. Our doctor asked Dr. Primack, "If you had a patient with these syndromes, etc.?" And that's how they finally got to malaria.

At that point, John Dean asked him to go to Cambodia. My heart sank. We had Chris who was wrongly diagnosed as a manic-depressive. It's a long, long story, but it turned out really to be drug addiction. So he had many, many problems with schools and behavior and lack of his father being around in a lot of cases and again because Bob had to leave for Cambodia early. You know, as soon things went well.

Q: What was he, DCM?

KEELEY: He was DCM. He got there in about June or July. Chris went to boarding school in the fall. Children were not allowed in Cambodia. But they were going to make a dispensation at Christmastime. Anyway, I guess I got there in October, I don't remember exactly. It was very interesting, I'm very glad I had that experience, but it was rather short-lived, dangerous, frightening, intense.

Q: Was that during Pol Pot?

KEELEY: No, we were not open then. This was as the Khmer Rouge were approaching. Yes, it was the Pol Pot area in the sense that the Khmer Rouge were circling the city and rocketing the city. One thing and another. And in December, while Bob was Chargé he got a bleeding ulcer from taking aspirin and drinking too much Alka Seltzer but they thought it was something much more serious. And there was a great French doctor in this horrible hospital that was being bombed and eventually he was evacuated. But he wouldn't accept evacuation because he didn't want to leave. John wasn't there, John Dean.

Eventually he had to leave and he was evacuated to the States. So I did see things that I thought should be done for the medical evacuees because we landed with our dear friend Bob Miller who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary who came out to meet Bob because he really was kind of worried, and helped us. But the next day, we had to go home. Our

house was being lived in by our daughter who had taken a year off from college because she thought we'd be home and then we went to Cambodia. Then two other people we had rented half the house to. And we had to go home and then back into the Department and wait around the medical branch until this desperately ill person could be admitted to Sibley Hospital. And they thought he had a really bad liver situation because of certain x-rays they had taken. It was a long story. He was terribly, terribly weak because this happened more or less on top of the malaria.

Of course he had to get back into the fray. So a month later we went back and two weeks later our AID Director became desperately ill. And he didn't get evacuated. Every decision had to be made. It was just a very terrible situation. He was taken to Bangkok where he died a very short time after that.

We had promised John Dean that if he allowed us in Cambodia, he wanted his wife there and he said, "I'll accept any wife who speaks French to work in the refugee camps." So we did, the few of us that were there. We worked in the refugee camps. And we did whatever we could. Martine Dean was really wonderful. We had a very fine, small group. We had two darling young Military Attachés' wives.

We all went off in the Attaché's plane and evacuated to Bangkok. We all went together and we found an Embassy that really didn't want us around and we had some of our own members there. But nobody really gave us the support we needed. The Military eventually helped us to set up, allowed us to have these phone calls to our husbands. And they were allowed to come out twenty-four hours at a time. This was again an extremely difficult -- it was a war situation. We're not talking about just the wife should go and sit in Bangkok because the conditions were unpleasant. It was a war. And again, we were just so terrified for our husbands.

And then we were even more terrified when we learned that they were going to be kept there an extra week. That Kissinger, after months of refusing to let John Dean do certain negotiations or talk to certain people, had suddenly decided that everybody should be evacuated but John and Bob. Can you envision what happened later? The Press would not believe what the Embassy and all the others were telling them, that the Khmer Rouge were going to have a blood bath. And Kissinger wanted John and Bob to stay there. And there was a phone call which Bob had with Phil Habib. Well anyway, I have to not get into all of the Cambodian thing. But you'll see that Kissinger will never write his volume on Cambodia because he can't tell the truth. And John has it all. So many sad things.

But anyway we were there. And again, John (the ambassador) wanted us to go out and be evacuated and set the good example. The American Embassy was responsible for quite a few embassies. He felt that if his wife and I left, it would encourage other wives to go. Well most wives stayed as long as they could, understandably. They wanted to be with their husbands. They didn't have their children there and they felt that it was better to be together than to be apart and chewing your hands in Bangkok.

