

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

RAND BEERS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not completed and was not edited by Mr. Beers.]

Q: Okay, today is the 12th of May, 2003. This is an interview with Rand Beers. This is done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. What do you go by?

BEERS: Rand, Randy.

Q: How come you got Rand rather than Randolph or something like that?

BEERS: It's my mother's maiden name. My christened name was Robert Rand Beers. No one ever called me Robert.

Q: So you just sort of dropped it.

BEERS: Over the course of the years, dropped it.

Q: My official documents all say Charles S. Kennedy. Everybody knows me as Stu Kennedy and when I got into this business I started calling myself Charles Stuart Kennedy which I never did before. I think if people try to look me up one way or the other I thought I'd have both out there.

BEERS: I went back for the first time in my life to Robert when I retired figuring that the last thing I needed to do was screw up social security because I had several different names. I'm back to Robert Rand Beers or Robert R. Beers.

Q: Well, let's start kind of at the beginning. Can you tell me when and where you were born?

BEERS: I was born in the District of Columbia on the 30th of November, 1942.

Q: Right in the middle of the war.

BEERS: Right.

Q: Well, tell me first on your father's side, where did the Beers come from and what was your father up to?

BEERS: The Beers were basically from New England and my father was born in Boston, but that's really not representative of his immediate family. They were Methodist ministers and their parishes were in the Midwest, so he essentially grew up in Illinois, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas and went to Nebraska Wesleyan just before the Depression, came to Washington, thought of himself as a writer, actor. He worked for the Department of Agriculture among other things and in some of his acting he met my mother and he was a graduate of Syracuse. She is the distant resident in my family and they got married in the '30s and then along came me in 1942.

Q: What about on your mother's side, the name is Rand then. Where do they come from?

BEERS: The name is Rand. They are also from New England and upstate New York. My maternal grandfather was the son of a Congregationalist preacher and was born in Barnett, Vermont. My maternal grandmother was born in upstate New York, I believe in Constable. My grandfather went to the University of Vermont, met my grandmother, they moved to Washington in 1906 to work for the Department of Agriculture and stayed here the rest of their lives.

Q: Did your father fall into the preaching mode?

BEERS: No, although maybe some of it rubbed off in his desire to be a writer, although he really never succeeded in that line of work other than a few books that he ghostwrote for other people. He was a public affairs officer for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in his last job.

Q: And your mother, what was she up to?

BEERS: She was basically a housewife although she had various short term jobs teaching. She was a secretary for several years. She was trained as a speech therapist and she did that occasionally, but not really. Essentially she was a housewife. My parents were divorced when I was four. My mother remarried a naval officer whose name is Charles Appleby. So, although I was born in Washington and lived in the Washington area the first four years, we then moved when my mother remarried all over the United States.

Q: Well, just going back to your mother and your father. You say they met acting. What sort of acting was this?

BEERS: It was a group called the Roadside Theater. It was during the Depression and it was one of the extracurricular activities that they both enjoyed.

Q: So, you really didn't grow up in the District did you or not?

BEERS: No, not really, no. The first four years and then my stepfather moved back when I was in the 7th grade, so 7th, 8th and 9th grades were here. We went away in 10th grade. Then we came back my senior year in high school and lived for about five more years. Then we moved back in 1971 when I joined the Foreign Service.

Q: Well, elementary school, where did you start out?

BEERS: That was in Jacksonville, Florida. Then I finished first grade in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Q: What was your stepfather's specialty?

BEERS: He was a supply officer in the navy. He retired as a captain.

Q: Yes. Were you brought up kind of as a navy brat?

BEERS: Oh, yes. I think that's absolutely correct.

Q: Well, it's navy junior, excuse me, it's an army brat.

BEERS: Right.

Q: When you started out you say in Jacksonville, how did you find school? How did you take to school at an early age?

BEERS: I always liked school. I mean I found school an engaging process. My mother and stepfather were both very committed to education and so I got a lot of reinforcement for doing well in school and I liked school and I did well in school.

Q: Were you a reader?

BEERS: I was a reader although I wouldn't say I was a sight reader and it took me sort of the first half of first grade to figure it out. Then I was fine after that. Not a phonetics reader.

Q: When you started elementary school, what things interested you? Do you recall?

BEERS: I always loved math and history.

Q: How did you find sort of moving from school to school, I mean moving from Jacksonville to Indianapolis?

BEERS: I thought it was an exciting and wonderful adventure. The notion of going to a new place every couple of years, seeing new things and doing new things and meeting new people. Sort of like getting to try on lots of different clothes.

Q: What about did you notice a difference between the schools in Jacksonville down in Florida and in the South going to Indianapolis in Indiana?

BEERS: No, because I really wasn't in Jacksonville long enough. I mean it was really like three months in first grade. I did kindergarten in Jacksonville, also, but my stepfather was only there for nine months since we lived in three or four different houses. I went to three different schools in that short period of time and then we moved to Indianapolis. That's sort of when my life stabilized.

Q: What does a naval officer do in Indianapolis?

BEERS: There was a naval Norden plant where they made the Norden bombsight which is where the main bombsight was made during the Second World War. They did other things then, but that was what their claim to fame was. It's probably no longer a military base. It's probably closed during one of the base closings, although I can't tell you that for sure.

Q: How long were you in Indianapolis?

BEERS: Two years. The rest of first grade, second and then the first part of third grade.

Q: Then where did you go?

BEERS: Then we moved to Honolulu, to Pearl Harbor I should say.

Q: That must have been, this was in the.

BEERS: This was right as the Korean War began.

Q: This must have been rather exciting.

BEERS: Oh, it was fabulous for a kid. I mean there were all kinds of places to go and my mother was pretty open in allowing me to go wherever I wanted to go. I could get around on the bus. I had a bicycle. We'd ride all over the place. There were some old military encampments that were no longer occupied that we would go and explore. Swimming pools, beaches. It was a wonderful place for a kid to live.

Q: Did you mess around in the naval yard or not?

BEERS: Yes, rode all over the naval yard. I mean all the swimming pools or almost all of the swimming pools were actually on the naval base and the PX was on the naval base. We had dependent ID cards and we could go on the naval base as long as we didn't get in the way of anything.

Q: Well, there's nothing like having the navy to play around with as a kid.

BEERS: Oh, right, it was fascinating.

Q: How did you find school there?

BEERS: It was interesting. One memory is I moved at the point in the third grade when borrowing was being taught in subtraction. So the first few weeks that I was in class I would put zeros down for any case in which the number below was larger than the number above until the teacher did a little remedial explanation on what the concept of borrowing was. Then I got it. I had a wonderful teacher in 4th grade, Mrs. Masaku, a very genial person and always supportive of students who wanted to learn. I had a hard-nosed teacher named Miss Wong in 5th grade. She was very good at English and it was good for me to have a teacher like that at that point because English was never my best subject.

Q: No, there's nothing better than have somebody who doesn't take nonsense particularly in English I think.

BEERS: Yes. I didn't have that opportunity again until the last two years of high school on my way to prep school.

Q: In Hawaii did you get involved in sort of maybe war and that sort of thing or were you just being a kid?

BEERS: Well, to some extent, yes. The Arizona, the Utah were still there at that point. They had friends on Ford Island and we'd go over and see what happened there and other places around in terms of the history side. The elementary school we went to was called Pearl Harbor Elementary School. It was basically for dependent children. It was the largest elementary school west of New York City, 2,000 kids.

Q: Good heavens.

BEERS: It was definitely a lot of navy stuff, although we had the air force base, Hickam Air Force Base, adjacent to Pearl Harbor. I guess there probably were air force kids who went there. I don't know where the army kids went. There was an army base on the island also. My stepfather started off at Pearl Harbor, but he ended up at the Naval Air Station which is Barber's Point which was quite a ways away although I think the kids were all bused.

Q: I know people who have gone to school in Hawaii said that they had a real problem, that things were sort of the regular public schools, sort of conflicts with the native Hawaiians who were usually a lot bigger and one was interested in education and it sort of caused tension.

BEERS: There may have been some kids who were Hawaiian, but they would have had to be dependents. Where we did have Asian or Polynesian students, they tended to be either from the Philippines or from American Samoa who were allowed to join the navy. American Samoa is American. In the Philippines, after the Second World War, there was

never any restriction on Philippine citizens joining the navy although they mostly ended up as mess stewards.

Q: Yes.

BEERS: In every class I was in we had several students who came from that kind of a background.

Q: You were there at Pearl Harbor for how long?

BEERS: Two and a half years, so I started third and finished fifth grade.

Q: Then where did you go?

BEERS: A place called Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, a naval supply depot between Carlisle and Harrisburg. It's the largest supply depot on the East Coast. I then went to a rural elementary school for 6th grade and started 7th grade.

Q: How did you find that?

BEERS: The 6th grade was somewhat limited. I had come from a background which was a lot more worldly, international, and the kids there were pretty much foreign kids except for those of us who lived on the base and I was the only 6th grader who lived on the base. It was a good social experience though because I had to adapt to a totally different environment from anything that I had ever experienced before. Indianapolis was not a central city, but was a suburban school. Pearl Harbor was a cosmopolitan school by any measure. I still did well in 6th grade and I had friends, but that was unusual. Seventh grade then things changed because it was a brand new school for me with the newness of Chaining classes and different teachers in the same day and all that.

Q: Did you get down to Gettysburg much?

BEERS: Oh, yes, two or three times with the Boy Scout troop that I was in.

Q: I was just remembering there's a Mechanicsburg Road. It's one of the main arteries that goes around Gettysburg. It's something out of the corner of my Civil War history. Then from there, whence?

BEERS: That was when we moved back to Washington and lived in Arlington. Finished 7th, 8th, 9th and started 10th grade.

Q: Now this would have been from when to when?

BEERS: From if we went, we would have left in '57 so it would have been probably '54.

Q: You know, was this around the time when Virginia went in for its massive resistance?

BEERS: Oh, yes.

Q: Here you came from I assume schools that didn't have any of this segregation stuff.

BEERS: There were no blacks. No, I take that back. There were no blacks in 6th grade. There were blacks in the high school that I went to. Yes, let me get the dates exactly right, but massive resistance was an issue there. We moved in '55 and we left in '57. We were there for about two and a half years.

Q: What happened to you all?

BEERS: My memory is that there were no blacks in my junior high school in 8th and 9th grade. When we went to high school to start 10th grade that would have been in the fall of '57 we had blacks who were in the high school at that point in time.

Q: Which high school did you go to?

BEERS: It was Washington & Lee.

Q: Washington & Lee.

BEERS: They had gone to segregated junior high schools and I guess at that point that's when they integrated. It was a pretty vague memory. I mean I do remember segregated bathrooms in places, but it wasn't a really vivid memory. Much more when I was in college.

Q: How did you find coming back to Arlington, back to the Washington area?

BEERS: I loved it. My father lived here. My mother's parents live here. It was a place I could maneuver around on the bus or on bicycles and I had a really good group of friends. The schools were really good and I just loved it.

Q: Let's talk about school. What sort of things were you particularly interested in?

BEERS: By that time it was math, history and science basically. This was the era of Sputnik and I fancied myself going to be an astronaut.

Q: How about reading?

BEERS: I read a lot of just big old history book texts or historical novels. I got to be interested in science fiction during that period.

Q: Because you were coming a little bit after the great period of what was it amazing stories and those wonderful pulp magazines.

BEERS: Right. I never really got interested in magazines. I liked full-length novels better. A friend of mine suggest that I read an Arthur Clark book and that got me started and then Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov, all the greats from that period.

Q: Oh, yes. In high school how far did you go in high school?

BEERS: I went to the start of 10th grade and then we moved again.

Q: Where did you go then?

BEERS: Argentia, Newfoundland, there's a naval air station there. It was one of the bases that Roosevelt got in the great destroyer deal.

Q: Fifty destroyers for British Commonwealth bases.

BEERS: Yes. Our navy flew anti-submarine warfare detection aircraft. It was called a P2; the current version is called a P3 although it has been modified numerous times. They would go looking for Russian subs between Newfoundland and the Azores. The flight was called the barrier. They would fly the barrier. Sometimes they would also fly up to Iceland and look for them there, but that was basically the reason for the base. I finished 10th grade there. It was the first year that they had a high school. It was a navy high school staffed by the navy school system. They had correspondence courses where it was pretty small. The graduating class was three that year and it wasn't a very good education. My parents decided that I should come back to Washington and go to prep school here. I came back and went to Episcopal High School for 11th and 12th grades in Alexandria.

Q: How was Newfoundland? I've flown over it it doesn't look like much.

BEERS: What I remember was a cold and sort of barren environment, not barren in the sense that there were no trees. There were trees, but they were all stunted. It's like when you get to the top of the White Mountains where the wind blows so hard that the tallest pine that you find up there is maybe four feet high. It was the same up there. The base was in the middle of a fishing area. There wasn't much to do on the base except go to the movies or go to the gym and skate. St. Johns was 90 miles away and the occasional school field trips were there. I was glad to come back.

Q: You went to Episcopal prep school?

BEERS: Yes.

Q: What was it like and this would be what in the late '50s?

BEERS: This would be starting in the fall of '58 and graduating in the spring of 1960. This was a southern prep school and for a number of people who sent their kids to this school it was also a haven against desegregation, there is no question about that. The prep

school was the oldest prep school in the South, and a lot of kids who went there had parents or grandparents, fathers or grandfathers who had gone there. It was all male.

Q: Only male.

BEERS: At that point it was all male and it was all white. In 1968 when the first black student came there we alumni received letters in the mail indication that, and there was an article in the New York Times that the school had integrated. It is now a coed preparatory school. It had a companion girls school called St. Agnes. I don't know if that still exists.

Q: Did you find yourself a little at odds with it coming from your background and all?

BEERS: I think I was pretty naïve at that point. I really don't think I developed a social consciousness until I moved to college.

Q: I was sort of on the same thing. Well, how did you find the school?

BEERS: The school was exactly what I needed. It was a disciplined environment with high educational standards, small classes. They taught me how to write.

Q: In history was it a southern history?

BEERS: I took U.S. History my junior year and they squeezed in U.S. Government at the end of the class so that at least we had that. It was not accredited in the state of Virginia because it didn't have a separate year of government. It was a well-established prep school, so they couldn't have cared whether they were accredited in the state of Virginia. They had their curriculum and they taught it. While I had foreign languages before, that's where I first got real foreign language training. Science courses were okay. Math was excellent.

Q: Were you still pursuing a sort of dual track, math and history or social science?

BEERS: Yes. Although I guess I spent more time and effort on the math and the science. I really only took American History because the senior year in most high schools would have been American government and I took World History in 10th grade in Newfoundland. It really wasn't something that I did and at that point in my life I wanted to go to West Point.

Q: You graduated from Episcopal?

BEERS: I graduated from Episcopal, yes.

Q: Why West Point?

BEERS: Being raised on military bases I thought of the military as a career. I was much more interested in land warfare than naval warfare to the extent that anybody in high

school knew anything serious about either of those two subjects. I applied to all three of the academies because I thought that would look good at West Point. I got into Annapolis and the Air Force Academy and not into West Point.

Q: How did one apply in those days? I mean there's always this sort of congressional thing.

BEERS: Right, that was it. I was not the adopted son of my naval stepfather so I was not able to apply under the number of slots that they had reserved for sons of military officers. I had to go to my father, a Nebraska resident and a registered Democrat, and try to get a political appointment through one of those. I got an appointment to the Air Force Academy and I got a qualified alternate appointment to the Naval Academy and nothing from West Point.

Q: So, what happened?

BEERS: So, I applied to a bunch of other colleges, MIT, Dartmouth, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Cornell. That may have been all and I was accepted by all of them. I also put my name in for the NROTC (Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps) program and won an NROTC scholarship and selected Dartmouth.

Q: Did both Annapolis and the Air Force Academy appeal to you?

BEERS: No. If I wasn't going to go to West Point I didn't want to go to a service academy. I didn't want to be in those services. Well, you say, why did you take the NROTC scholarship? It was just a way to pay for college. My parents were not wealthy. My stepfather was not contributing to my college. So essentially it was my mother and whatever money my father was prepared to put forward.

Q: How about VMI?

BEERS: I didn't know about VMI.

Q: That's a pretty respectable place to get into.

BEERS: You're right and if I had known enough I might have been attracted to it, but West Point was the only place I wanted to go.

Q: Okay, well, off to, you graduated from high school what year?

BEERS: 1960.

Q: 1960. Then you went to Dartmouth for four years?

BEERS: Four years at Dartmouth, right.

Q: During the summer of '60 and all this was a time of great debate and a lot of young people were engaged because it was a Kennedy Nixon time and all that, more than almost any other campaign I can think of. Well, it was the beginning of sort of the youth movement in the United States and a lot of people were engaged. Did you get engaged in this?

BEERS: No, I worked a construction job that summer and then went off to college. I followed current events, but not really closely. I was still pretty much the kid who read the sports page and the comics.

Q: Good practice for later on. What about okay, Dartmouth, 1960, what was it like?

BEERS: It was a wonderfully intellectual and socially exciting place. The classes were extraordinary and the people that I met were really interesting people to get to know. It was, however, an all-male college and I sure didn't take that into account when I applied to college. In retrospect I always said until Dartmouth went coed I would never recommend to a child of mine they should go to Dartmouth. But I went to an all-male prep school so probably part of it was not even thinking about that issue. We had access to girls in high school and it was close by, but this was Washington. Hanover, New Hampshire, big thrill.

Q: What were you majoring in there?

BEERS: I started off as a German major. When it came time to declare majors I decided that I wanted to be a German major because I really liked the teachers. I had several good friends who were also German majors. Sometime in my junior year, when I came back from a fall semester in Germany I looked at all of the courses that I was going to be taking for the rest of college other than the courses that I was required to take in order to have filled out the German major requirement. They were all history courses so I declared a double major, second quarter of my senior year, and that's what I graduated in. A major in history which was pretty much European history and then German. I lost my interest in becoming an astronaut. I took Physics and I didn't do well in Calculus either. I'd done really well in high school. I'd done really well on the college boards and took Calculus and found it baffling.

Q: Social life there does it revolve around fraternities?

BEERS: Yes, very much, I mean freshmen survived in dormitory environments, but the real party atmosphere was based at that point in time in fraternities. That's no longer the case.

Q: Did you join a fraternity?

BEERS: I joined a fraternity called Zeta Psi, which is so renowned on Dartmouth that it was expelled from the campus last year for unacceptable behavior.

Q: Point applied.

BEERS: No, not from me. I wish I'd joined a different fraternity.