Anyway, in Bangkok, we couldn't get information as usual. I remember I was robbed. I

was paying extra money out of my allowance to stay in a very good hotel with adjoining rooms with the Australian chargés' wife. In spite of that, I was completely robbed of all my jewelry. And what worried me, I had two suitcases of John's in there with a lot of his things and had very, very little help from the Embassy Security Officer. The hotel said that a moustached man had been seen lately in my company. (laughter)

We just laughed so much over some of these things. I mean it was so annoying and tiring. I had to go down and sit in these Thai Police stations by myself with no translator. And once -- again at a bridge game -- I told an American Colonel about this who was absolutely horrified. He sent me two Thai-speaking Sergeants and they talked to the hotel and the hotel became very crest-fallen and wanted to pay my bill and give me a free [room]. Of course I couldn't accept, you know. I mean I wish I had. Bob wouldn't let me.

And so the Colonel got me permission to move to the military hotel which was called the Chao Piya where I was right next door to the darling military attachés' wives who repeated the wonderful thing that had been said in Nairobi. That we evacuees were treated by the Embassy worse than tourists. History repeated itself.

And then we discovered -- we were at some kind of a party and some senior wife of the Nairobi Embassy said something to us to the effect that, "Soon you'll see your husbands." And we said, "Well what do you mean?" "We can't tell you, but we know that soon..." We said, "Well we should know if you know." And this angered us, so once again we went on the march with the USIS wife. We marched around to every office and pounded the doors. We talked to the people, to the different counselors, and said, "This is terrible. How can you treat us this way with all we're going through? It isn't fair." And nobody paid any attention to us really.

And then one day we were called and told that they were coming. I mean we knew that something was happening. And I was offered transport to the airport. The others weren't and so I tried to get the others transport. They had to take a taxi to the airport. All these government cars went out empty. I mean just little things like that, it was constant. And again, you see, because the Ambassador's wife had gone to stay with the General's wife. Her husband really wanted her off the scene because of the Press. I thought I had to be in a way the pound around the table. You see none of these people in Nairobi would believe that our husbands were in danger. And we couldn't stand this. I don't know if you know Bob Skiff, but Bob Skiff and his wife Christian were wonderful to us.

Q: Oh he's down at DACOR, I've talked to him, but I don't really know him.

KEELEY: Well he was really wonderful, and she. And they took me once to Pattaya Beach or one of the places outside Bangkok. And I simply couldn't stand being away from any kind of hopeful communication. I couldn't visit Thailand, I couldn't. . . . I mean what can you do in those circumstances? Two months of just living, terrible. Now there the Press would contact us and take us out to lunch or dinner. But we didn't know anything, so it was just a question. Of course I think they, too, felt. . . . Their wives were away or whatever.

Q: So you really weren't in Cambodia very long?

KEELEY: No I was only there a total of five months or four months.

Q: Did all of your things go there, too?

KEELEY: Well no, thanks to Martine. She told me to take a minimum of things. I moved into this house that Gaetana Enders had decorated to the hilt. So that there was everything that one could possibly dream of. Wonderful servants. And thanks to I think -- I hate to be boastful -- but a memo I wrote to John about servants being our first line of security and defense. It was a question of getting their salaries raised and Martine was upset that John wouldn't raise the salaries. He was trying to keep the cost of living down and applying it to himself as well as everyone else. But her best person was going to leave and she really needed him because even in the middle of the war, there was a lot to do. I don't mean exactly socially, I mean representationally.

And then John decreed that his household staff and our household staff as well as the Embassy employees, because I kept saying they should be treated as members of the Embassy, could go. So I'm happy to say that we're still in touch with all five. Three of them are here. We just went to the wedding of this little child. And I had to make -- because our house was rocketed -- I made a little bomb shelter. Anyway, I had marshmallows and Kool-Aid and things like that. And that little child had been there. And their families used to come in from the countryside. By the time Bob left, their families were sleeping all over the house and Martine had left me two big boxes for personal effects.

We would leave as John instructed us, but Martha Olmsted, the widow of the AID Director, wanted Tom, who had died, to have a service. She wanted a memorial service for Tom in Phnom Penh in the Catholic Church in Phnom Penh where Tom had been really a hero to many of the Cambodians and his own staff. And we wouldn't leave until that service took place. I think we had the service that day. And Martine had given me these two boxes to urge me into really preparing myself to go again. And the servants filled it all with the Government silver at the end. All the Government silver was saved. Nobody else saved their government silver. I tried to get them a commendation. Because they were leaving their families, their country, they could have stolen everything. Bob wanted them to steal the Government silver, frankly.

And of course Gaetana Enders stuff, all that stuff she brought for the house, jade centerpieces and God knows what, went to the Khmer Rouge. But the servants saved everything. In Bangkok, they came there and they said, "Where is that teapot?" and there it was. I said, "I'm taking this centerpiece and these two candlesticks which I ordered in silver plate from the ORE and I'm paying for them out of my claim and I'm keeping them on my table forever and ever."

Q: Oh Lou, honestly! I must say that I have never done an interview like this before.

KEELEY: We were in Bangkok and we had some pretty funny stories there. But we were again a close group because by law the people in Cambodia were limited to 200, and if 201 were there at night, one had to be flown to Bangkok. And that included military, AID, everybody. So we had some pretty wonderful people. You know, a few unusual people.

Q: So then when you were evacuated from there the last time, you came back here and Bob worked with refugees.

KEELEY: Yes, that was another thing that I felt was wrong in the sense that he wasn't in any mental or physical shape to have to take on those hours and everything. But this was a power play of a certain Foreign Service officer who wanted to get out of the job. And in fact lied to the Department and said that his wife had recently died and his mother-less child needed him at home. But he just saw it as a dead-end job and he wanted a job within the Department which had even longer hours, but which was far more high profile. But Bob very much enjoyed working for Julia Taft. She is a very fine person. He enjoyed the work. It was just terrific travel, never home with the family. Our son desperately needed him at the time. Again, I'm sorry to say I felt very resentful of the Department.

But John, had it not been for John Dean, who went to bat for every single person on the staff whether he thought that they were hotshots or not, in some cases, to try to get them a good onward assignment. I mean he pounded tables, he went to see people. I mean in every instance. He went to USIS or he went to the military. I don't say he said make everybody high-ranking or anything. But he just made sure that everybody went on to something.

Now they tried to send Bob on to Madagascar, but his transfer was refused because he'd served in Cambodia, so that's why he went to Mauritius which was 27 months of paradise, very easy hours, not too much work, just wonderful. And nice pay.

Q: And by that time you really were settled and it was long past '72, so as you said, if you had volunteers, that was fine. If you didn't, you just sort of went with the flow as to how the women reacted.

KEELEY: If they wanted to do something or they didn't want to do something. When we got there, there was a very good DCM and wife but they left very soon after we got there. I didn't go there for the first several months because I had Chris. He had been diagnosed as a manic-depressive. He had several horrible episodes. He had been to Johns Hopkins, going through quite a lot of terrible things. Bob had to leave because there was a big conference of the OAU [Organization of African Unity]. Anyway, Amin was going to be there and they particularly wanted Bob there at the time. The Entebbe raid happened just as Amin returned to Uganda -- he slept through it.

So until Chris was cleared by the Department and his doctors, we did not go to Mauritius. couple of months or so after he went there. Oh, we had to find a doctor, a psychiatrist,

and there was a very good Chinese psychiatrist there who totally disagreed with the guy at Johns Hopkins and he was totally right.

Q: So you took Chris to Mauritius with you?

KEELEY: Chris to Mauritius and after he left, he went home to American University. His problems didn't really get solved until we were almost leaving Zimbabwe and that was five years or so later. Because he had to accept the fact that he had to get off drugs and alcohol. It was something. And if you've been in difficult posts, you haven't had much counseling available. We had quite a lot of periods where the father figure is either terribly tied up or not there because of not only evacuations, but also demands of the job. And I think that he's the one of our two who suffered the most, but probably the one who would now say he suffered less.

Our daughter is the one that thinks of certain deprivations -- and I've heard this from a number of Foreign Service kids. In fact our daughter was the first person of her generation, or a young generation to document some of her thoughts. She wrote her thesis at Princeton on Problems of Geographic Mobility in Foreign Service Children.

Q: I remember hearing about this, yes.

KEELEY: And lots of people took an interest in that thesis. In fact a New York Times reporter cribbed it, cribbed a lot of it. And the interesting thing is that she (our daughter) thought she was going to find more problems than she did. But because she was working with a university population, in other words kids that had gotten out of high school and into college, they were the more successful ones but she had the most heart-rending stories. You could hardly read them from these children who poured out everything to her. Basically these were not the damaged ones, the most damaged ones.

Q: But that's interesting that she feels deprived.