Q: One of those things. I went to Williams for four years and looking back on it there's some young man who went and got into the fraternity thing and all. It was the first time they'd hit this and they really couldn't take the drinking and the party thing and the studying and all and it weeded out some. It's unfortunate I think. Had there been a little more supervision. How did you find it?

BEERS: Well, first of all you couldn't join a fraternity until your sophomore year so there was some presumption that that first year was a way to gradually enter into college environment without having access to the party atmosphere in your freshman year. I never really found it a problem. I would go to the weekend parties. I would occasionally go down and have a beer when beer was available on the weekend, but I was really much more part of academic or intellectual crowd and spent a lot of time pondering life and various other issues.

Q: How about skiing and mountaineering?

BEERS: I did a little mountaineering my freshman year. I learned how to ski there and did some skiing while I was there, but I was pretty much of a student.

Q: What were you pointed towards?

BEERS: That was where I changed from wanting to be an astronaut to being a diplomat.

Q: How did that come about?

BEERS: Part of it was, okay, I'm not going to be a soldier and I'm not cut out to be an astronaut because science and I don't get along as I thought we did. The part of me that was interested in military history was also interested in politics and international affairs and that's where I think the connection to diplomacy came through to me. When I was in the Marine Corps and when I came back from Vietnam it was absolutely clear that that's what I wanted to do, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Q: During the '60 to '64 period, things got a little bit excited there as far as the Berlin Wall and then the Cuban missile crisis and all this. How did this hit the campus and you personally?

BEERS: The Cuban missile crisis was while I was in Germany at the University of Freiburg in my junior year.

Q: Well in the naval ROTC what were you doing?

BEERS: In addition to regular college classes, you had to take one NROTC course per year. You had to take two more credits than everybody else was required to take to graduate in order to not take away from the academic requirements. The last two NROTC classes could be justified as history classes because they were basically military and naval history classes. The first two were naval engineering which was partly engineering and naval orientation which was nothing more than welcome to the United States navy. Then we had a drill once a week and we had six week summer cruises every summer.

Q: Where did you go on the summer cruises?

BEERS: The first summer cruise was in the North Atlantic among Boston, Newport and Quebec and on a destroyer escort. I found that while I didn't mind going to sea and didn't get sea sick it was pretty darn boring standing watches and the various things that one stood watch doing. The various parts of the ship. The second year it was the other parts of the navy so three weeks at Little Creek, Virginia, doing amphibious training which was both the amphibious side of the navy and the Marine Corps and three weeks in Corpus Christi, Texas, with an introduction to aviation and an opportunity to fly airplanes. Then the senior year depended on whether you picked the navy or the Marine option and I picked the Marines and went to Quantico.

Q: What attracted you to the Marines?

BEERS: In the fall of '62 I made the decision. I thought I don't want to be in the navy. Maybe if I join the Marine Corps I can stay ashore and take some graduate school courses and get further along in my education while I'm fulfilling my four year obligation. It didn't turn out that way. That was the original rationale. I was much more interested in land warfare than naval warfare. Certainly the Marines still have a wonderful PR image and gives one a certain sense of the few good men concept. It was a little bit of that. We also saw Sands of Iwo Jima.

Q: Sergeant Stryker.

BEERS: Sergeant Stryker, right.

Q: What about did the sort of the profession of diplomacy cross your radar at all while you were at Dartmouth?

BEERS: Oh, yes. Absolutely. As I said, I took mostly European history and it was mostly political history including one class in diplomatic history and I found it absolutely fascinating.

Q: Did you run across anybody who had been in the school or in the trade, teachers or anybody?

BEERS: The president at that time was John Sloan Dickey and he had been in the State Department before he had gone to Dartmouth. There were a few other people who had

worked in Washington, but I don't remember anybody specifically who was a Foreign Service Officer. Some of them probably were and I just didn't know what to look for.

Q: So, you graduated in '64 and then off to Quantico?

BEERS: Right.

Q: How did you find the Quantico training?

BEERS: It was challenging. I didn't go on the summer cruise before my junior year. I made up the last cruise, the Marine Corps portion, after I graduated from college so I was not commissioned when I graduated. I did that at the end of the summer and then I was commissioned and I went to basic school directly from there. I was in pretty good physical shape and that made me even better physically. I didn't find it at all demanding physically and the discipline was part of what you expected. Like all other systems it was something you learned to deal with and tolerate.

Q: Before we move on here while you were at the University of Freiburg, was this, how did the Dartmouth program work? Was it all in German?

BEERS: Yes. Basically there were two parts to it. We went in August and we took I think eight weeks at a Goethe-Institut which is the German language school. Then we went to the University of Freiburg for the fall semester until Christmas. It was one large lecture course and then we had a seminar leader, tutor I guess, who was in charge of the Dartmouth contingent and he had a smaller seminar which he ran with us.

Q: Did you get any feel for German student life at that point?

BEERS: Not really. We were all satellited with German families when we went to the university. We saw our class in those environments and we were living with the families. It was more an introduction to Germany more broadly than to German students.

Q: How did you find Germany?

BEERS: I thought it was a fascinating place to live. I enjoyed meeting with and talking to the people and going around and looking at all of the historical buildings and other things that were there in terms of growing up in America where nothing's older than 200 or 300 years and here's a place where 1,000 years is normal.

Q: Yes. Well, then in the Marine Corps were they, what was happening Marine-wise while you were at Quantico? Things were beginning to crank up weren't they?

BEERS: Oh, yes, the first Marine deployment to Da Nang was in March of 1965 and we were just graduating then. Vietnam was very much on our horizon when we went there. What it meant wasn't at all clear. I don't think any of us had the sense that almost every single one of us would go to Vietnam during our three or four year time in the Marine

Corps because it was still very nascent in the level of involvement in Vietnam. It was certainly something that people talked about and the Marine instructors used to enjoy critiquing the earlier army involvement in Vietnam. I remember a couple of quips. One was that the army officers didn't know enough to have darkened rank insignias on their uniforms so that they stood out as targets and some other things like that as well. Everybody was wearing them then.

Q: Did you make a, while you were in the Marine Corps did you choose a branch of the service?

BEERS: Yes. I took the infantry. I figured if I was going to go in the Marine Corps I ought to do what Marines did which was slog. I picked the infantry. I was looking for the leadership experience and I got it.

Q: Well, then what happened?

BEERS: My first assignment was Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and I went into Echo Company, Second Battalion, Second Marines. Within two months got on an amphibious troop transport and went to the Mediterranean. I missed the Dominican Republic deployment. Some of my basic school colleagues who went to Camp Lejeune were in units that went to the Dominican Republic. I went to the Mediterranean for five months, visited Spain, Italy, Greece, Malta, Sardinia. We did some amphibious landings and we sailed around on ships and taught classes to the troops and then we went on liberty in all of those locations.

Q: I've observed this. I was consul general in Athens and Naples at various times in my career and I kept thinking about these guys on these troop ships, amphibious landing ship. How the hell, I mean you keep them busy, but this must be chaos.

BEERS: It was a real challenge. We had classes and the NCOs worked hard in terms of maintaining discipline through the vehicles of keeping their weapons clean and having periodic inspections. Basically being aboard ship was boring. It was just plain boring. Even the amphibious landings were a welcome opportunity because it got you doing something and it got you off the ship. It made your life really distorted when you went on liberty because you have all of this pent up boredom that's just seeking some kind of an expression and its often in the form of explosion, drinking too much or doing things that are illegal or whatever. You must have experienced some of that in your citizen services requirement when you had troops to get out of jail.

Q: Well, the military, they usually had somebody who took care of that from the military. We'd get repercussions of this. Did you get involved with the military police at all, the shore patrol?

BEERS: I eventually did become a military policeman. That's how I went to Vietnam. But, no, I never did shore patrol duty.

Q: I would think that would not be that much fun. You could hit people over the head or something.

BEERS: I never got involved in that.

Q: While you were doing this did it give you a chance to take a look at the world outside?

BEERS: Oh, yes, I mean in Spain we went to the Costa del Sol. In Italy we went to Rome and to Florence and Pisa. In Malta, we went, we did some touring there also, so yes, it was a chance to do more than just go to the local bar and have a few beers.

Q: Then you came back from the cruise, what?

BEERS: A couple of months at Camp Lejeune, then orders to go to the first MP battalion which was being formed at Camp Pendleton, California for deployment to Vietnam.

Q: How did you end up in the military police?

BEERS: They were organizing a unit and they were looking for bodies. I was up for rotation. The way that the deployment cycle worked was you did train for deployment, you went under deployment and then you came back and the unit basically purged everybody who had been through that one year training cycle. While you might stay at Camp Lejeune, you could just as easily be transferred to someplace else. So, I was available for rotation and they took a number of people from the battalion that I had been in and sent them to the first MP battalion in _____. We spent three months training and then we got on a ship and went to Vietnam.

Q: Tell me about training and all that.

BEERS: It was different from normal infantry training, which is what I'd been doing before. We had to learn and then teach various military police skills running the gamut from traffic control to POW compound stewardship, to perimeter security kinds of situations in a life environment. That's basically what we did. One of the things we did was to give the troops real experience. They directed traffic on days during rush hour. You know, to send a 19 year old out to be in charge of a certain situation like that is not the easiest thing in the world and several of them would get flustered and you'd have to have somebody who could take over if they did it on a traffic stand. We did a lot of PT because we didn't know what kind of environment we'd be in, in Vietnam.

Then when we got there we were basically substituted for a regular infantry unit and put on the Da Nang airfield perimeter. One of the platoons did the shore patrol activity in downtown Da Nang because there were a few places that Marines could go in Da Nang. One platoon ran the stockade. Most of us and certainly my platoon and company were basically just put on perimeter and the defensive perimeter had already been built at that point. We just did 12 on and 12 off guard duty.

Q: This was when were you there?

BEERS: I got there in May of '66 and I left the First MP battalion about six months later and went to the Third Marine Regiment as a regimental staff officer on the DMC.

Q: Let's talk about the Da Nang experience. What was it like?

BEERS: Well, in terms of a perimeter, my first night in Da Nang I went on a night patrol with the unit that we were relieving. So I'm sure we could have been seen coming out of the perimeter. We walked across the rice paddies or snuck across the rice paddies into a wooded area on the other side of the rice paddies and just sort of set up and waited in one spot and then moved to another spot and waited. The purpose being to see if there was any hostile movement in the area without necessarily exposing ourselves to the local population. We sent out patrols regularly every night. We had defensive bunkers and then we had watchtowers to give the perimeter some heightened observation ability. Oddly enough when I got there the watchtowers were not in any way protected.

Q: I would think this would not be.

BEERS: No, it was presented like where do I want to be if there is an attack and the answer is not in the watchtower. Now, if there was an attack you'd come down out of the watchtower, but it also might be the first place that would be shot at. One of my first tasks was to reinforce all of the watch towers with sandbags and the only metal that I could find were those U shaped poles that you drive in the ground to put barbed wire or string wire fences on. So I made sort of a metal cover on the outer side and then put the sandbags on the inner side to hold them firmly enclosed. It was boring. It was just guard duty waiting to be attacked, which never happened.

Q: There weren't probing attacks and all that while you were there?

BEERS: No, because by this time Da Nang had several concentric perimeters around it. There was a perimeter on the airfield which was to provide immediate protection to the F4 jets that were permanently based there as well as whatever transports brought stuff in. Then you had various tactical units encamped in various ways around it going out as the Marines ran operations against the NVA and the Viet Cong in the more distant area in order to give Da Nang a certain degree of protection. So life could go on to some degree in what was then I think the second largest city in Vietnam.

Q: I'm sure it was.

BEERS: Did I meet any Vietnamese? Only very rarely. The people who were on the shore patrol side had much more contact with the local community than any of us did.

Q: Then in what, in '66?

BEERS: In the fall of '66 I then went up to a place called Camp Carol in the DMZ. This was regimental command location with a battalion that was also positioned there to provide perimeter security for the regimental staff. There were artillery units as well as the regimental staff within the perimeter. I was not the head operations officer. I started off as the third ranking and became the second ranking operations officer there. We basically ran battalion operations out of there up toward the DMZ and west toward the Cambodian border.

Q: What was happening up there at that time?

BEERS: It was a lull period actually. It was after the big operations had been run in the summer of '66 and there was a long period in which very little happened. We got mortared or rocketed at Camp Carol probably three times while I was there. The two most significant things that occurred while I was there: first a battalion command post operating outside the perimeter toward the DMZ got overrun by an NVA unit that had intercepted their communications and had overrun the command perimeter. So the regimental commander sent the regimental executive officer and myself out to take over the battalion and get it out of trouble. We were choppered in and the bodies and stretchers with wounded from the command group were taken out. The battalion was intact. The NVA had somehow found the command group, which was not very heavily guarded, and so they had killed the battalion commander and they had severely wounded the battalion operations officer and several other people. The regimental executive officer took over as the commanding officer of the battalion and I was the battalion operations officer. We then maneuvered the separate companies, which had been operating in satellite fashion from the commander. We maneuvered them back into the command group and then marched the battalion out of the area to a place where they could be picked up and moved out of country. They were taken back to Okinawa. That occurred first because the regimental executive officer comes back into the picture at the next.

Q: Why would they take a whole battalion out?

BEERS: They wanted to give them a chance to regroup because the command group was decimated. They may have been due for rotation. I don't remember that particular fact, but they went back to Okinawa. They were supposed to rotate out. Everybody that was due for rotation and bring in new people so that when and if they were reintroduced into Vietnam they would come in with fresh troops and at a manning level that was closer to what the table of organization said the manning level ought to be. That occurred first.

The next thing that occurred is what historians call the first battle of Khe Sanh. The NVA for the first time tried to overrun the airfield at Khe Sanh. They moved in several regiments and dug in on the hills surrounding the perimeter to the west. They were discovered there before they actually started moving against the base. They again started mortaring the base and the _____ began introducing a large enough force to challenge them. It was decided that the regimental commander at Camp Carol would take responsibility for the operations there. There had been a Special Forces unit there and maybe a company of regular Marines with the airfield. Not a major installation, not really

thought to require all that much. He took me as his operations officer. The two of us and some radio people basically went and that battalion that had been overrun and had been refitted was brought into Vietnam along with another battalion from the 26th Marines. Those were the two maneuver elements that went up against the three NVA regiments that had dug in to the West and basically drove them off after some pretty tough fighting.

Q: I mean when you were there, back home, everybody was looking for a parallel to Dien Bien Phu.

BEERS: That was much more in the second and the main battle, but yes.

Q: At the same time this must have been sort, I mean this is, must have been in your minds, wasn't it?

BEERS: Oh, yes. I mean the airfield was here and the high ground is all around.

Q: You're showing the high ground, which is exactly what had happened at Dien Bien Phu. So, what did you do in this?

BEERS: I basically was responsible for keeping track of where the units were and what their situation was for the regimental commander as he tried to work out with the battalion commanders what they were going to do. We would write regimental operations orders and they would write battalion operation orders and they would give them back out so we basically commanded by the radio. He would fly up occasionally or have the battalion commanders come down. The Marine Corps is small enough that everybody, at colonel and lieutenant colonel level, probably knew one another. Not so different from the Foreign Service They would have their conversations and then the battalion commanders would go off and fight the battle. We were not directly engaged in combat. We got mortared or rocketed at least once while we were there. One of the crazy things is that in the containment areas they built plywood structures with screens halfway up and either corrugated roofs or tent roofs. So when it rained you were dry and when it was hot you at least had some chance of being cool. When you got mortared or rocketed you didn't stay in these places, you ran for the closest hole in the ground. But the only people who actually slept in their holes were the people who were on the perimeter. If you were in the field that was not true, but in the containment areas, even though it was a hardship situation, it was not living in trenches.

Q: How did the Marines beat back the North Vietnamese because from what I gather if we had battalions they had regiments.

BEERS: Well, their regiments weren't as large as our battalions, and I don't think we could have covered precisely what the manning levels for those regiments were. One of the things that U.S. artillery does that almost all over armies don't do is they really have aimed fire. So you could call in artillery and you could put it on a bunker and you could reasonably expect to destroy that bunker or at least make it so that nobody had their head above ground when you went into the bunkers. When we got to the bunkers we would

throw grenades and smoke in the bunkers rather than going into the bunker, but it was that kind of a fight and eventually the NVA backed off. We of course had air superiority during this period and we called in jets, but we could also see them moving and that was a great advantage. They eventually backed off, but I don't want to minimize the tough fighting those units went through up on the hill.

Q: During this time were you at the Khe Sanh?

BEERS: I was on the base at Khe Sanh airfield.

Q: Was there any concern that we were going to get cut off at all?

BEERS: There was a way back in your mind possibility, but the assumption was that we could reinforce fast enough that that would not happen. The fact that we had an airfield as opposed to simply being out in the jungle meant that the ability to move things in was a lot greater than it would have been otherwise. We could also have marched people in overland if necessary.

Q: There was a road connection.

BEERS: There was a road all the way to Khe Sanh, which we patrolled on a daily basis in order to make sure that the road stayed open. Again until Tet.

Q: Which was in '68.

BEERS: In late January or early February of '68. The NVA had pretty much backed off after the battles of the summer of '66. This was probably more of a probing maneuver or a target of opportunity, which didn't look so opportune after we threw up resistance. I'm sure though that historians have discovered that that probing operation was what set the NVA's mind to going after that base in a dedicated fashion and figuring that the Americans would reinforce making it an even more lucrative target.

Q: Yes and each military tries to replicate its great victories and that. It looked like a good place to do that except that it was a different group of people or different capabilities.

BEERS: Yes. So, anyway, my 13 months were up in June of '67, but I was young and immortal and hadn't really seen any combat and decided that I wanted to see what that was like. I took the option of having 30 days leave back in the United States and returned to Vietnam for another six months with a request to be sent to a line battalion with the opportunity to command a company. I came back in late July and was sent to the Third Battalion Third Marines. Started off as the headquarters and support company commander. Then that company commander was relieved during a battle to protect the road to Khe Sanh and I became the India company commander replacing him. I was India company commander until I came home in January of '68, a week before Tet.

Q: Why was the commander relieved?

BEERS: The battalion commander thought he did not show he had prosecuted an attack aggressively enough. He took the guy out of command and we swapped jobs.

Q: How did you find, what sort of things were you involved in?

BEERS: From then on we were guarding a perimeter at a place called a rock pile. This was on Route Nine I think it's called which is the route that went from Dong Ha to Khe Sanh and then over to the Cambodian border. That was a particularly strategic bend in the road, high ground that was one of the encampments along the road. We stayed there for several months. Then we moved to places closer up to the DMZ. During that time there was a big artillery duel going on for a place called Con Thien which was right up on the DMZ. There was a battalion unit up there. The Vietnamese from North Vietnam would shell that so there was counter battery fire going on all the time. The first place we went to was a little bridge over a stream that was along the road to Con Thien. Then we went to another place called Cam Lo and then we went to another place called A-3 which was the beginning of the McNamara line. Basically we filled sandbags and built bunkers so the censor system could be set out and guarded by the people who were situated at the various encampment areas along the DMZ.

In the time that I was the company commander we had two engagements with North Vietnamese forces directly. One where we were involved in a day patrol. The company had an engagement with a North Vietnamese unit probably a company, but their companies were smaller. They were in an encampment area probably intending to probe our perimeter at night. We saw them first or at least it looked like we saw them first and then we set up in hopes of capturing a couple of them. But they didn't come and that led to a fire fight. Then one of my lieutenants thought he would lead a charge against the position. I had not ordered a charge. We were still in the "how many are there?" situation. He got cut down. We decided that what made the most sense, because we were only about half a mile from the battalion perimeter, was that we would become the base of fire and another company would come and envelop from the left. That's what we did that day. It was an afternoon engagement. We were back in the perimeter by nightfall. There were probably 25 to 40 NVA in this location after the other company overran the position. They had dug in. I'm not clear how long they'd been there.

The second engagement was a battalion size maneuver. We were out in the field and the battalion took fire and we went into a two-company envelopment and drove them off. Only heard the fire, never was shot at at that particular point in time. I was hit in the arm with a piece of shrapnel from a boobytrap that killed one of the radio operators in the company two or three feet behind me in the column. Again, this is six months and those were the only two engagements. We got mortared and rocketed during this time, but mostly we filled sandbags.

Q: Of course this is what war is really.

BEERS: That's right. War is a boring and then a crisis situation.

Q: Yes.

BEERS: The one experience that I tell people is that on my 25th birthday we had moved into a perimeter around this place called A-3 and we had dug foxholes and it snowed. It snowed at the 17th parallel.

Q: Oh God.

BEERS: We had not much preparation for that although people did have field jackets. Why we had field jackets in Vietnam I guess it was they figured it was waterproof and we had ponchos, too, but we were pretty ill prepared for that situation. Miserable weather. I'll always remember my 25th birthday as a result of that.

Q: Well, anyway, you got what you wanted command experience.

BEERS: I did.

Q: Which is something few people really have. You know, you consider it.

BEER: I felt enormously guilty when Tet occurred. I was sitting in Norfolk, Virginia as a guard officer at the Marine barracks at the Norfolk naval base. All of the people who I had commanded were still there and I was safe. It was hard to spend that much time in that kind of an atmosphere with those people and not have a tremendous sense of loyalty.

Q: You did go, I mean you were back in Norfolk after you left there. What was sort of your feeling about how the Vietnam War was going? I mean I realize you were in a little piece of the action.

BEERS: My wife to be and I had met when I was a senior in college and she was a senior in high school in Macon, Georgia, a naval ordinance plant that our parents were stationed at. She wrote me from Duke where she was going to college at the time while I was in Vietnam. She was trying to understand the war and figure it out, so she would ask me questions and I would come back with a standard defense of American foreign policy, domino theory, got to stop the communists, etc. I believed that when I wrote those letters. I came back in January and February and watched the anti-war movement coalesce around Gene McCarthy, and Lyndon Johnson's capitulation, and Bobby Kennedy's entry into the campaign. I was aware of Westmoreland's continual request for additional troops, the light at the end of the tunnel kinds of rhetoric and saw that we were really not doing much better. Even though the Vietnamese were defeated militarily during the Tet Offensive, they really did provoke a reaction in the United States and a recognition that the United States couldn't continue to pile in more and more troops. I saw an unwillingness to raise the air war in North Vietnam to another level and I began during that period to have real questions about whether or not we should have stayed in Vietnam. So, by the time I got out of the Marine Corps in September, the beginning of

September of 1968 to go to graduate school, I thought we should find a way to disengage from Vietnam. Those are thoughts that you can't or shouldn't think while you are in combat, but they were certainly thoughts that were pretty apparent as I came back. I'd been starved for newspapers while I was in Vietnam. Stars and Stripes was hardly a full reporting newspaper. I would read the New York Times daily cover to cover while I was in Norfolk, listen to the news; things like that and really became opposed to the war during that time.

Q: This is a good place to stop. We'll put at the end here we'll pick this up in 1968 when you're off to grad school.

BEERS: At the University of Michigan after the Democratic convention.

Q: All right. We'll talk about the Democratic convention and all that.

BEERS: All right.

Q: This is tape two, side one with Rand Beers. Rand, let's talk about the Chicago Democratic convention of 1968. This is when Mayor Daley ran roughshod over things. Where were you at that time?

BEERS: During the actual convention I think I was still in the Marine Corps in Norfolk, Virginia where I was the guard officer. I had been accepted at the University of Michigan and was getting ready to go to Michigan to find a place to live and to register for courses. I was sitting at home in Norfolk watching the events with some strong sympathy for the anti-war protesters. Coming back from Vietnam I had really felt that we were spending blood and treasure on a policy that had no real chance of success unless we were prepared to take measures that seemed far beyond anything that anyone was contemplating. Tet occurred in February. Westmoreland asked for a major increase in forces. Johnson and the cabinet considered this and came to the view that it was too great an expenditure and we began the process of looking for a way out. Johnson withdrew from running for re-election. The whole question of Vietnam had become a central question in the political environment about where the United States ought to be going. The convention was the expression of the anti-war wing of the Democratic party. The anti-war movement within the country had an audience and thought they had a chance of winning. Daley committed to a stable convention and in support of Hubert Humphrey at the time and Daley wasn't prepared to let the streets of Chicago become a platform for any one of them.

Q: How did you react to this and say your colleagues in the Marine Corps then? What were you getting?

BEERS: I don't have any memories of talking with my Marine Corps colleagues about that. We didn't talk about politics a lot in the Marine Corps unless you were talking with a really close personal friend. At least I didn't, so I don't have any memories of that.

Q: Well, you went off to where, to Michigan?

BEERS: The University of Michigan to the Ann Arbor campus which had one of the founding chapters of the Students for a Democratic Society and entered a totally different environment from the United States Marine Corps.

Q: How did you feel? Was this, were you a stranger in a strange land or something at this point or I mean were you back home?

BEERS: I was in sort of an in-between place. When I got out of the Marine Corps I allowed my hair to grow. Not to my shoulders, but certainly longer than the very short Marine Corps haircut. I grew some mutton chop sideburns. People knew I had been in the Marine Corps, but they also knew that I had come to view the war as a mistake. So I think I had a certain amount of respect or credit from the academic community and my graduate student colleagues who were almost entirely of the anti-war persuasion. I had been there and I had come back and had a view that it was a mistake as opposed to simply having formed that opinion from the newspapers or from other information sources rather than directly being involved. I didn't talk about my Vietnam experience a whole lot. I wasn't particularly interested in talking about any wartime experiences that I had had, but people ask my views and I think I had a certain amount of respect for having been there.

Q: I was wondering, this was a period of time when I gather that sort of the graduate student instructors and all were running wild in that some of the older faculty was sort of stunned by the student movement. I mean did you get any feel for that?

BEERS: Oh, yes, I think that's very true. There were various events that weren't even necessarily related to the Vietnam War. Students began to demonstrate and took over classrooms or took over buildings much to the consternation of the orderly processes that ivory towered academia had grown so accustomed to.

Q: When you were there you were probably, were you a little older?

BEERS: Yes, I was 25 when I got there. I'd had four years in the Marine Corps. Many of my graduate school colleagues were obviously trying to avoid being drafted by continuing their education, although that was the point at which they stopped allowing graduate school deferments; they had come to graduate school in order to avoid being drafted.

Q: I would think there would be I mean coming from a force that was doing something in the Marines and then coming to the university and seeing what could very easily strike you as callow youth, trotting out their stuff and pontificating on things even though you might be on the same side, you couldn't have a feeling of a certain amount of, contempt maybe is too strong a word for it, but I would think this would be in the mix.

BEERS: The feelings were particularly in listening to the more radical elements that there was sometimes or often lacking a level of analysis or fact based argument that was

designed to mobilize people without regard to serious intellectual thought. There was also a sense on my own part that radical solutions were not necessarily the best way to move things.

Q: Well, could you get into discussions on these grounds?

BEERS: I talked with some people about this. I didn't talk with the most radical part of the anti-war movement or campus politics, mostly with my graduate school friends in the Department of History at the University of Michigan. I was then, as I think I have always remained, much more interested in finding constructive, more evolutionary solutions to problems than radical and revolutionary kinds of solutions to problems. When I would talk with my friends I would certainly indicate my willingness to think about change, but in not so dramatic a fashion. With respect to the anti-war movement, I think there was a recognition that what people were trying to do was change the opinion of the country so that a way could be found to stop the carnage. I recognized that it was a pretty blunt instrument to try to mobilize an anti-war movement that was then going to have to effect still some kind of withdrawal from Vietnam.

Q: As a history major were you looking at this as with the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and all, I mean maybe an abortive revolution, but seeing some of the seeds of these things?

BEERS: That was certainly true. My undergraduate education in history had been pretty superficial when you think of what most undergraduate history courses are like. Your basic survey courses and then a few specialty courses, more diplomatic history than anything else. When I came to the University of Michigan I took one course in the French Revolution. I took another course in the history of the Russian Revolution and read a fair amount about that. So, yes, my perspective was very much the sort of revolution, counter revolution model thinking about what was happening in the United States. I don't think at that particular time and still today I didn't see our strife being as cataclysmic a kind of change as either of those two revolutions caused.

Q: How long were you at the University of Michigan?

BEERS: I was there from September of '68 until August of '71.

Q: What were you getting there?

BEERS: I went to graduate school because I was interested in going to graduate school and I had intended to take the Foreign Service exam and join the Foreign Service. I did not have an opportunity to take it while I was in Vietnam. I had to wait until the winter of '69 to take the exam. By then I had gotten immersed in graduate school. While I didn't stop wanting to be part of the Foreign Service, I decided by that time I would certainly complete my M.A. which is what I went there to do. I would spend some time until I could get in the Foreign Service and embark upon a Ph.D. candidacy. By the time I left in '71 I had become a Ph.D. candidate, but I had not embarked upon my dissertation.

Q: Had you been concentrating on any particular field?

BEERS: Military history. I came out of Vietnam. I came out of the Marine Corps with a sense that the military had in many ways been used by politicians to undertake a war against or out of sync with the military's best advice on how to win the war from its inception. This was the period when the dominant strategic thought about warfare was called graduated currents and so we had an incremental forced application in Vietnam. The notion was that we could continue to escalate until the other side was no longer prepared for the price that they were paying to fight this war. In guerrilla warfare it certainly was unclear that the North Vietnamese were ever going to be pulled to the point that they were no longer prepared to continue to fight for South Vietnam; although there have been subsequent histories which suggest perhaps they were actually getting to that point with the bombing campaign. I'm not a student of the Vietnam War. So I'm not in a position to say anything more than that I've heard that theory, but it certainly didn't seem to be working in the period up to 1968. The military had asked for more forces earlier in the process and had been denied. Johnson wanted guns and butter and it was a hard set of choices for him to make. He didn't want to be a wartime president. He wanted to be the great society president.

Q: You know in a way Johnson is a tragic figure because he had, personally he wasn't very likable, but his policies are really quite commendable, but he got caught in that damned war.

BEERS: Yes.

Q: Did you take the Foreign Service exam?

BEERS: I took the Foreign Service exam in 1969 and the orals I guess that summer. I passed the medical and was on the list. I declined one or maybe two offerings and then in the spring I guess of '71 was told either I take this last offering or I would fall off the list. The time of a job offer would have expired and I would have had to reapply. I was in the process of taking my oral exams and accepted the appointment for an A100 course in the fall of '71.

Q: Do you recall on your oral exams, I'm talking about the Foreign Service oral exams, do you recall any of the questions or how it went for you?

BEERS: The one question that I very clearly remember is if America is often criticized as not really having any culture, what would you say in response to that kind of a criticism by people where you might be living, such as in Europe and probably France. I went through a litany of literature and then remarked about American contributions in jazz and in the musical, or extension of the Gilbert & Sullivan opera, as contributions that the United States had made to the world and in arts and literature and in abstract expressionism in painting. There were a bunch of political questions. I have no specific memory of those. That's funny though. I would remember.

Q: Blot out some things and others. Did you feel I mean when you did it did you feel that you were able to take care of yourself?

BEERS: Yes, I certainly felt that I had enough presence to be able to respond. I remember the person who came out of the exam room before me looked like he'd been through an ordeal. I did not feel like I'd been through an ordeal by the time I finished. I thought it was an interesting conversation.

Q: You came, how did you treat your Ph.D. prospects? Did you keep it on hold?

BEERS: Yes, I thought I would come back and finish my dissertation and I did take leave without pay in the late '70s to try to finish it up, but didn't really do it. I selected a topic that was way too large to do without devoting several years to it.

Q: What was the topic?

BEERS: It was career patterns in the army and air force from 1900 to 1950 as seen through the careers of West Point graduates of the classes 1885 to 1930. I had a huge amount of biographical data on every one of those individuals because West Point had kept that information and made it public. I was taking my military history background and my sociology background and my quantitative training, all of which I got at Michigan, and tried to put them together into a computerization of those careers. Then you could actually manipulate what would have been 3,000 biographies into saying something meaningful sociologically about what was happening in this and then put alongside of that what would be your standard, or more traditional, historical investigations. What was happening with respect to weapons, what was happening with respect to politics, what was happening with respect to warfare during this period. You have the creation of the air force starting in the First World War and we have the creation of the armored corps starting in the First World War and a number of other innovations that come to fruition in the Second World War.

Q: The pursuit of military history in a way would be running counter to the student culture at the time wasn't it? I mean down with all military or not?

BEERS: Oh, yes, I think that's true. There were not a lot of people, but there was a historian there named John Chy who had written about the American Revolution for his dissertation. He was a West Point graduate of about 1950 or '51 and he had a small circle of people who he worked with. No, most of my friends were involved in political or social or urban history at the University of Michigan. I think with the serious students the notion that one would study the military in order to understand them better was understood as a legitimate academic pursuit along with whatever it was that they themselves were interested in.

Q: Well, you started the basic officer's course when?

BEERS: It would have been the September class of '71. I don't remember the A100 number that we had.

Q: How would you describe the consistency of the class?

BEERS: It was a fairly diverse class in terms of age and background and experience. We had people who had had prior military service. We didn't have mid-level entries I think so that no one was probably older than 30. In '71 I would have been 28, going on 29 when I entered the Foreign Service. Most people still came out of school rather than a work experience, but that was not entirely true. We had the different cones so people were placed in political, economic, administrative and consular. We no longer had the requirement that most or everyone goes directly to CORDS in Vietnam. I think that had ended in the spring although I'm not absolutely sure. I just know that none of us went to Vietnam from there. An interesting group of people, none of whom remained close friends of mine after that. Many of whom, many of their careers and mine crossed at various times.

Q: Minorities, women?

BEERS: Yes, there were a number of women and minorities within the class. I can't tell you how many, but it seemed not atypical for a reasonable approximation of American society. I mean I'm sure there were fewer women than 50%. I can only remember two blacks for sure, one man and one woman, although that may simply be my memory. I can't tell you that there was a Hispanic.

Q: While you were in there, what cone were you put into?

BEERS: I was in the political cone.

Q: Was there a feeling in the class that unhappiness as they started to find out what the cones meant and all that?

BEERS: I think there was the beginning of that particular process. I mean there were some pretty bright and interesting people. One friend of mine, Ron Ravens, had received his law degree and ended up in the administrative cone and was a quite distinguished Foreign Service Officer in the administrative cone. I'm not sure he necessarily wanted to end up in the administrative cone. Didn't hear a whole lot from the consular people in terms of concerns or complaints. In part, although our assignments belied this, everybody thought they'd end up with a consular assignment or a rotational assignment that would put them in a consular position in their first assignment. It didn't turn out that way. Everybody went to their own cone.

Q: Did you have any geographic or type of work preference?

BEERS: Well, I fancied myself going to Western Europe and being involved in things related to NATO, political military affairs of some form.

Q: So, what happened?

BEERS: I was assigned to the Bureau of Political Military Affairs. None of the people who were political officers were assigned overseas except for one guy who became the special assistant to the ambassador to Mexico. The rest of us were assigned to the Department in various assignments that were relevant to political affairs.

Q: What assignment did you have there?

BEERS: I was put in the Bureau of Political Military Affairs and it was a rotational type assignment. The first office I was assigned to was the Office of International Security Operations and then I did a brief bit in the front office during summer leave. Then I was assigned to the Office of International Security Policy. In the first instance it was sort of base rights and military operations as in exercises and things like that. In the second one it was policy toward NATO or other kinds of security policies that we had a smattering of Israel and the Israel security relationship and things like that. The director of the bureau was Ron Spiers. The deputy director of the bureau was Tom Pickering. The second deputy of the bureau was Ray Garthoff. This was before PM had an assistant secretary. It was sort of in its evolutionary stage from being an appendage of the undersecretary of political affairs and then it became separate bureau, but not accorded an assistant secretary.

Q: You were there from '70 what?

BEERS: '71 to '73.

Q: '73, well, this is a very powerful group of people who were there at that time.

BEERS: Yes, this was also during the SALT negotiations. I didn't do arms control.

Q: What piece of the action were you dealing with in different places?

BEERS: I worked on, for example, the Indian Ocean basing. People were worrying about Diego Garcia and what our military presence should be in the Indian Ocean. I worked on NATO some aspects of thinking about MBFR. I worked on a number of military exercises of no particular import. I had a colleague in the office that worked on the incidents of sea agreement with the Russians, the Soviets. I ran a couple of conferences for the political advisors from around the world who were to be brought back to Washington for consultations once a year. I worked on the State-Defense exchange program.

Q: How did you find the State-Defense exchange program? How did you feel that worked? Were you picking up anything while you were doing about how the people in State who went to the Pentagon or the Pentagon people who came to the State Department.

BEERS: Yes, that was an interesting project. Larry Eagleburger was the deputy assistant secretary of defense for policy and Pickering was the principal deputy in PM. They had a series of meetings and I was the recorder for the State side. I certainly thought that it was an extremely valuable program in the sense that it exposed military officers to the State Department culture and Foreign Service Officers to the Defense Department culture. We went through the program and talked about how valuable the program was to individuals was invaluable to the institutions. The concerns were whether or not the people who were in the program benefited in the long term from that particular assignment or was it simply an additional career experience the payoff for which was not recognizable. The specific payoff for which was not recognizable in any promotion and maybe it was useful in later careers.