KEELEY: Yes, she feels that her father didn't have enough time for her. She feels that even things like -- well of course the leaving of her friends. It's hard to pinpoint exactly, I suppose. A different life than other children. But yet she really had an easier time. A lot easier time because she was always with us until she went to college. And I think she felt she was made to conform, to be the DCM's daughter, the Ambassador's daughter, and she really wasn't because she wasn't with us that much when Bob got to the high rank. But I think she resented very much that I wouldn't let her wear blue jeans in the Embassy in Athens. Athens I, if you want to call it that. And silly things like that. But as far as the big picture, I think she's happy that she had different, mind-opening, cultural possibilities.

Q: What is she doing now?

KEELEY: She had a ten-month trip after graduation, six months of it with another Foreign Service child whom she knew in school. They had a very interesting time and

both became Buddhists and they're Buddhists to this day. American Buddhists which is a very different kind of thing. Most of them are into meditation and they do not dress in [robes]. But you know, beliefs in certain aspects of spiritual life.

Q: My son-in-law's cousin is a Buddhist.

KEELEY: She's an editor, a copy editor one day at the Washington Post and two days at U.S. News. She was on the Op-ed page of the Post, but when she had her second child, Meg Greenfield didn't want to give her her job back. And she could have fought it because she had every entitlement as a young woman. I mean as a young maternity-leave person who had never taken an extra day, who had a very good record. We didn't want her to fight it, so she doesn't want to work on weekends, and she decided she wanted more time to spend with the children. But her husband is a lawyer. Left his job just as the worst of the recession started. He's been out of work for several months. It's just lucky she had those jobs. She's done a lot of free-lance work. But now he's starting another job May 15th and he'll be doing research and other small legal jobs. And things are getting [better].

No, she's probably one of the Foreign Service [success stories]. She was magna cum laude at Princeton, had a very brilliant career all along. She's a very responsible child and always has been. Coped wonderfully with all these changes in schools. She had an awful lot of changes as did Chris. But her changes did not come with these evacuations. You can't blame everything on evacuation by a long shot, but I think it has affected us deeply. But a military wife would be in the same position. I don't think they'd have the dangers.

Q: Truly, we've done 130-some interviews and I've never seen one like this before.

KEELEY: It just happens to be. I think if you interviewed Judy Ringdahl who is a younger person, you'd find that they had an awful lot. I mean we were together in three posts. We were together in Uganda initially. She was quite a young wife. She then had to go to Accra, Ghana. And I think at some stage she went through Chad. And then we were together in Mauritius which was quite nice. And then we were together in Zimbabwe unexpectedly when the person her husband was brought in to replace had to leave sooner than planned.

Q: Just to summarize Mauritius, Zimbabwe and Athens, how did you find the staff members? We've already said that sometimes they wanted to volunteer and sometimes they wanted to have nothing. But did you for instance set up the ruling that a number of ambassadors did that the officer has to come to the receptions at the Residence? The wife is invited if she is willing to work. If she's not willing to work, she's not invited. Did you ever do anything like that?

KEELEY: Many times I wanted to give them the kind of manners, teaching that we had had with Mrs. Mills in a nice way and I must say Irene Wright, too. And Irene Wright said something that has kept in my mind all the time. This is, "You are a hostess at this house. This is a part of America. You want the people to feel at home, so if you see

something going wrong, feel free to correct it in a polite and general way. Please make the people feel at home. Feel at home yourself so you make the people feel at home.”

Of course Zimbabwe was a special experience in the sense that it was a brand-new post. We were all under-equipped, we all had to share. People were really very generous. I don't say everyone was, but there was a lot of support and a lot of people who wanted to work together. Whenever you have a small situation, it's much easier. In Athens, I was just so busy. There were some wonderfully helpful wives there at one stage. At another stage, they weren't and I just didn't bother with them. The one thing that bothered me somewhat was that I felt at times a certain feeling that they wanted me to be den mother as well as everything else. And I think without any of their help, I just didn't feel that I could. Because I was in a country where I was soothing Greek feathers at all times in the sense that there are always people when you serve in a country where they are your friends, you can't necessarily invite over all the time just because you can't. I mean you have too much to do. And so you're worrying more in a way about those local feathers of the people you're representing your country to than you're worrying [about your own staff].

Had it been a situation like Cambodia or Uganda, yes, I think you have to really worry about each other a lot. In those situations. Even Zimbabwe, a brand-new post where some of us didn't have enough sweaters and there were things like that. But Athens, especially a post that I had lived in without many advantages in the beginning, in not-government housing and not government looking after, I just didn't feel that that was something I could take on.