Q: Was any conclusion reached on that?

BEERS: I think it was to do everything possible to insure that the efficiency reports that were written in the two institutions were at a minimum reviewed by a senior enough official in the other institution from which the exchanges were sent so that when it got to the promotion panel, the panel recognized somebody in that evaluation chain. That was probably going to be more true on the State Department side because if you brought it back and had Pickering sign the review statement that was going to be a recognizable person. It's not clear that Larry Eagleburger would have been a recognizable person at DOD if for example he was the person who was doing the review over there. You would probably have wanted it to be somebody who was in a uniform and in the service of the individual. That wouldn't necessarily have been so easy to effect, but the military was much better I think about getting its people out of the normal way of doing things. I mean they spend still today far more time sending people to educational institutions than the State Department has ever done.

Q: Yes. I think Colin Powell our present Secretary of State and Marc Grossman have a little routine where they get up and talk about this problem and Marc Grossman, how many, he had maybe a couple of months of training and Powell said, well, he had six years of training.

BEERS: Exactly. Right, we had mid-career courses which at best I can tell were an episodic occurrence; they were sort of washed away. I took the economic course after my first overseas assignment. That's the training that I had besides language training. It was six months of valuable training. I made a point of trying to get to it because I'd not had economic training in my academic career.

Q: In the political military field, how about, let's talk a little bit about Diego Garcia. Were we talking to the British a lot?

BEERS: Well, Diego belonged to the British and the basic agreement had been signed several years before that. What we were doing was laying out what was the presence in fact that the U.S. military, U.S. navy wanted to have at Diego Garcia. What kinds of

developments and constructions were necessary in order to effect that and then what did that location represent in relationship to the presence that we had in Bahrain. This was before we had the pre-positioning agreements with Amman or any of the other Gulf relationships that developed over the course of the '80s basically and early '90s. It was basically about was the Indian Ocean in effect a new strategic frontier for the navy? Admiral Zumwalt certainly thought of it in that regard.

Q: He was the chief of naval operations at the time.

BEERS: Yes, I think he was still chief. Obviously we wanted to have ballistic submarines in the Indian Ocean that would be able to maintain deterrence with respect to the Soviet Union. Did we want to have a carrier battle group presence in the Indian Ocean and for what or purpose? India Pakistan rivalry. Persian Gulf oil protection. All of the issues in the early '70s when we were beginning to appreciate our energy dependence on the Persian Gulf and to continue our worry about regional conflict in the subcontinent.

Q: Did Diego Garcia fall under the Pacific command then?

BEERS: I guess so.

Q: Did the British, I mean were you having to clear things with the British and all?

BEERS: We certainly tried to keep them informed. I think the agreement was written in such a way that we had a fair amount of latitude, but there was no reason to irritate the British with doing anything. They were still going to have to answer to their own parliament about what was territory that the United States has essentially occupied. I don't believe there was any British presence on the island and they had conveniently moved the islanders elsewhere. I think the Comoros, but I'm not sure, maybe the Seychelles.

Q: Well, at that time when you're dealing with it, it was more a navy base and had been turned into a strategic air base and a.

BEERS: Prepositioning base.

Q: Prepositioning base.

BEERS: No, that really comes in the late '70s with the rise of the RDJTF, the precursor for U.S. Central Command. I was involved in that, too because I was back in PM by then.

Q: Was there anything else that you were engaged in in that that sort of grabbed your interest?

BEERS: The whole experience was an interesting intellectual set of issues because it was very much what I wanted to be involved in. That's very much why I came and wanted to join the Foreign Service and work for the State Department and it was my introduction to

bureaucratic politics. Mort Halperin I don't think had written his book yet, although I did hear him speak in graduate school. I think he was still writing it at that point, Bureaucratic Politics in Foreign Policy. I had some appreciation for bureaucratic politics, but this was an eye-opening experience in terms of institutional positions that the Pentagon and the State Department traditionally took.

Q: How did you find the political military? How did it mesh or not mesh with the geographic bureaus?

BEERS: Well, there was obviously a constant functional regional tension. I did not do arms control, but even in the area of arms control you had the European bureau and the PM bureau having different views, maybe as much personality based as institutional based. Then you had ACDA and OSD and you had the joint chiefs and then you had the White House. There were all of those actors there. In terms of NATO policy, EUR had always had or at least certainly in my memory had always had the regional political military affairs office which thought of itself as the repository for things NATO. PM was always interested in that. Then you had military sales, the budget for which PM was responsible. But obviously all of the regional bureaus wanted their share of that pie to security assistance and that represented an additional tension. Every time there was an exercise PM was often between where the regional bureaus were and where the Pentagon was. I think it depended upon the issue as to whether it was more inclined toward the regional bureau's perspective or more inclined toward the Pentagon's perspective.

The East Asian bureau was very much opposed to having aircraft carriers stationed in Japan because they thought that it would exacerbate the nuclear issue and EA very much resisted that. Then somebody asked the Japanese, and the Japanese said okay and came up with their great accommodation which was the United States understands the prohibition of having nuclear weapons on Japanese territory.

Q: Did you get involved with home porting in Athens for example? Did that come up, this is during that period.

BEERS: Yes, I guess we did. I don't remember anything specific about that, but homeport in Athens was also one of the issues that came up at that particular time.

Q: I was consul general in Athens at the time and the embassy as a group was sort of on the shore waving them away, you know. Zumwalt particularly, a lot of the home ports I understand was based on trying to maintain, it was hard to maintain troops, I mean sailors because they were away from the family for six months and this was very difficult to keep them.

BEERS: Home porting was a move by the navy to be more responsive to the increasing family nature of military service. Now, it's a predominant aspect of all military service. Zumwalt was trying to deal with that because the navy had the biggest problem because of the deployment schedules.

Q: You left the bureau in what '73?

BEERS: '73 to take French and then to go to SHAPE as the deputy political advisor.

Q: Well, did you feel you were sort of really on the political military track at this time?

BEERS: Very much so. I mean there was a political military affairs subspecialty and I thought of myself as being in that. I knew that I would have to do other things or things that were less predominantly political military affairs in a Foreign Service career, but was very pleased with that assignment.

Q: Going back to the Political Military Bureau, one of the things that, the words didn't cross your lips: Latin America. Was Latin America ever much of an issue at all?

BEERS: Not during that time frame. The only thing I remember was that I got involved in clearing a naval exercise that went around South America once a year. I don't remember any other discussions of Latin America at that time.

Q: Well, there probably wouldn't be. Well, you were in SHAPE?

BEERS: '73 to '75.

Q: '73 to '75. Where was SHAPE located?

BEERS: It was in Mons, well, no, it was actually in a small town called Casteau.

Q: In Belgium?

BEERS: In Belgium, 60 kilometers south of Brussels. That's where the compound was. SACEUR residence was in Mons.

Q: SHAPE stands for what?

BEERS: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.

Q: Now, is that the top military command?

BEERS: Yes, I mean the supreme allied commander Europe, SACEUR, is a dual headed position. SACEUR is a NATO position. That same person is also the U.S. commander, U.S. CINCEUR. That is, he is the commander of all the U.S. forces in Europe at the same time. He has a deputy located in Stuttgart and he is located in Belgium at the SHAPE headquarters. It's recognition on the part of NATO of the U.S. role in effect.

Q: What did SHAPE do? I mean what was SHAPE's responsibility?

BEERS: They basically did the planning, the war fighting planning for a war in Europe if the Russians, if the Soviets, if the Warsaw Pact attacked. They exercised on a regular basis with command post exercises and field exercises although my memory is that the field exercises didn't really start until close to the end. I mean large field exercises as opposed to simply small training exercises. Then they would do a lot of effort to try to create the basis of better communications and more interoperability among the various NATO military organizations. All of the NATO military commands were integrated, but they were only in headquarters. They had no forces. They essentially accepted the transfer of those forces to NATO in wartime and those forces then had to be able to operate together under this unified international organization. Making sure that the militaries in fact could do that beyond the paper exercises that occurred in headquarters exercises was a critical aspect of that. Then NATO was or the military command might be asked to comment on such things as the mutual and balanced force reductions discussions. Less so on the strategic arms limitation talks.

Q: '73 to '75 who was SHAPE commander?

BEERS: When I got there it was Andrew Goodpaster. I think in the spring of '75 Alexander Haig showed up.

Q: Where did you fit in this?

BEERS: The political advisor who was Ted Long. It was his second POLAD (political advisor) job. He had also been the POLAD at U.S. Southern Command. He was on both the personal staff of General Goodpaster, but he was also part of the international staff as well. I was his deputy. In those days there were several junior officer jobs at the major command center. There and Stuttgart had deputies and I'm not sure there was anyplace else that had a junior officer position.

Q: What was your impression of how the POLAD worked at this particular time?

BEERS: The actual job was very much dependent upon the SACEUR and his willingness to take advice from a political advisor, somebody with a Foreign Service background. It depended upon what the issues were. My experience was there was no reason to have a deputy political advisor. I mean I found things to do, but it was.

Q: I assume you're reading a lot of telegrams.

BEERS: I read a lot of telegrams. I wrote some reports. I spent a lot of time doing public speaking for the public affairs part of SHAPE.

Q: Who were you speaking to?

BEERS: They were visitors who would come through. In some cases tourists who came through. I worked with the exercise branch in terms of devising scenarios. I really wasn't that involved in the day to day work of the military headquarters. I'm not sure that my

boss Ted Long had all that much to do with the day-to-day work of the military headquarters.

Q: Somehow I have the feeling that the political advisor and please correct me if I'm wrong, is sort of around there to look and see if there may be a diplomatic issue that arises.

BEERS: That's right.

Q: That a military commander won't perceive or may take a little bit _____ to tug on his sleeve and say you know this is, there's a diplomatic element to this and I would suggest this and that. In other words, not a real line person at all, but just to be there to prevent gaps.

BEERS: I think that that's right. But I think that for the U.S. only commands, when the CINC travels to foreign countries and meets with political leaders in addition to military counterparts, that the POLAD has a much more direct and involved function interfacing with the embassy or the visit. The POLAD briefs the CINC on issues, that are political military as opposed to military only, that the CINC needs to be prepared to talk about and might not necessarily have the full flavor of from a military perspective. Still, after a CINC has been in the position for a year or more they're likely to also have picked up many of those issues. With Andrew Goodpaster with SACEUR you have one of the premier military diplomats of all time.

Q: He sat at the side of Eisenhower.

BEERS: He didn't need a POLAD, but it was a position and it was filled. He talked to Ted Long and I wrote some papers, which he wrote some very laudatory comments on. I don't remember Ted traveling when Goodpaster went anywhere. Ted was with Haig.

Q: Would you say that, go into it a little more.

BEERS: He came with all of the panache in the military side that I remember when he came at the beginning of the Reagan administration. He came into the State Department lobby and announced that he was the vicar of foreign policy. He fancied himself a larger than life figure and he wanted to bring all of his own people in on the immediate advisory staff. Goodpaster had hired Jack Galvin to be his personal aide. Galvin comes and then Haig is appointed. Galvin in his later career became CINC SOUTH and then SACEUR, a very distinguished and a very learned military officer. He was not Haig's guy so Haig brought in a guy named Schwartz who had his own checkered career. Galvin was sent off to work for the chief of staff. Haig would issue his own pronouncements now and again. My memory is that he started the major military field exercise program in NATO, that it had been paper exercises in terms of large-scale NATO exercises.

The staff had worked on a scenario for the major command post exercise. It was brought to Haig's attention and he didn't like the scenario. So he threw it out completely and sent

them back to the drawing board to write a scenario that he dictated the broad outlines of. A very imperial style, very contrasted to Goodpaster, the quiet low-key thoughtful military leader.

Q: Now, you were dealing in strictly an American environment is that right?

BEERS: No, no I had colleagues from all of the NATO military services.

Q: How did you find this organization worked? What was your impression of it?

BEERS: First of all a potpourri of a lot of different people, the language was English. There was no attempt to speak French in the military command even though French was the second language of NATO. The Belgian diplomat at the North Atlantic Council always spoke in French along with his French colleague to insure that French was maintained as the language which is no longer the case. I was shocked when I went back in 1992 or '91 to a NAC meeting and the Belgian ambassador spoke in English. That was then. As a result, well, all of the individuals were professional in their own military senses. They were very uneven with respect to one another both in their language skills and their ability to think in the large concept terms that one dealt with at a level of command like SHAPE. While they may have been excellent troop leaders in their own military organizations, they were in some cases modest or poor staff officers in this level of command. But the command structure was such that you had to figure out how to keep everybody involved and employed and focused on the particular area that they were responsible for.

Q: Well, did you find, can you characterize at all the different nationalities, in the first place the French weren't in this were they?

BEERS: No, although there was a French military representative there if I recall correctly, but there was no French military on the staff. Most of the work was done by the Americans or the British or the Germans. Those three groups were the heart of the work there. The deputy SACEUR was a Brit. The director of operations was a German. Among those three nationalities most of the work was done. The Nordics had a limited presence there. The Italians were there in numbers, but I don't remember any major contributions by them. The Greeks and the Turks were there, but they were sort of always at the periphery and there was always the Turkish tension.

Q: They're watching each other.

BEERS: Right. There was a minimal Portuguese presence and of course Spain was not a NATO member then. Iceland didn't have an army, so they didn't have anybody there.

Q: How was the Soviet threat seen at that time?

BEERS: Very much a real threat. I mean these are individuals whose job it is to focus exclusively on the possibility that the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies might

attack Western Europe. It was treated with the utmost seriousness. Did people believe that the Russians, that the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact was actually going to attack? I think that probably depended upon the individual officer, but people didn't talk in those terms. It was treated very seriously. This was their profession and this was what they were focused on. You would have an intelligence briefing every day and all of the military movements were discussed on the part of the Warsaw Pact. They were all seen as possible evolutions that might have been related to the counterplanning that would have been done by the Warsaw Pact to the planning that was done by NATO. The assumption was always that the Warsaw Pact would attack. The assumption was always that the overwhelming conventional force balance that the Warsaw Pact enjoyed would lead to a retreat from the front by NATO forces and, without necessarily admitting to themselves, NATO's first use of nuclear weapons.

Q: I would think that just by its nature that there's no way you couldn't use nuclear weapons.

BEERS: It was always an issue. When do you use it? Do you use it on NATO soil or do you use it on Warsaw Pact soil? What are your targets? How far do you allow yourself to be driven back before you're prepared to use nuclear weapons? On the one hand not wanting to immediately use nuclear weapons and the other hand not wanting to use those nuclear weapons in the tactical sense on your own territory, your own civilians who might be in the area.

Q: Well, in planning if you know you're facing an overwhelming force, you have to have very optimistic plans about how you would beat back this force or something like that. Either that or you'd say okay, we're going to fall back to the Rhine and then nuke the hell out of them and they'll nuke us.

BEERS: Well, I haven't talked about strategic exchange and that was always the end point of the exercise. In other words, the conventional war would begin, NATO would be attacked. The Warsaw Pact would advance. Tactical nuclear weapons would be used. That's why I was talking about how long do you wait before you begin to use tactical nuclear weapons because the longer you wait the more likely you are tactically to be using them on NATO territory as opposed to Warsaw Pact territory. I mean you obviously would want to think about preventing second and third echelon forces from the Warsaw Pact getting to the front and you could go after them in marshaling yards in the east. If you were also being driven back by the first echelon forces, what do you do to stop the first echelon force? Then at the end of the exercise you would get to the point where to stop the war the United States would threaten strategic nuclear exchange. You sort of end it. I mean my memory is a little hazy. I may not be entirely accurate, but that's sort of the way the exercises went.

Q: At a certain point logic tells you there's no way of getting around it.

BEERS: Yes, but note that strategic nuclear exchange didn't involve NATO. That's a U.S. unilateral decision, whereas the use of tactical nuclear weapons did involve NATO.

Q: Were there nuclear people sort of on the planning in the planning groups?

BEERS: Oh, yes very much so. They were tactical nuclear weapons.

Q: Were these things looked upon as oh my God. I mean were people talking rationally about them?

BEERS: They were not treated as beyond the pale. It was very much these are weapons that are part of warfare. They are part of planning. We have to be prepared to use them because that will likely be the only way in which a Warsaw Pact attack could be stopped.

Q: Yes. What was your impression again? I understand you're a junior officer on this, what was your impression of the analysis of the Soviet forces?

BEERS: I think the folks there gave the Russians more credit, gave the Warsaw Pact, no, mostly the Soviets, more credit for their capability than subsequently turned out to be the case. This predated the Gorbachev period, which was nearer to the end of the Soviet Union when it became clear that the Soviet general staff recognized that the technological backwardness of the Soviet military establishment was a serious vulnerability that they had. It was more simply they had this many troops. They have this many tanks. They have this many artillery pieces. What can stop them? Rather than asking more difficult questions on the Warsaw Pact allies which I think with the exception of the East Germans were treated as lesser capable forces. They certainly contributed to the overwhelming numerical superiority that Warsaw Pact conventional forces had then. I think that the sense of the capability of the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact was driven predominantly by the numbers. They just seemed overwhelming. Within NATO, all of the militaries, and this is more true in Western Europe than it was in the United States, were fighting for their share of resources within their own national budgets. These countries had large social programs then and still do that they needed to fund. One of the common themes of American political military diplomacy at that time was everybody should be spending I think it was 3% of their GNP or 3% of their national budgets, I don't remember which it was, on the military. A lot of countries weren't reaching that level and there was always a concern that this made them less effective and made the task of defending Europe from the Soviets more difficult. At no time during this period was there a crisis. Now, wait a minute. We would have had the '73 war going on.

Q: Yes, I was going to say.

BEERS: We would have had the threats in association with the '73 war which were Middle Eastern based.

Q: The '73 war being the October War.

BEERS: Right.

Q: Wasn't there I mean.

BEERS: There was a Russian threat.

Q: There was a Russian threat and there was also concern that we were reaching into our own strategic stockpile, wasn't it in order to, the Israelis had lost a hell of a lot of equipment and supplies.

BEERS: The _____ of conventional force on location, yes.

Q: A decision was made by I guess the president to give the Israelis what they needed which was taking away from our supplies.

BEERS: Yes, but my memory is that that passed fairly quickly as a serious concern. Part of the concern or discussion then was the mental state of Richard Nixon and the Schlesinger dual key requirement so that the president couldn't initiate hostilities without Schlesinger's concurrence.

Q: What about, I mean also Vietnam was falling apart.

BEERS: Yes, but that was really outside of.

Q: What was the effect though on American troops? The people you were talking to were officers dealing with their own troops. Were you picking up concerns of, you as a Vietnam veteran and all, were you getting reports of the American army just ain't what it used to be or something like that?

BEERS: That was certainly an issue that was beginning to be talked about. At headquarters we were pretty much removed from the troops so it was sort of more casual chatter. I don't remember a lot of discussion about it although the press was certainly reporting the drug problem and other kinds of issues associated with Vietnam. The last American troops came out in '73. I don't remember when in '73. Then Vietnam collapsed in '75.

Q: You left in '75, whither?

BEERS: I went to the economic course at FSI.

Q: You took the economics course for what about six months?

BEERS: It was a six months course then and it was the functional equivalent of a masters in economic studies.

Q: You did this in '70?

BEERS: June of '75 until December or January of '76.

Q: Now, how did you find the course?

BEERS: I thought it really was stimulating and an exciting course. I had had just your basic economics 101 when I was in college and it was not something that I had a lot of familiarity with and felt that as a Foreign Service Officer it was something that I really ought to have in my kit in order to be able to deal with economic issues in foreign countries.

Q: I think one of the prickly points of this or at least one of the landmines of the economic course for a garden variety Foreign Service Officer is statistics, the math and all that. How did you find it?

BEERS: I actually very much liked it. I had not done well in Calculus in college. When I went to graduate school at the University of Michigan, I went back mostly because I wanted to learn statistics. I wanted to use it as a historical investigation technique. I had actually had most of the statistical stuff that they were dealing with and had already been using mainframe computers for calculations so it wasn't a challenge.

Q: Well, then looking back on it, how did you find it as a course as pertinent to what you were doing?

BEERS: Since I later got very much involved in things related to the budget and to military procurement for foreign customers I thought it was a useful course. The macroeconomics gave me some sense of what was happening in foreign countries in a macro sense, but I really didn't use it as much as I did the parts about budgets in business and things related to the military. As I progressed in my career the budget part of it became the most important aspect.

Q: Well, we get to '76, whither, what?

BEERS: You're supposed to have a related assignment coming out of the economics course and I was interested in either energy or food or population and the first two had no openings so I ended up going to work for Marshall Green in the office of population affairs which was located in OES at that point in time.

Q: I've interviewed Marshall Green in various parts of his career including that which is one he picked himself as seeing this really was a problem having been ambassador to Indonesia and all. Tell me about working with Marshall Green and our approach at the time. You did this in '76 to?

BEERS: From '76 to '78 when I went on leave without pay with a brief stint in the office of the counselor which I'll come back to. Marshall had just come into the office. It was after the population conference which was headed up by the guy who had really pioneered population affairs in the State Department, Philander Claxton -- always an interesting name and he had more than his share of children, let me put it that way. There

was always a question about maybe he got religion late on this issue. Marshall as far as he related to us he one chose it. It was very much an issue that he thought of as repairing his relationship with his son with whom he had a great falling out during the Vietnam War when he was a defender of the war and his son was very much in opposition to that. I remember one time when he went off on a trip I believe to Brazil with his son to look at this issue. He was on the one hand I think a true believer and on the other hand given his enormous diplomatic skills very much an able articulator of the issue. This was in the late Ford administration and overlapping into the Carter administration. I think it was his last Foreign Service assignment if I recall correctly.

Q: I think it was, yes.

BEERS: Then he went off to one of the population NGOs after that. But he, like all of us who worked in this particular area, labored under the difficulty of getting more senior people to think about and do something about the problem. We tried several different angles working with outside academics, working with people in the business community, pushing issues to try to get discussions and speeches in national security studies. This was at a time before the Reagan administration came in with its Mexico City policy and so both Ford and then Carter were at least rhetorically supportive of population control. There was a guy in AID, Ray Ravenholt, an epidemiologist by training and his solution to the population problem was contraception. He was well known for his distribution of condoms, multicolored condoms, anything to get people interested in using them. He also was supportive of abortion during the period before abortion got a bad name in the Republican Party. There are a number of different kinds of interventions that he was supportive of. What he was less supportive of was what are other tools that are now more widely used, programs to empower women, programs to deal with economic development to raise living standards and therefore create the basis for family decisions that didn't need children as insurance policies. The reason I spent so much time on him was, as the executor or implementer of population policy at the practical level, his views were very different from Marshall's views. Marshall was not opposed to these kinds of interventions, he just didn't think that they were the only way that one should proceed. AID was having a schizophrenic sort of approach to Ravenholt. There were people there who were looking at much more a broader development that was even more pronounced than when the Carter administration came in to office. Ravenholt eventually left and Sandy Levin I think came in and replaced him in the brief period before he went back to Michigan to become a member of congress. It was a period when population affairs didn't have this ideological overhang on the abortion issue. It was a lot freer and open kind of debate than is possible today.

Q: How did you, in the first place, sort of career wise, people say, what the hell are you doing over there?

BEERS: I think that my career counselor recognized that I had to at least show something to do after taking the economics course. I was also beginning to think that maybe I didn't want to stay in the Foreign Service. It was an intellectually interesting job. It was

definitely under any circumstance a career excursion and, yes, my counselor was sort of wondering what to do.

Q: This is tape three, side one with Rand Beers. Yes?

BEERS: David Passage was still lingering around on the 7th floor at this particular point in time and he and Jim Montgomery contrived to recommend me to Matt Nimitz as one among several special assistants he might want to pick up. So, for a period of from about January, February of '77 until probably sometime in August I was a 7th floor special assistant and I worked primarily on Micronesia.

Q: I'd like to go back though now to the population.

BEERS: Yes.

Q: What.

Q: This is tape three side one with Rand Beers.

BEERS: David Passage was still lingering around on the seventh floor at this particular point in time. He and Jim Montgomery contrived to recommend me to Matt Nimetz as one of among several special assistants that he might want to pick up. So, for a period from about January, February of '77 till probably sometime in August I was a seventh floor special assistant and I worked primarily on Micronesia.

Q: I like to go back though now to the population.

BEERS: Yeah

Q: You say there was much sort of intellectual ferment about what to do about this problem. I mean, I assume the projections were being run off and they were horrendous.

BEERS: They were. I mean this was before there was some curtailment. The Chinese population policy had just begun; but it hadn't shown the kinds of results ..

Q: This is one child.

BEERS: Right. And the other projections around the world were still quite high and so when you ran the math out, yeah, it was very dramatically a doomsday scenario.

Q: Were there centers at universities or other places that were looking at the population thing quite seriously? I mean where was sort of the impulse coming from?

BEERS: It was a combination of the academic world combined with a number of NGOs and they were the instigators, the drum beaters, the pushers and shovers, and always pressing the government to do more. There were a number of people with connections in

the population movement who would call up senior people in the administration and say that they ought to do this or do that. That represented in many ways the path through which things got done. The anti-abortion movement was just beginning to become a serious issue within the United States. Well, Catholicism still had the reservations that it has always had about contraception; they had subsided by and large during this period and then picked up again as the anti-abortion movement moved into full swing.

Q: Was the United States seen as having its own problem or we really looking at the outside world?

BEERS: We were predominantly looking at the outside world but there was always the question about a child in the United States represents a utilization of resources that are far greater than children in the developing world. So that the consumption of energy, the consumption other goods, meant that we were using the planet's resources at a far higher rate than in the developing world. And that moving in the direction of replacement only ought also to be a policy here, or at least a practice if not a policy. Europe was beginning to show a movement in terms of zero population growth. And that was sort of held up as the model for the United States.

Q: Were we looking at the problem in population? There is consumption, how to do that, but also it's the other side of it, if you don't keep having little more than replacement you're going to end up with too many old people depending on the young people supporting them. Was that something that we were looking at?

BEERS: I don't remember that being an issue then as it has become now. I first remember the issue as we began to worry about social security which was during the Reagan administration, at least that's what I'm remembering. I'm sure there were people who were talking about this. But it wasn't part of the policy deliberations that I remember.

Q: How were we looking at India?

BEERS: India and China were the two big countries in the world at that particular time. India was the country where we had tried over a number of years, through various interventions on both development and population, to see if we couldn't reduce population. China was much more of a country unto itself where our interventions essentially were non-existent at that point. To the extent that anybody was there it was the UN not USAID. India was the place where we were really trying very hard, in a single country, to make a difference.

Q: Did you have the feeling that we were doing the right things? Or that the Indians were cooperating? Or, how was this going?

BEERS: My memory is that the whole process of development within India was a mixed bag. That our interventions were always less than the desired level of success for a lot of the reasons that people talk about now with respect to development in terms of corruption and government inefficiency. But having said that, it was probably the biggest laboratory

that we had for trying out population policies at that particular point in time. The two years that I was there I don't remember any particularly dramatic successes that people were touting. But dealing with population growth is a very long-term proposition.

Q: Oh yes! Did you find you were up against, that's the wrong term, that enthusiasts not fanatics but enthusiasts, I mean people that you are having to deal with who were, I mean this was their focus and difficult for them to see the things in perspective in the political process?

BEERS: Yeah, there was certainly an element of that. I mean, like many of the single-issue constituencies they were, the population control advocates were as much a single issue constituency as the anti-abortion group. They were frustrated by lack of progress. They wanted more money -- doesn't everybody -- in support of their projects. They were still in the process of trying to understand what kinds of interventions were in fact going to be successful. And that was the debate about condoms versus development.

Q: AIDS, of course, was not part of the equation.

BEERS: No it was not. Certainly African population growth was a concern. But no, AIDS was not.

Q: When you left there how did you feel wither the program?

BEERS: When I left, because Ravenholt had left by that time, I felt that the program and this would have been during the Carter Administration was moving in a much more balanced way. And the issue then would be to what extent would program support in the form of funds be available? I mean, even though there was a Democratic majority in the Congress, there was still a difficulty, traditional difficulty, in getting foreign assistance. Ironically, it was the Reagan administration that probably got the biggest increases relative to the budget for foreign assistance.

Q: Then, well, you went to the seventh floor, the top executive floor of the State Department. Who were you working for?

BEERS: I was working for Matt Nimetz at the very beginning of the Carter Administration. He was given Cyprus as his principal portfolio and he had a special assistant who worked with him on Cyprus and then other tasks advanced as appropriate for him as somebody who Vance had come to know in his New York law firm before he came down with the Secretary of State. The one issue that I inherited was Micronesia and what we ought to do about the Compact of Free Association. This was a process of ending finally the trust territories and deciding what place in the world Micronesia was going to have.

Q: How did you view that problem when you looked at it for the first time?

BEERS: Well, it seemed to me that as the country that was despite having had a long history in the Philippines and numerous interventions in Latin America, it seemed to me that we were a country that really wasn't a nation of empire and that the transition for the various small island groups in the Pacific was to move in the direction of giving them as much freedom as possible recognizing that because of their size there was going to be a relationship with the United States of some form. Not Guam. They did not seem to be interested in that kind of a relationship with the United States. I'm trying to remember when the Marianas withdrew from this. I think it was it was around that timeframe and affiliated. I don't remember it is as occurring while I was actually working on this problem. They were the only element in the in the group of the people that I talked to who had come from the islands to Washington who seemed interested in remaining in a close relationship with the United States. So the issue then became: how do you define what we called the Compact of Free Association? Independent states with some kind of a relationship with the United States that was more than, that represented some kind of common direction with respect to foreign policy and security.

Q: Did you find yourself at least representing State Department in battles with Department of the Interior at this point?

BEERS: There was a battle with Interior but in the end it ended up being more with the views of the Pentagon and their desire to maintain a relationship that would have allowed them to have a basing structure in in the Pacific. So, yeah, there were sort of three parts to this. In the end Brzezinski essentially sided with the Pentagon.

Q: Part of our policy was essentially strategic denial. In other words, we didn't want the Soviets or the Chinese messing around there.

BEERS: It was certainly strategic denial and this is obviously before we lost the Philippine bases. But it was a time in which, for example, the Palaus. I think it's Ulithi in the Palaus was looked at as a very nice anchorage that might be developable.

Q: One thinks of that photograph taken during World War II of Ulithi called Murderers Row, was showing all our aircraft carriers and other vessels all moored together. I remember that distinctly.

Did you get out there or see any of that?

BEERS: No. I did not travel. The people came to Washington, the advocates for this and that. I talked with them and sometimes Matt Nimetz talked with them as we tried to define this policy. Obviously there was very much a desire to retain the missile test range at Kwajalein. So, whatever the marshals were going to do...

Q: Well, that was an important trump card wasn't it?

BEERS: Absolutely. And they often thought that maybe they could have a separate deal.

Q: Yeah. Well, essentially weren't you dealing with Washington lawyers who were, you know, working on behalf of...

BEERS: Yeah, that's true. I'd forgotten about that aspect of it. Covington and Burling was one of the firms whose lawyers came to see me; either with their clients or separately.

Q: I take it this was not very high on the administration's agenda?

BEERS: No. But when it went up for decision at the deputies in the principals level, which was sort of late in the time that I was there, they dealt with it pretty quickly and the word came back down that we would preserve our defense relationship out there. That that was the preeminent issue for how the Compact ought to be negotiated.

Q: Well, much was boiled down to how much financial support we'd give. Wasn't that?

BEERS: Well, to some degree it did. But the other side of it was, to what degree did the United States want to twist arms in order to make it clear that this was the best deal you were going to get. So, yeah, money was part of the discussion. Certainly the islanders wanted as much money as the United States could give them. As best I remember, we never put anything approaching what they wanted on the table. But, their choices were limited, and we were not prepared to let them be free agents in appealing to, as you pointed out, the Russians or the Chinese.

Q: Yeah. Did you have a problem of, you know, these islands really don't have a damn thing they can... Unless they want to go back to raising breadfruit, coconuts, and going out and fishing, there is not a hell a lot they can do.

BEERS: Well, there's some degree of tourism to the extent that there's good diving or whatnot out there. Although, I don't know how developed that is.

Q: Well, I went in about 1995 or so, I spent a week on Pohnpei sort of as an advisor to setting up a consular service. You know, it was like going into a poor part of West Virginia or something. Sort of the old society had kind of gone. It was pickup trucks and beer. Kind of sad.

BEERS: Yeah, I think except for places like the Solomons, where you actually had enough land that you could talk about possible serious agriculture, that they really were too small for much but the traditional form of living which was, as you point out, fishing and coconuts.

Q: They'd stop doing most. The fishing, they were buying canned tuna from Japan. The Japanese were fishing them out. I mean it was an unfortunate situation unless you want to sort of go back to the Stone Age there isn't much to do.

BEERS: Yeah. Well, and I mean, to some extent they were hoping that Law of the Seas would bring them some sort of a windfall from the ocean bottom if they could get

agreement to economic zones that were economically viable for them. But those were all dreams. I remember the marshals came by and said, well, we're going to issue postage stamps and we'll make our revenue that way, or we'll make some revenue that way. That is a way to make some revenue among the stamp collecting community. Not much sale for letters.

Q: No. Where we concerned, did the issue come up of their relationship to the United States as far as passports, visas, and that sort of thing? Was that something you're looking at?

BEERS: I don't remember that become becoming an issue. It's an obvious sort of next level question. But we were really deciding on what were the broad parameters of our negotiating position.

Q: Were we looking at establishing embassies in these places?

BEERS: I don't think we had actually come down on that. We had the principal relationship as you pointed out which was the Interior Department at that particular point in time. We did obviously ultimately establish a relationship.

Q: The reason I ask about the Interior relationship was that you had sort of two full things. You had Department of Interior which had its people who went out there on trips and all; you know, this was part of their own little empire and you don't -- we all know in a bureaucracy you don't take things away easily. And then you had congressmen who were on the interior committees who also use this. You know if you're going out to look at the islands you've got to stop in Hawaii for couple days to rest and recuperate and that sort of thing. I'm being facetious, but we were breaking somebody's rice bowls by particularly that interior-congress relationship. I was wondering whether that came into your sphere.

BEERS: It did, but it was not a major issue because I think that there was a broad decision in the Carter Administration to, in this relationship and set it out on new ground so that we didn't have to deal with it. There was a guy who was deputy UN Ambassador, Don, African-American,

Q: McHenry?

BEERS: Yes! Don McHenry. He had written a book at Carnegie on this issue and basically sold it to the Carter Administration as something that we ought to resolve. That was where we were starting from. The issue then became simply: how did we do that transition in the best possible way, rather than retaining the old trust territory.

Q: But you left before that came to fruition.

BEERS: Yeah.

Q: We'll stop here. But where did you go?

BEERS: What happened basically was I had two young children at that particular point in time and I had originally thought that seventh-floor work would be interesting and challenging and it ended up being more than I was prepared to handle.

Q: You're talking about hours and things like that.

BEERS: Yeah and maintain my family relationship; being a child of a divorce marriage I really wanted to make that work. So, I went to Matt Nimetz and said you know I just don't feel that I can perform at the level that is expected or that I expect of myself. He said to me, well, you know, I don't have any complaints about you reducing your hours. And I said, but I have this problem myself. I can't do what I want to do to my level of expectations. So I ended up going back to the Office of Population Affairs, but it was really a short stint until I could go on leave without pay. Which was to go back and try to finish my dissertation and make a decision on whether I wanted to stay in government or whether I wanted to go back to academia.

Q: Okay, this is the 14th of August 2003. Rand, let's talk a bit first about the long hours on the 7th floor and all. What was your impression?

BEERS: Well, in terms of the overall sort of 7th floor work ethic I think there was and still is an expectation on the part of special assistants that they've been anointed to be the men and women in waiting to the Dukes and the Duchesses at very elevated levels. And that one, there's a desire to serve, to do a good job. It's regarded as a career enhancing assignment that allows one a certain visibility among senior levels in the Foreign Service, or, in the State Department, that don't come with being a desk officer in one of the regional or functional bureaus. So, one, it's an honor; two, it's an opportunity, and then three, you really are dependent upon your access to the principal in your ability to provide information, or pieces of paper, or contacts, at a near moment's notice should you be asked, or to push issues forward that need the principal's attention. Your opportunity to get to the principal is entirely dependent upon the principal's schedule. So there's this, it isn't necessarily you don't have access, is that you can't predict when you will have access because of the often busy schedules of seventh or principals. Then there's the, well I should be there before the boss gets here and I should stay after the boss leaves, sort of syndrome. You know, I think all of those end up being factors in pushing people toward long hours. In my own case it was I had two young children and wanted to get home and be their father, not just an absentee landlord.

Q: Well, I mean, you know, did you can see a real problem with families? Divorces? Separations? That sort of thing?