Q: You didn't have to make it part of your job.

KEELEY: Yes.

Q: Harare, is that the capital of Zimbabwe? The one thing that maybe you don't want to put in, but place and date of birth?

KEELEY: 1/3/30 in New York City.

Q: And another thing you didn't put -- profession. Do you want to put "Foreign Service spouse" or "None" as a protest. Some people put "None" as a protest.

KEELEY: No, but I think I might have had a profession had I been in an easier post or not had these traumatic evacuations, because now I say to myself, "Well, you're 62 years old." I've always wanted to get a degree in social work. And I'm torn between trying to look into doing it and not doing it, you know what I mean? I'm tired, I'm burned out. I don't find that same urge I had in every post. I'm not going to go into these details, but really, in every post I did some serious volunteer work. On my own. Nobody made me do it, I didn't go as the "blank's wife" or anything like that. It was very rewarding to me, very. I feel that that's one of my fortes. I speak languages and I think I'm good with people. I would like to do that kind of thing. When I think, really just think of the

transport, the study, the change of my schedule, I could not do just what I want to do. I'm not going back.

Q: That's just exactly the way I feel. I could walk over to GW, but I'm not sure I want to spend that much money. I could use a degree in Women's Studies and Sociology if I'm going to go on with this project. And Guido tells me I don't need it. I must say he's very nice about that.

KEELEY: Well I don't think you do.

Q: It would help though if I had something, if just for your own. .. But I'd like to go when I get there. I don't want to slog over to GW in the snow and sleet, and I don't want Guido to have to take me on the mornings that he's home. He has his days at the Smithsonian and then those other days are his. He goes to the Smithsonian on the days that I am involved in this, Monday and Wednesday, and then we have Tuesday and Thursday to do our own thing. Well I'm usually working and he does his thing and then we go shopping, grocery shopping, and we've sort of slipped into a very nice pattern. I don't want to disrupt that.

KEELEY: I don't think you should because now, because we couldn't just concentrate on family, you could say it. Our younger generations say it, and I don't think to excess either.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Spouse: Robert V. Keeley, son of James Hugh Keeley, who spent 41 years in FS

Spouse Entered FS: 1/1956

Left Service: 9/1989

You Entered FS: Same

Left Service:

Status: Spouse of Retired AEP

Posts:

1956-1958	Washington, DC
7/58-10/60	Amman, Jordan*
11/60-6/61	Temporary duty Washington, DC (Congo Desk)
6/61-6/63	Bamako, Mall, Political Officer
7/63-8/65	Washington, DC Desk Officer for Ruanda, Burundi and Congo, Brazzaville
1965-66	NIPA Fellow Stanford University
8/66-7/70	Athens, Greece, Political Officer
9/70-5/71	Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, Princeton University
7/71-11/73	DCM, Kampala, Uganda*(post closed)
12/73-5/74	Washington, DC Alt. Dir. EA Affairs & Ethiopian Desk Officer

6/74-4/75 DCM Phnom Penh, Cambodia* (post closed)
6/75-5/76 Washington, DC Deputy Director Committee to Resettle Vietnamese and
Cambodian Refugees
6/76-9/78 Ambassador to Port Louis, Mauritius
10/78-5/80 Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs
6/80-3/84 Ambassador to Harare, Zimbabwe
3/84-4/85 FSI and other temporary jobs
10/85-7/89 Ambassador to Athens, Greece
9/89 Retired from FS

*Evacuations, 5 in all

Spouse's Position: AEP

Place/Date of birth: January 3, 1930- New York City

Maiden Name: Louise Benedict Schoonmaker

Parents (Name, Profession):

John D. Schoonmaker, shipbuilder

Schools (Prep, University):

Masters School, Oldfields School 1947
Smith 1951

Date/Place of Marriage: June 23, 1951, Kingston, NY

Profession: FS spouse

Children:

Michal Keeley Frank, Princeton 1976, Editor at US News
Christopher Keeley, Corcoran School of Art 1981, Photographer

Volunteer and Paid Positions held:

A. At Post:

Too many to list; paid only once for filling in as translator, Embassy, Mall, and once for one of many cost of living surveys I did at insistence of other participants.

B. In Washington, D.C.

Mostly volunteer work with foreigners or for political party of my choice

End of interview