BEERS: I think this was a period in which the previous cultural norm of families staying together, in spite of differences, had broken down. And that it was more likely that families which weren't functional would split. So, the sense of job dedication hadn't changed and if there were more women working there were two people who had the same

sense of job dedication. And that meant how much time were you spending in your spousal relationship? How much time were you thinking or devoting to it? That kind of tendency in those kinds of high-pressure jobs automatically means that you're going to have some sort of problem.

Q: Well, how did you feel, again as I mentioned before, what was your feeling towards government service at this point? Or, at least State Department service?

BEERS: Because of that expectation of the time that needed to be devoted to the job, and it could well have been my own expectations of what I thought I should be doing, I was feeling like it wasn't clear that I wanted to continue to work for the government. And that I wanted something that had a little more freedom in terms of time to be with my family. Something that was structure able to allow that kind of time. In terms of job satisfaction, I think up to that point I hadn't really done anything much that I thought was very significant. It was sort of the time one reasonably should expect to spend in waiting.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Learning the tools of the trade. Understanding the way in which bureaucracies work. The way in which foreign countries were in a really practical way that a Foreign Service officer has to do. I was also not, I found that I liked working in Washington more than I liked working in an overseas environment even though I really hadn't tested the overseas environment. But I really thought that Washington was a more interesting place to go and wasn't so interested in picking up and moving every several years. Having grown up in a service family it seemed fun as a kid but when I had to do it myself it was less fun.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: My wife was more clear in her own mind that it wasn't fun. I was not sure I wanted to stay in the Foreign Service even if I stayed in government. Not sure I wanted to stay in government. And not really having anything that bound me in terms of job satisfaction to staying in the government.

Q: Well, then you went on leave without pay?

BEERS: I went on leave without pay for what ended up being 18 months in an effort to finish my dissertation. And probably would have done that if we hadn't gotten into a financial situation in which I needed to come back and earn a salary because my wife wasn't working at the time.

Q: I was just going to say, you know, leave without pay for a Foreign Service officer, like myself or something, you know a couple months and then all of a sudden it really begins to bind.

BEERS: Well, we had a very, very, very low mortgage payment. I worked as a carpenter part-time in order to have time to work on my dissertation.

Q: Okay. Well, your dissertation again was what?

BEERS: It was career patterns in the Army and Air Force from 1900 to 1950 as seen through the graduating classes of West Point from 1885 to 1930. So it was a collective history or collected biography of the military during that period; through the separation of the Air Force from the Army in 1947. It was a follow-on to a study of general officers that a sociologist named Morris Janowitz did on the professional soldier, a book that came out in about 1960. His was more sociological and mine was really an effort to understand what or how military officers operated in their careers in order to one, develop themselves professionally, to get ahead and three, to adapt to a very changing sense of warfare that occurred during this period. You have in terms of innovations: the machine gun, gas, the tank or gasoline engines, the airplane, and missiles, among other things. Radios.

Q: When you think about it.

BEERS: Other kinds of communications. I mean, we have a lot of technological innovation today. But for that 50-year period in terms of the changing nature of warfare I still think that more changes took place in that period that forced military officers to totally rethink warfare and their careers than all of the brilliant technological innovations that we've had in the latter half of the century.

Q: Well, they've all been accumulative.

BEERS: That's right.

Q: I mean, the idea was there first. They've just gotten ...

BEERS: Right, right, right. Precision guided munitions have changed work there considerably. But their improvements on existing technology, they're not really the same kind of thing as new technology like the gasoline engine and the airplane or the radio.

Q: Well, did you, I mean can't go too far in this subject. But part of the thing too was the role of the United States military. If you were a British officer you've learned colonial wars keeping an eye on Germany. If you were a German officer during the early part of this period you kept an eye on France and Russia. I mean, this sort of thing.

BEERS: And if you were an American officer you fought the Indians.

Q: Yeah. And the Indians were a dissipating commodity.

BEERS: Right, right, Now 1898 and the Spanish-American war was the next major military adventure after the Civil War. It was a totally new experience for the United

States. Yeah, we fought the Mexican War; that was outside of the United States. But this was different. And then Europe, twice, and the Pacific once. That was a real change.

Q: What was your impression of the officers who went into the Air Force? The reason I ask, I came into the Air Force as an enlisted man in 1950 and we seem to have a superfluidity of captains and majors who probably were good pilots. I was a college graduate and I had a hard time trying to respect some of the officers. Because they were flyers and that was that.

BEERS: Stu, that is a very accurate characterization of the Air Force. It is something that even to this day the Air Force still is trying to overcome. There were a number of technically very bright people who had advanced degrees the longer the Army Air Corps and the Air Force continued as an organization. But, the core of the organization was pilots and the core of the corps of pilots were fighter pilots. If you ever saw the movie Top Gun that's sort of the way that a lot of them behave. They are on one level the lineal descendants, in my view in warfare, of knights. They get on their horses, or into their cockpits, with their men-at-arms servicing them and go off and do individual combat in an organized chaos, fighter pilots, and come back with their degree of recognition being the number planes they shot down. They are prepared to live at the edge. That's a certain personality type in many cases. And probably the best pilots do everything at the edge. So when you've run into those and people it it's not surprising that the personality type it's not particularly conducive to making an organization work. They were all individualist. They're not team players even though fighter pilot tactics suggest that you have to not so much fly in formation but it works better if you at least have a wingman as teammate.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: But it's still more an individual sport than a team sport.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: And so people who flew bombers were sort of second fiddle to that. Even though it was the purpose of the fighter planes was to protect the bombers.

Q: Well, anyway, did you get any support from the military on your work?

BEERS: I did. I had a fellowship from the Office of the Chief of Military History. I actually got the first fellowship that they offered while I was still in graduate school but had to turn it down because I entered the Foreign Service and so I applied again and came back and was offered that fellowship again. That was part of what I lived on for the first year. Then the second year I was applying for an Eisenhower fellowship at the Smithsonian and while I got it, it really wasn't going to be enough money which is why I came back.

Q: So, after working on this you didn't finish your dissertation.

BEERS: No.

Q: It's still sitting there?

BEERS: It's still sitting there. The University of Michigan, maybe uniquely, has no time limit on history dissertations.

Q: When did you come back?

BEERS: I came back in August of 1979.

Q: How did you feel about it? I mean, were you sort of reluctantly dragged in: oh my god, I have to have a job?

BEERS: There was one part of that. But what happened was my career counselor knowing my abiding interest in political-military affairs said that there was an opening in an office in the Bureau of Political Military Affairs (PM) that was called the Office of Systems Analysis and did a lot of interesting studies, if you will, on political military affairs subjects for the director of PM, Les Gelb, a Carter Administration appointee. He was leaving and Reggie Bartholomew succeeded him. But, it was an interesting office that I went into. It was, briefly, an arms control job. I had not done arms control before. I was hired to be the exotic arms specialist. This is a period when the SALT II treaty had been signed and the Carter Administration was organizing itself for the SALT III treaty. There had been an effort in association with SALT II to do an anti-satellite agreement and it had not come to fruition. So there was the notion that as the effort was organized for SAFT III that we should also make a push in terms of seeing if we couldn't put some limits on exotic weaponry. This is the State Department's view. The Pentagon was concerned about limiting new technology in areas that we really hadn't yet defined what we wanted or could do. We didn't know enough about what could be done to be, in their mind, entirely sure that we ought to put limitations forward that we didn't really understand. That was the job that I got hired to do. I worked on that job for about four months until the Russians, the Soviets, invaded Afghanistan. And then my career took off.

Q: What was your, you must have been devouring all of the developments, figure out what the hell you're talking about?

BEERS: Yes. I have some science background but I had to do a lot of learning about lasers.

Q: I was going to say I'm told lasers and directed-energy was a big thing that the Soviets are supposed to be quite a bit ahead of us. How do you knock out satellites and that sort of thing.

BEERS: With a little dose of ABM as well. Early ABM.

Q: This is the time when you went into a political military affairs and the Bureau, from all accounts, had quite a reputation. I mean, it was particularly strong. I think it changed quite a bit. But at that time it was a group of extraordinary, both senior and younger, officers. Is this correct?

BEERS: That's absolutely true. It was Les Gelb, Reg Bartholomew, Rick Burt was the first Reagan appointee. I guess it was Jonathan Howe, Allen Holmes, Jack Chain. The directors and assistant secretaries were extraordinary. But truly, more extraordinary than that was the office that I went into. The first office director that I worked for was a guy named Bill Barnett. (end tape 3 side a)

Q: You were saying Arnie Kanter was there.

BEERS: Arnie Kanter was the office director during the Reagan administration. Barnett left at the beginning of the Reagan administration. Dick Clarke was the deputy office director in that office. Among the action officers in that office were myself, John Gordon ultimately DDCI and now Homeland Security Adviser to President Bush, Chuck Cartman ambassador to Korea and now the head of CATO, Joe Limprecht ambassador to Albania who died about a year ago on the job. So it was it was an extraordinary group of people who happened to be in the same office at the same time who went on to important other jobs in their careers.

Q: Obviously you can't sit and plumb the depths of State Department experience in this thing. You'd come up with, you're working almost with an empty well. You had to go out somewhere else.

BEERS: No.

Q: That would be the Pentagon, maybe MIT. How did you go about it? I like to find out how people go about doing things? How do you do this?

BEERS: You mean in terms of hiring the people? Or information?

Q: I'm talking about getting information.

BEERS: Well, again, the people who were hired in addition to Foreign Service officers were from the Pentagon or were military officers. One of the things that PM did traditionally was have about a third of their officers be exchange assignments from the Pentagon. Then people who either had work from academia like Kanter or who had academic connections. So, yeah, exactly. The idea was to go and mine as much information as you possibly could. From the other agencies where the greater expertise or knowledge base lay or to go to outside people. There were interns that were or visiting scholars who were hired in those offices as well to provide input to the various things that we were thinking about in terms of arms control and whatnot. It was absolutely essential because most of the information that we were dealing with was not State Department

information. We simply put it in a State Department political context. But it was essentially military information.

Q: Well now, later the exotic side became pretty much a focal point of the Reagan, from the president, you know, Star Wars. Was that within your orbit?

BEERS: No. By that time I had gone back to regional affairs. When I said that was the job that I was hired with, I really only did that job until December and then the whole SALT empire collapsed after the Senate refused to ratify the SALT II treaty. The focus of a lot of the work that PM was involved in, at least this office which was basically an office of special projects for the PM director, shifted over to thinking about how to deal with the Soviets in Afghanistan and the concerns with respect to the Persian Gulf.

Q: My question was not so much on the Reagan side, but was the equivalent to Star Wars something we were looking at? You know, sort of never-never, an ability to shoot down enemy missiles? Was that something you were looking at?

BEERS: It was something that we looked at, but it was thought to be a technology that was insufficiently mature to be able to in fact achieve the objective in any near term.

Q: Did you get any feel for the push/pull of saying okay, here is something that's coming down the pike. Like an energy directed laser stuff or something. Can we put a limitation on it or the other side saying, hell no this looks promising? I mean this will give us another arrow in our quiver or something like that?

BEERS: You have characterized the state of the debate at that particular point in time which was: do we even want to go down that road or is it so interesting and promising that we want to have the flexibility to in fact see what whether we could get them. I think that that was a particularly interesting transitional time when you think about what appeared to be happening and what was actually happening. On one level there was an expectation that the Russians were very technologically advanced in these areas and that we had better do something to catch up with them. Reality is more: no they weren't and that eventually our technology overwhelmed them and they were in awe of us. Ogarkov and others in the mid-eighties wrote extensively about how Western technology would be the weapon that defeated the Soviet armies. Even with overwhelming conventional superiority in numbers.

Q: You were there not at the birth but the teenager, junior age, of sort of the computer driven type thing. The computer was not that, these are big mainframes.

BEERS: Still mainframes, not laptops. Certainly not even desktops.

Q: So, I mean, it was not something that's going to go out on the battlefield or not.

BEERS: No. There were certainly computers that you could put in to main headquarters or on naval vessels. But no, they were not mobile.

Q: Were we seeing the computer as such a tool as now it has become sort of indispensable?

BEERS: Certainly on one level. The one experience that I remember was an exercise, a military exercise, which had to do with military deployments. In the pre-computer days all of the matching of troops and ships and planes was done as military describes it: in stubby pencil form. The computer was just coming into military staff work in that regard in terms of being able to solve this problem. Enter where the boats, ships and planes are, enter where the troops are, now give me a solution that moves them as quickly as possible from the United States to Western Europe, to the Persian Gulf to Korea, wherever you want. It's called the Tip-fiddle (TPFDL, time-phased deployment list). It was being done by the computer. But, in this particular exercise the computer crashed. They had to go back and do the final part of it with back of the envelope, or pieces of paper.

Q: The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, around Christmas time of 1979, really stopped everything. People must been speculating, what why the hell did they do it? What were you getting from this? Because you look at this, and we're very much living from that sort of minor invasion you might say is very much has tipped the whole new age for us. Which is sort of the age of terrorism.

BEERS: That's very true. We had during this period and really on to today in the form of Hamas and the Palestinian forms of terrorism a state-sponsored relationship. But Afghanistan created al-Qaeda, created this clear form of what is now called the non-state actor in international affairs. But in many ways Afghanistan was an enormously significant event in the end of 20th century history.

Q: The people banding about there when this invasion happened, was there any accepted wisdom of why they did this? The Soviets did this?

BEERS: Well certainly one of the themes was that they were, in geostrategic terms, coming south to the Indian Ocean. Coming south to the Persian Gulf looking for oil, trying to disrupt Western interests. The Soviets had had a long-standing relationship with India, for better or worse. Pakistan was a U.S. ally and Afghanistan was on their immediate border. Not clear to me what sense of ethnic threat they felt from Afghanistan. Or whether that was something that came much later. But it was definitely seen as a very threatening move against Western interests. And something that the United States needed to consider carefully and look at trying to deal with.

Q: It wasn't, we weren't seeing, well if they go in there they're not going to come out.

BEERS: Not initially, no.

Q: It was a feeling that this is a real step forward into a more threatening mode.

BEERS: Yeah. I think initially that certainly was the expectation.

Q: So, all of a sudden you lost your job, you know, in a way, an assignment. What did they do with you?

BEERS: Well, basically what happened Bartholomew was by that time the director of PM. Reg was always interested in anything that was new and exciting. So, it was Musky had become Secretary of State by that point and the question was what ought the US response to be? We had efforts to get Zia on board.

Q: Zia being the president?

BEERS: The president of Pakistan. The "Peanuts Rejection" on Zia's part for the piddling amount of security assistance. I think it was a hundred and eighty million dollars that was offered by the Carter Administration to stand up to the Soviets in any further incursions to the south. So we were sort of grasping around on what kinds of responses we ought to be prepared to do even in light of the fact that Zia wasn't about to be caught up so clearly in our orbit if we were unprepared to be more supportive of him than he thought he deserved to be. He obviously had to worry about India and to the degree that the U.S. gave him half a loaf. Was that going to make the Indians more concerned and him less capable of dealing with that concern? And what were the Soviets really up to? I got involved in a particular project that was to write a paper about what options the United States had if the Soviets continued South in Pakistan. It was about a five page paper. I researched it with the Pentagon. We had, I think, three sorts of options and each of the options had a series of defensive measures that the United States could take to signal the Soviets to stop or to be prepared to move military forces into Pakistan, to actually help the Pakistanis fend off the Soviets who would be at the end of a difficult supply line and moving into terrain that wasn't necessarily going to be that easy to operate in, at least not initially. Perhaps if you got down to the Indus plain it would be easier. But not initially.

So, I work the paper out with people in the Pentagon. Sent it on to the NSC. The NSC held a meeting on it and it became U.S. policy. What I was told was so remarkable about it was that when the paper went forward to the NSC there were no further comments. No one wanted to fiddle with the paper any further. That it was deemed just what was needed. And that that was remarkable at that point in time.

Q: In general what were some of the thrusts of this?

BEERS: It had to do with moving air, naval, and ground force assets to staging areas or into Pakistan to signal to the Soviets, and then to engage the Soviets if necessary. The strongest option had us engaging the Soviets militarily in Pakistan.

Q: How did we see the Indian response? Sometimes you look at the Indian-Pakistan standoff that's been going on and I would think that for India their worst nightmare would be to end up occupying Pakistan and taking it over. I mean, if Kashmir is a problem.

BEERS: Oh I think that's right!

Q: I mean, there must be a point where the Indian, I mean, even at that time the Indians looking at this would not see, in their best interest, to see a conquered Pakistan.

BEERS: Yes, I think that's right. There may be Indian nationalists who think that that's the solution to the problem. But India conquering Pakistan would be a worse nightmare than certainly the United States in Iraq today. I mean, there would be a hostile population. Why would they want to take that on themselves.

Q: A huge, hostile population. A military one too. And the terrain.

BEERS: I certainly think after the separation of East and West Pakistan into Pakistan and Bangladesh a lot of the strategic problems that India faced were removed. Two separate countries not likely to operate in concert. East Pakistan, Bangladesh, is a basket case anyway.

Q: Well, in running up this paper how did you find, who were your major contacts over at the Pentagon?

BEERS: There were people in the J5 and in ISA in the Middle East office in the Pentagon. So there were civilians and military people who worked on this together with us and then NEA, the Near East Bureau, Near East and South Asia Bureau at that point in time in the State Department.

Q: As you looked at it, our military assets at that point weren't very great were they? I mean we didn't have that tremendous buildup we've now had.

BEERS: This was the beginning of the RDJTF.

Q: Which means?

BEERS: The Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force which became CENTCOM after that. This was the period in which we began to assemble the pre-position shifts for Diego Garcia. When we began to look for bases in the Persian Gulf region beyond Bahrain where we were. Where the agreement with Oman was signed for pre-positioning and access. Where we began to see if we could cash in our chips with Saudi Arabia for all of the construction, the military construction, that we have done for them. All of those things really came to the fore during this period. We certainly knew up to that period that we were dependent upon Persian Gulf oil and that that was a security challenge. But the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, I think, made people much more on edge that that security concern really required a level of protection that didn't exist in the U.S. arsenal. We have spent the years leading up to that point in time looking at the Fulda Gap and the East-West battlefield in Western Europe. This maneuver in effect said that there was a

significant possibility that the Russians could attack the Persian Gulf oil fields and, if not take them over, deny them.

Q: When did Iran fit into the equation? Because at that point the Iranian Revolution was on and we had hostages.

BEERS: Right. That was obviously a concern. My memory is that people saw it as a nationalist revolution, a theological revolution, and not something that meant that Iran was going to fall into the Soviet orbit. But it certainly meant that Iran was no longer an ally of the United States. So it was a troubling picture in that regard. It meant that Iranian oil was subject to political denial by the Iranian government particularly because they were so hostile towards the United States. So that was a further complicating factor and perhaps that they would want to spread their fundamentalist religion at least into the Shia portions of Iraq and the Shia populations that are in the majority in some of the Persian Gulf sheikdoms.

Q: And part of the eastern province of Saudi Arabia.

Well, this paper went up to the NSC. Did you have any contact with the NSC as you were working on this?

BEERS: Yeah. Whoever the NSC senior director and directors that were concerned with it were certainly -- they followed the draft of the paper and when it finally came over from the Executive Secretariat they caused the meeting to be held. To review it. To make sure that it wasn't just the State Department piece of paper. And that's where the comment occurred: this is remarkable, we don't remember a paper like this. That gets scrutinized at this level after it came from one of the agencies.

Q: Well, then what were you doing?

BEERS: The next project that I ended up working on was AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) for Saudi Arabia. This was at the end of the of the Carter Administration and it was really a project that I wrote the first paper for. It ended up being a transition document for the Reagan Administration and one of the first projects that the Reagan Administration seized upon when it came into office. There were obviously other things that I worked on. That was the other major thing.

Q: Well, when you're talking about AWACS for Saudi Arabia, particularly at that time, this in a way was probably the hottest political issue that one can think of.

BEERS: Oh it certainly was! I mean, it really broke through the self-restrictions that we had placed upon ourselves about giving significant weapons and technology to Arab countries that could be a threat to Israel. It was a big battle on the Hill during the beginning of the Reagan Administration to get the sale approved because of the requirements for sales of that size to have actually approval from the Congress of the United States.

Q: Where did the initiative come from? I mean you were given the assignment, but somebody had to come up with the idea.

BEERS: The Saudis even then would put forward their lists of weapons that they would like to buy. The administration had a requirement to report to the Hill on pending arms sales which it tried not to do until they were sure that the arms sale was going to go through so that resistance to arms sales to whomever, but particularly the Arab-Israeli context, wouldn't be torpedoed before they had a chance to really get close to fruition. The Saudis wanted AWACS and F-15s and they wanted an air force, they said, to protect their oil fields and the Israelis felt that they wanted an air force to bomb Israel. That was the debate, in the simplest form, that went forward with this arms sale. The Saudis spent a lot of time and effort trying to convince people in the United States that this was a benign sale as far as Israel was concerned. The companies that sold the equipment obviously wanted to make those sales. They were hugely profitable. The Saudis tended to buy everything that you could hang on these aircraft, that they were allowed to hang on these aircraft. I'm sure that the markups that the companies put on them made the arms sales enormously profitable. The US government also benefited enormously because they were sold under foreign military sales (FMS) contracts and there was a markup that the government took off of these sales to administer the contracts. The advantage of having the government administer the contract meant that the foreign buyer was not simply left to deal with contractors in an arms-length sort of relationship, but had government people who knew the systems that were being sold. Because it had to be a U.S. military weapon system in order to be sold under an FMS contract. So the people who administered the contracts actually knew a great deal about systems that they were administering. So there was a serious benefit to having the pentagon administer the contract.

Q: When you've got this assignment where people saying: that's a non-starter? Because, I mean, just hearing this, certainly up to that point and even maybe today if the Israelis object we kind of rolled over and accepted their objections.

BEERS: Well, yeah. The Saudi wish list came in and the office in PM that did arms sale passed the list off to our office and said and give us your analysis on what makes sense for the Saudis to have and what's egregious. So I wrote the paper and I passed it to the other office. I really didn't think anything else of it. I mean, it was at the end of the administration and it was a project that I worked on. And about two months later, after the change of administration, it's when somebody came back to me and said, okay, we're really going to work on this. They really liked your paper in the incoming team and they want to work on it. So, yeah, I was a surprise to me.

Q: How long did you continue in PM?

BEERS: You know, a variety of positions until 1988 when I went to the NSC for the first time. I got out of the Foreign Service and became a civil servant. I moved from being an action officer to being a deputy office director to office director to a quasi-deputy assistant secretary in the front office.

Q: Okay. Well then let's talk about early Reagan Administration. What sort of things, did you find the change there? I mean, a new thrust or anything?

BEERS: I wouldn't so much call it a new thrust as an expansion of the attention that people gave to the Persian Gulf region. It's not that the Persian Gulf wasn't important, but this was a period in which because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, because of difficulties that we had with Iran, because the Iran-Iraq war broke out, because we were looking for improving our security posture in the region, there were a lot of activities concerned with Persian Gulf security. And they ended up being projects that I worked on. PM at the same time was doing a whole lot of work on the arms control side in terms of totally revamping the approach to arms control in the Reagan Administration. So that was another issue area that I didn't have anything to do with. The office that I worked had some people who did some arms control work. John Gordon worked on arms control. Occasionally we had somebody who worked on MBFR, Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe and some of the other issues. But we did analysis for other offices to some extent. We had some projects of our own. Most of what I did during this period was working on the Persian Gulf.

Q: Were we shifting our attention from Saudi Arabia to the United Arab Emirates and Qatar and places like that?

BEERS: I wouldn't say we were shifting our attention as much as trying to find a solution to the problem of the Saudi reluctance for US forces to be stationed in Saudi Arabia or to have what the military wanted in the form of a formal access agreement. The Saudis during this period always said if there's a security crisis in the region you all can come in. You built these airports. You know what's in them. You don't need to survey them every 30 minutes in order to know where to put things. But the military, in fact, did need to have regular contact so that the people who were actually working the projects could figure out where to put airplanes and troops and things like that because those were not static kinds of issues. The people who worked on them were not the same because people move. So, they did need to be updated. So during this period of time in addition to the Oman access, in addition to the expansion of the agreement with Bahrain, there were efforts to engage the UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait in something more, as well as to see whether or not we could expand the relationship with Oman and to test whether the Saudis were in fact prepared to offer a little more in the formal sense of an arrangement that would allow US military planners more and frequent access to the sites that might be used if there were a contingency. We had in this period the Iraqis -- at the beginning of the period it was the Iraqi threat in 1980. It was the threat of the Iraqis coming into Saudi Arabia, invading Saudi Arabia. Then, the Iraqis got tangled up with the Iranians in the Iran-Iraq war. And then the Iranians pushed the Iraqis back and it looked like the Iranians might win the war and maybe they would come south. But all during this period of time there was a Soviet overhang and people were simply trying out war plans. How do you defend Saudi Arabia and how do you defend the Persian Gulf no matter who comes south from the Iraqi border? The problems always were: how do you get enough forces there quickly enough to stop the attack before it has a chance to get to the major oil fields.

Kuwait, I think, was always regarded as something that we probably couldn't defend in an initial onslaught unless there were an enormous amount of warning time that allowed us to deploy forces that far north.

Nobody wanted us to have forces in the region. So, you know, pre-positioning was the strategic alternative to that. Stationing carriers in the Indian Ocean on a permanent basis was a major issue. But, where the heck did they go? For port visits in a region, in the Arab world at least, it certainly didn't want 5,000 sailors coming ashore in an Arab society. So the carrier would come in and would make port calls in places that were as far away as Perth or Mombasa. I don't remember whether they went in to Karachi or not. It was an enormous burden on the Navy to be able to station carriers in that environment for extended periods of time because of the lack of ability to let the sailors go ashore and the additional time away from families that was inevitable. The transit time to get to the Indian Ocean from an American port was huge and even if you took them from the forward port of say, Athens or Japan, that meant that they weren't patrolling in the Mediterranean or the Pacific. So you had a degradation. Or you had to make a replacement from the United States for all of the advantages that you'd hope to gain by forward homeporting. It was a trying military situation. Complicated the military planning sphere because it isn't like we totally stopped thinking about Western Europe.

Q: Did your counterparts at the Pentagon have a different perspective? I mean, you know the problems you've described are very, very, real. These are people and pieces of equipment. You can't just plump them into place. You've got to maintain them, keep the morale up, and all that. Did we come out as sort of the unsympathetic pusher or not?

BEERS: Well, I think that from the military perspective there was always a sense that somehow the diplomats simply couldn't deliver what the military needed. But the people in the Pentagon who actually spent time in the region, the people at CENTCOM, which during the Reagan Administration was formally established, had a much better appreciation for that. They were still frustrated. There's no question about that. The military leadership, particularly at CENTCOM, would try through military channels to see whether or not they could advance the ball. But the countries in the region were sufficiently unified that regardless of what a military counterpart might have thought, the political leadership wasn't about to just roll over and give the United States everything that it wanted. But over time there was an enhancement of the ability of the U.S. to be able to deploy into the region. But never to station in the region with the exception of Bahrain.

To some degree the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, and the training compliments that went along with them, were seen as at least surrogate capabilities that might be useful. They were certainly going to be capabilities that were technologically superior to what the Iraqis or the Iranians had. I mean the Iranian F-14 fleet went downhill after Khomeini took over because there were no more spare parts to keep the planes flying. So when we watched their number of available aircraft, they were clearly going down. And the Iran-Iraq war pushed them to the limit there.

Q: Was CENTCOM established while you were there?

BEERS: Yeah. I don't remember the date. But the RDJTF moved on to become CENTCOM during that period.

Q: I've interviewed Chas Freeman and others who in Saudi Arabia at the time and all of a sudden they were faced with the invasion of Kuwait and all. Their presentation is that very little at the upper level of government had been done really to prepare for what the hell are we going to do?

BEERS: In the US? Or the Saudi army?

Q: In the U.S. and also the Saudis. You were making these plans. But these weren't sort of reaching up to even the assistant secretary of state level and all. Did you feel we had a plan so if the Iraqis move in we will do thus and so?

BEERS: Yeah. I mean, there was a war plan that was written in CENTCOM probably during the RDJTF time and it was revised and revised on a regular basis. There were very few people in the State Department; there was nobody in the State Department who had access to that plan in terms of the details of the plan. But what the officers in CENTCOM and the Pentagon would brief was: well, you know, we're going to need places to put fighter planes. We're going to need places to put troops, to land troops so that they can participate in the campaign. We are going to need to find ways to keep carriers forward deployed so that we will have, under even the worst scenario, the ability to have carrier air available to work with the military in the region.

Q: This is tape four, side one with Rand Beers.

BEERS: The second thing was that these countries didn't really operate together. There was the Gulf Cooperative Council and there was a major security relationship that was budding as part of this, but they didn't operate together. They didn't plan together, they didn't train together and the ability of them to operate together in wartime was non-existent. To the extent that they were going to be helpful in a war environment probably the CENTCOM planners only assumed that the Saudis would be probably only minimally helpless since they had some air power. Their ground forces were of limited utility. The Iraqis were always rated as being better than they were even though we had given them M1 tanks. I'm not surprised that Chas Freeman and others thought that senior levels knew very little because I think that's true.

I got involved in some war planning in the Persian Gulf at the end of the Reagan administration. I was working for Mike Armacost and we had a tiff with the Pentagon. CENTCOM had gone out and signed some agreements with some of the countries in the region which were regarded as or could be understood to be military commitments that had not been vetted in the State Department. They sent the agreements over and we went over them and we went back and said to Armitage and others, "Well, this agreement, the way you've written it is the functional equivalent of a military commitment to defend this

country. That issue has never been decided.” There was some serious heartburn on Armitage’s part that the State Department was questioning an agreement that the military had drawn up, but in the end I think he backed off is my memory.

Q: He was at the Pentagon?

BEERS: He was the Assistant Secretary for ISA, International Security Affairs.

Q: Well, you must have been following the Iran Iraq War weren’t you?

BEERS: Yes, that was one of the major issues that I worked on and got pretty deeply involved in the shipping war in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. decided to side with the Iraqis and stop the Iranians from shipping to the Persian Gulf, stop the shippers from coming into the Persian Gulf to lift Iranian oil and take it out.

Q: As you were monitoring it and all that, did we have any mindset, we wanted the Iraqis to beat the hell out of these guys who had taken our embassy over and cut off all relations with us or were we concerned about Iraq, too?

BEERS: At the very beginning of the war I think there was some sentiment suggesting that the Iranians had this coming to them, but it pretty quickly became we really don’t want to upset the status quo here. We don’t want either of them to become more powerful by acquiring the oil if you will of the other because the war was fought between the oil fields of the two countries in the south. There was obviously conflict that extended far up to the north, but the war was about the Arab portion of Iran or the Shia portion of Iraq, both of which are oil-producing areas. In the end, after the Iraqi invasion was blunted and the Iraqis were driven back, it seemed as if the Iranians had a possibility of winning the war. That then finally got us to lean forward and oppose, do what we could to aid the Iraqis in getting out of the war in one piece. That’s essentially the way in which it was seen. That contribution on our part ended up being our shipping embargo in the Persian Gulf.

Q: Did you get the feeling, I mean again talking to Chas and others who were dealing with this, this is a few years later. We’re talking about 1990 when the war went, but things had been set in place. It was on the political side we had the bureaus NEA and South Asian Affairs, but the bureau at the top level from what I gather was really concentrating on what the hell to do about the Palestinians.

BEERS: Always.

Q: This major battle, this huge battle going on and the consequences no matter how important they were was really of secondary interest of what to do about the Israeli strip along the Mediterranean coast. I mean did you get that feeling?

BEERS: I did. I think that it was impossible for any assistant secretary of the Near East Bureau not to get drawn into the Arab Israeli issue as the principal area of concern. Dick

Murphy was the Assistant Secretary in the Reagan administration. He had been ambassador to Saudi Arabia and he certainly knew the issues, but he was still spending most of his time doing that. So Peter Burleigh or Marion Creekmore ended up being the people who really worried about the Persian Gulf. It was just the way NEA was. That is why people like Congressman Solarz pushed for the creation of the South Asian bureau. If the Persian Gulf was a second area of interest, then India-Pakistan was even further away from the center of action. The NEA assistant secretary seldom went to the Persian Gulf.

Q: In one of these interviews somebody was talking about maybe you get an assistant secretary of commerce or something to go to the United Emirates or someplace. It was really off the radar.

BEERS: It really was. CENTCOM used to just wring its hands about it because they didn't feel like the State Department was carrying its share of the water. The ambassadors out there were fine, they were very responsive, but they were just the ambassadors. There's nobody in Washington.

Q: Then you left that particular area in what '88?

BEERS: Yes, my progression was as I said I became the Deputy Office Director of the Office of Policy Analysis. I worked in that office until probably '84ish and by that time Rick Burg had been succeeded by Jonathan Howe who had been succeeded by Jack Chain. Jack Chain reorganized the bureau and Bob Gallucci and I took two offices that were part of this reorganization. Dick Clarke moved to the front office as a deputy assistant secretary. Gallucci's office focused primarily on the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. I took an office that represented the rest of the world and I did that for a year plus. Then Clarke went down to be a deputy assistant secretary for Mort Abramowitz in INR. I moved up to the front office and went back to work on Persian Gulf issues which was what I spent most of my time on. I worked on Latin America briefly during the period around '84 and '85 when Tom Pickering was ambassador to El Salvador and I did Asian stuff and African stuff. I had a very brief period in that global environment and then back to the Persian Gulf in the front office because from the regional affairs perspective, this was what I was working on, the Persian Gulf or the Middle East was the issue.

Q: Again going back to this time, did you feel a bit like a lone voice about the Persian Gulf? Obviously those of you who were concentrating on it could understand the problem, but I mean within the bureaucratic context was it hard to get people to?

BEERS: Yes and no. While the director of PM, or Allen Holmes, the first assistant secretary, spent a lot of time dealing with the myriad of issues that PM dealt with, the assistant secretary of Near East and South Asian affairs spent most of his time worrying about the Middle East peace process. Because the Persian Gulf issue was of enough importance that it was a major interagency discussion between State and Defense at the White House, Mike Armacost was very much interested in this issue as the political

undersecretary. So, Eagleburger before him or Armacost we would get called up to their offices. We would write papers to the deputies committee meetings and things like that. They were attending to it. They just didn't go to the region, but there were lengthy discussions about what our role ought to be in the Persian Gulf. That is why the Reagan administration actually decided to intervene in the Iran and Iraq War. No, I didn't feel like people weren't attending it. Sometimes it was frustrating, but things got done. What didn't happen and I'm not sure it could have happened was the Persian Gulf actually opening to access for the United States in a way that CENTCOM actually wanted it to happen. The Saudis and the Gulf countries were perfectly happy to have the U.S. intervene in the Iran Iraq War by stopping Iranian oil. They weren't interested in Iran winning, defeating Iraq.

Q: Iran was the real concern wasn't it?

BEERS: By that time, sure it was. They were a larger country and more capable militarily and strongly anti-U.S. They were opposed at least on one level to the governments of all of the other countries in the region because of the religious differences between the Shia and the Sunni. Their Shia compatriots in those countries were in every case a suppressed minority. All of the countries in the region felt threatened and we were concerned also.

Q: We'll pick this up the next time, you know if you think of anything you'd like to add, do it. We'll pick this up in 1988 and where did you go?

BEERS: I went to the NSC. My job was to be the director for terrorism and narcotics. I was the replacement for Ted McNamara who succeeded Ollie North in that job and I took over Ollie's office.

Q: Just one further question. Jonathan Howe became quite a controversial person later on in his handling of the.

BEERS: Somalia situation.

Q: Somalia situation. I've talked to Ann Wright who was working with him at the time. Did you see any apparently he became fixated on getting Aidid and all this and he was very much a detail person and would see something as being the solution and fix on that. Did you see that in his personality at all?

BEERS: Oh, absolutely. I worked with Jonathan when he was the director of PM. I worked with him when he was the deputy national security advisor. I worked with him when he was in Somalia because I also worked on Somalia at the NSC. I had known him over that period of his career from when he made rear admiral all the way to.

Q: All right, next time we'll talk about the NSC. Let's go into Jonathan Howe.

BEERS: No, we need to go back because what we didn't talk about was Beirut. We didn't talk about Lebanon. I worked on Lebanon for a fair amount of time.

Q: Okay, very much so.

BEERS: I can talk about the bombing of the Marines in the barracks there and all of that. It's also useful about Howe because it talks about his attention to detail and his relationship with Poindexter during this time and all of that.

Q: Today is the 29th of August, 2003. Rand, just put me back. It's been a little while. You were at the NSC, the point when we're talking about it was when?

BEERS: I went to the NSC in May of 1988 at the end of the Reagan administration when Colin Powell was the National Security Advisor.

Q: All right. Well, let's talk about what you think we should talk about.

BEERS: All right. Let's go back and first of all talk about Jonathan Howe as a figure in government. Jonathan Howe was selected by George Shultz to be the Director of the Bureau of Political and Military Affairs. This is a period before the bureau had become an assistant secretaryship. Rick Burt had left and gone to take over European affairs and Howe had come in. He was a navy rear admiral, a submariner, staff officer, and was the first military officer to run the PM bureau, but not the last. He ran it for I guess about two years. John Howe was an absolutely dedicated, hardworking, attention to detail kind of individual. His office hours were longer than anybody else in the bureau except for the people in the front office who had to be there while he was there. He would get an issue and focus on it extensively. He also had a penchant for rewriting documents to excess and it certainly drove people wild. After the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, John Poindexter, who was a naval academy classmate of his and then the National Security Advisor, asked him to come up with a proposal on what we ought to do about Lebanon. He took this task on with fervor and would hold meetings throughout the regular workday and on beyond. He got himself at one point into such a mode that he was actually staying in the office the entire time. We couldn't get him to go home. We ended up having to create a support structure that allowed the people who supported him to go home. We had two shifts. There was somebody there to be with him, but it didn't have to be the same person all the time. He clearly wanted to provide Poindexter with something useful. He felt that the only way that he could do that would be to devote this kind of time and attention to it while managing all the rest of the tasks.

Q: Well, you know, it strikes me when you look at something like that, that it soon becomes almost an obsession and you wonder of the effectiveness. Putting that much time, attention to detail is rewriting of papers. So much is done which has in a way so little effect. How did you feel about this?

BEERS: All of us felt that John had gone over the edge with that. Larry Eagleburger at one point called him in and told him to go home. He was obsessive about it, there's no question. I think all of us were concerned. We got through it. We fashioned a policy. We withdrew from Lebanon.

Q: Well, I mean what was the big policy decision? I mean it's get the hell out.

BEERS: Well, no. There was a big debate about whether or not the United States, by withdrawing from Lebanon, represented that it did not have staying power in the face of being attacked by a brutal and terrorist foe.

Q: But, I mean, what was our Lebanon policy? We seemed to have reached the point where we weren't doing anything.

BEERS: My memory is that we became increasingly involved in the fighting that was going on there and part of it was the result of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. Part of it was the question of trying to in some way bring a degree of stability to that troubled region. We spent an enormous amount of time trying to figure out what the right mixture was and there was not a uniformity of views within the administration. We ended up with a compromise policy that ended up unraveling under pressure.

Q: In your memory, did Israel play much of a role in decisions and what to do and all that?

BEERS: Do you mean a direct role or that their activities influence?

Q: Their activities or was there any cooperation, supposedly this is our ally.

BEERS: We were in constant dialogue with them and there's no question that their actions ended up influencing the courses of action that we took. Our effort here was to try to get the parties separated and to find a way in which everybody could step back gracefully if you will. Part of the notion was that somehow we could intercede with force or with a force.

Q: Did you have the feeling that, I've heard that George Shultz sort of dug his heels in early on even before the blowing up of the Marine barracks when we were saying maybe it's a good idea to get out, George Shultz being an ex-Marine himself really didn't want to leave sort of under fire.

BEERS: I think that there was an element of that, but he was certainly also getting advice from the regional bureau that it would be disastrous for us politically in the region if we pulled back in the face of attack or pressure.

Q: How did the support staff I mean you and others, feel about this situation?

BEERS: I think that the people in the bureau of political military affairs pretty much agreed with the political perceptions of the people in NEA about withdrawal. But I think we were also very cognizant of the fact that we had gotten ourselves on a huge limb: that we needed to find some middle ground between staying the course with the full force of

our presence there and finding a better way not to be a target by being in the middle of this particular struggle at that time.

Q: What about the Pentagon? I would think the natural reaction there would be to preserve its troops and get them out.

BEERS: Yes, that's my memory of where the Pentagon was on this issue. I think that the White House was looking for a similar graceful way out. That's why Poindexter appealed to John Howe to come up with a policy proposal since John was in the State Department but understood these other pressures.

Q: When Howe was there dealing with political military affairs, did his obsession with detail and all this make him a figure that stood aside from sort of the regular working of the State Department, in other words was he listened to carefully or was it trying to deal with somebody who was overly focused?

BEERS: No, I think he had Shultz's ear. I think that that's fair. The bureau was also very actively participating in arms control and I really can't speak to any of the substance, but I think that he was listened to in that regard. That was sort of the two great divisions of responsibility that the bureau had then.

Q: Were you dealing before you went over to the NSC with Central America?

BEERS: I had a brief period of working on Central America around '84, '85. We were trying to figure out what our El Salvador policy was, what our Contra policy was and the principal issue that I dealt with was an access agreement with Honduras. Honduras had given us permission to use an airport outside of the capital. We were using that as a resupply point for the stuff that we moved in to support the Contras as well as just a regional presence that was outside of the Canal Zone. The Hondurans were concerned that they had given away the access rights for too little and were beginning to make sounds that they wanted more for the agreement. So we set up a negotiation with them and redid the access agreement, gave them somewhat more in terms of support, and successfully averted that difficulty in terms of access in Central America.

The vehicle for doing this was to set up a high level dialogue with the Honduran military. Jack Chain, an air force four star general, was the director of PM. He followed John Howe as the director and Chain went down and negotiated with the Hondurans. In addition to that, Ollie North came along on the plane. In the talks focused on the access agreement, one of the Honduran generals wanted to talk about the Contras. Ollie immediately intervened to say, no, this discussion was only about the access agreement. The Contras were a separate issue and they would be dealt with on a separate channel. That sort of ended that conversation. That was clearly his purpose on the trip.

Q: Well, at that time, supplying the Contras was. Were you, I mean this was really the height of the Iran Contra business which essentially had become an illegal action wasn't it?

BEERS: Yes.

Q: And that was supplying the Contras without congressional approval and the other side of the coin was selling things to the Iranians of all people in order to get some money. Were you at all, I mean was this sort of a buzz that was going on?

BEERS: No, it became one later in '86. I'd gone on to do something else by then. I knew obviously that we were supporting the Contras. I had no idea about these kinds of arrangements until a year or two later and it began to appear in the press and people started talking about it within the State Department.

Q: I mean as an operation, this wasn't one of these things if you mention Contras all of a sudden people say well, this is hush hush. As soon as you say this everybody's ears prick up and they start trying to find out more. It hadn't reached that situation?

BEERS: No. To think of the two sides of it, it's to talk to Bob Oakley on the one hand and hear his side of it, which I have heard, and Elliott Abrams or some of the people who worked for him to hear the other side. I've never talked to Elliott about that.

Q: Well, then what was your feeling, going back to were you doing anything else with Central America at that time?

BEERS: One project which never really went anywhere was to see if we could come up with a proposal to allow for arms reductions within Central America. We took from our experience doing mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, MBFR, to see if that was applicable to Central America. We made a tour of the Central American capitals and talked with the various ministries of defense and foreign affairs ministries about the project, but it really died after one round of discussions. There was not much desire within the United States government to do that outside, I think, of the State Department.

Q: While you were with the political military, dealing with issues where did the NSC fit? I mean was this a time of, were they really the ultimate word, how were things working at that particular time?

BEERS: Well, in the area that I worked on regional affairs, Howard Kaiser was the Director of the Office of Political Military Affairs there and Ollie North worked for him. I had really only that one dealing with Ollie that I recounted. We worked mostly with people who dealt with the Middle East because that's mostly what I was working on. NSC were regarded as sort of equals in the process rather than directing the process. Part of that may have been that there really wasn't anybody all that prestigious or anointed to do that. The Near East office I think that was Jeff Kemp, certainly at the beginning, and I don't remember who came later in that office. I think most of the discussions really occurred with Rich Armitage, who was the Assistant Secretary in the Defense Department for International Security Affairs, and somebody in NEA and somebody in PM. So that a lot of the discussion in policy was among that triumvirate or between

Armitage and NEA directly in terms of dealing with issues in the region. The NSC was kept informed. When it went above that level to the deputies committee or higher, then others were involved. But this was a period in which assistant secretaries still had a fair amount of responsibility and power within government. When the NSC was less in overall charge of a lot of the plunder.

Q: What about the Iran-Iraq War, that was going on while you were there wasn't it?

BEERS: Yes.

Q: What was your role?

BEERS: The State Department and the Defense Department were very much looking for options to try to insure that Iran, which was seen as the greater of two evils, did not win the Iran-Iraq War. Iraq attacked, and was successful for a little while. Then there was a period of balance between the two, but the struggle kept on. Then the Iranians started to push back on the Iraqis and were into Iraq in a number of places and it appeared that Iraq was going to collapse in that context. We were looking for ways to demonstrate to the Iranians that they were not going to be able to march to Baghdad without having to take the United States into their perspective.

Q: How could we do that?

BEERS: We were not prepared to intervene and that was pretty clear. The notion then was to see what if any kinds of weapons we could give to the Iraqis. Was there some sort of intervention that we could make that wouldn't directly involve us in the war. That's where the shipping option came up. The Iranians were basically using their superiority at sea to prevent Iraq from selling its oil which Iraq needed to sell in order to continue to fight the war. In that context we basically decided to declare ourselves in favor of freedom of passage in international waterways and to say that we were going to defend that freedom of passage so that the Iraqis could benefit from selling their oil.

Q: It was basically an Iraqi tip.

BEERS: Oh, there was no question about it. The Iranians very clearly understood that.

Q: Where did this idea of using this principle to push our cause?

BEERS: My memory is a little hazy on this. I think it was an idea that ended up being discussed between State and Defense at my level as a deputy office director on up to the assistant secretary level and then got sold to Shultz and Weinberger.

Q: Did you get anything, I realize you're kind of down the feeding chain a bit, but did you get any feeling during this on these particular issues of the lack of to put it politely rapport between Weinberger in Defense and Shultz in State?

BEERS: Oh, yes, and that was one of the critical issues. How can we get the two of them to agree to this policy given their lack of rapport between.

Q: Very nice.

BEERS: Between the two of them. It basically became the responsibility of Armitage to sell Weinberger and Dick Murphy and by this time I think Allen Holmes was the assistant secretary. It's right in that period that the PM bureau received authorization to have an assistant secretary and it was deemed that it would have to be a civilian. In fact it may have been required that it was a civilian.

Q: In other words, you had a situation where you might say all the people sort of below both at the Pentagon and State Department were all on the same thing, but the main idea was to get these two reluctant chiefs to get together because it was more driven by almost personal animosity than anything else.

BEERS: That's exactly right and then also to rope the Brits in as well so it wasn't just a U.S. defensive strategy.

Q: How did you find dealing with say the British?

BEERS: They did not come naturally to our legal argument. So the issue was more to get their lawyers to agree that in fact this was a legally defensible policy. I don't know whether they were hiding behind their lawyers or not, but in the end they came along.

Q: How about the French?

BEERS: I don't remember the French being involved in this at all. I remember talking to the Australians about being involved and they were at least rhetorically involved. I don't remember whether they had any ships. For them it was a tough issue because they were selling mutton to the Iranians.

Q: No, I mean it was eventually, we had a sort of international flotilla didn't we?

BEERS: Yes, but I can't tell you who beyond the Brits.

Q: Well, I think you've got people like I don't know maybe the Brazilians. The Dutch, I think, had somebody in there if I recall, but it wasn't a big deal. It was mainly to give us an international cover.

BEERS: Right.

Q: All this time when you're looking at this issue, was the United Nations a factor that you all were considering or not?

BEERS: I don't remember doing anything more than consulting with the United Nations or not on that particular issue. The UN involvement in making the peace at the end of the process was a factor, but I don't remember whether or not they were involved at this point in time.

Q: Was there anything else we should cover on this particular time in your career?

BEERS: I worked very briefly on the INF Treaty conclusion and ratification in setting up the verification system that was associated with that. It was really only an additional duty. People who did arms control in the bureau for a living were much more involved. They just needed an additional body to attend to ratification.

Q: Well, then you left, when did you leave the political military bureau?

BEERS: I left in May of 1988. I had worked for Ted McNamara as his deputy in the PM front office for a year. Then Ted went over to the NSC when Carlucci became the National Security Advisor and Poindexter left in disgrace. Ted took the terrorism and narcotics account there at the request of his friend Bob Oakley who was close to Carlucci. When Ted was being tapped to be the ambassador to Colombia, he asked me if I wanted to replace him. I was interviewed in February or March for the job. Ted's confirmation hearings were set later that spring so I came over in May to replace him.

Q: Yes?

BEERS: This was a period in which Carlucci had gone to become the Secretary of Defense and Colin Powell had become the National Security Advisor. On the issues that I was responsible for, terrorism and drugs, the terrorism issue was very much centered on the American hostages in Lebanon and doing what could be done to deal with Hezbollah which was seen as the principal actor in the terrorism world. Obviously with a concern about Syria, a concern about Iran because of their backing of Hezbollah. We continued to hold the concern that had caused Ollie North so much anxiety and his departure. But by that time the "we do not negotiate" policy was very much set in stone. The Reagan administration would not go back on that policy pronouncement. It was simply not going to happen because of the trouble that had occurred when North tried to negotiate to get the hostages out.

We were trying to nibble away at the particular terrorists. Right after I arrived we lured Fawaz Younis to a yacht off of Lebanon and captured him and brought into the United States for trial. There were discussions about whether or not the United States, if it could locate the terrorists, ought to engage in a unilateral strike of Special Forces to go after those hostages in order to rescue them. We never had the kind of detailed intelligence to do that and so nothing ever ended up being done, but there were certainly discussions that preceded my arrival at the White House. There were no discussions of those issues while I was there during the Reagan administration.

Q: You were in the White House in the NSC from when to when?

BEERS: In this particular assignment I was in the White House in NSC from May of '88 to July August of '92. The end of the Reagan administration and most of the first Bush administration.

Q: Was the NSC moving from a mode of being an action oriented organization sort of running operations to be, I mean having suffered from the Ollie North time or moving back to be more a coordinating organization?

BEERS: Oh, very much so. It was the new mantra that we don't do operations at the NSC. Those are done by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). McNamara and his successor were very much in the coordinating role. The interagency group that North had started which was called the CSG, which at that point meant Coordinating Sub Group, the acronym remained the same, but the meaning of the words changed during this period. Not during this period, but during its life. It was an interagency group that was chaired by either the senior director, neither Ted nor I were senior directors. We were simply directors, the lowest level, deputy assistant secretary equivalent function. The meeting itself was supposed to be held at the assistant secretary level and by and large people came at that level. Armitage was a regular attendee of that group. Jerry Bremer, who was the head of the counter terrorism office at State attended. The head of the counter terrorism center at CIA, Fred Turco, was a regular attendee and senior FBI and Justice officials attended. We had a lawyer by that time. That became a requirement that there would be a NSC lawyer present to ensure that we didn't violate any legal responsibilities that we might have had. There was a representative from the FBI and also somebody from the operations section of the joint staff, a flag officer.

Q: How were you looking at it at that time? Did you feel the cooperation to share information and all between the FBI and the CIA, Defense, you know, I mean all the organs are supposed to feed in to look at terrorism. How did you feel about that?

BEERS: The conventional wisdom was that while it wasn't perfect, the degree of cooperation in sharing on the terrorism front was probably the best that existed between law enforcement intelligence in the U.S. government. The bureau and the agency shared some material. The bureau continued really almost to today to suffer from the problem that Washington never entirely knew what field offices were doing. CIA was never entirely willing to give everything up, but they were beginning to exchange officers between the two organizations. That became a model for breaking down the barriers between law enforcement and intelligence that was replicated in other areas subsequently, drugs in particular.

Q: How did you feel? We were getting information on terrorism I mean because you have an awful lot of this has to come from non-American sources, foreign police, foreign intelligence agencies as well as agents all over.

BEERS: I think that most people felt that the intelligence was inadequate. That the points that really were made had been made for a number of years and continued to be made

after it: that the United States had given up its ability or even much of its effort to recruit human sources of intelligence as opposed to relying on national technical means as the way in which most intelligence was derived. It was certainly true in this area. We're talking about small numbers of people who were not going to show up on photography and who may or may not be interceptible.

Q: You're talking about phones and things like this. This was not a period of great use of cell phones and all.

BEERS: Right. Although we certainly still got some information from intercepts. But we were always feeling like we had an information deficit. I think that the example that set this perspective in a clear way was our inability to figure out where the Lebanese hostages were. The hostages were still a preoccupation and getting them out one way or another was still an important task that lingered on into the first Bush administration until they were all gone.

Q: Was anybody looking at what was happening in Afghanistan at the time? You know, at this point we were supporting the Mujahideen and the people fighting the Soviets. Looking at who these people were and sort of where their loyalties lay because even today in 2003, we're feeling the alumni of this group has given us a hell of a lot of trouble.

BEERS: That was really a regional issue, you know. It would have been dealt with by Bob Oakley, Dennis Ross, the ambassadors out there, Arnie Rafael and then Bob Oakley. It was not an issue that was seen as a terrorism issue while I was at the NSC at that particular tour.

Q: In this particular tour terrorism really meant the Middle East, sort of the PLO, the Hezbollah.

BEERS: That was essentially what we looked at. I mean you could talk about Sendero Luminoso being a terrorist organization or Peru or the groups in Colombia. You could talk about the Tamil Tigers then or the India-Pakistan struggle for Kashmir. But essentially we were talking about Hezbollah and Middle East.

Q: Because these other ones you mentioned at that point certainly were not really intruding on our interests.

BEERS: Right. Either directly or on our people or on our interests. We were fixated by the hostages, which is why, with the exception of Pan Am 103, the attention devoted to terrorism really went down during the time that I was at the NSC during this tour. The hostages were gotten out of Lebanon finally. Things seemed to be cooling and the threat of terrorism in the Middle East seemed to be diminishing. As a result of that there was a current of opinion that for example the State Department ought to merge the counter terrorism office and the drug bureau at the beginning of the Clinton administration.

Q: At the NSC did you have just the terrorism portfolio?

BEERS: No, I was also responsible for the narcotics issue.

Q: That was in a way, was that bigger?

BEERS: It ended up occupying more of my time in part because the terrorism issue receded in terms of the amount of activity and importance devoted to it. There was also a reorganization between the Reagan administration and the Bush administration, which brought some other activities, principally UN affairs, into the office. When I arrived at the NSC during the Reagan administration, the terrorism and the narcotics function was lodged in the intelligence directory. Carlucci wanted to dissolve the old office of political military affairs in a housecleaning and distributed the functions that that office had had around the rest of the NSC. The drug and terrorism function moved to the intelligence directorate. The person that he had brought in as the senior director had at an earlier time in his life been an undercover agent posing as a University of Pittsburgh radical in Lebanon talking to terrorists there in order to try to find out who they were. He was undercover seeking their advice for how he could sow dissent within the United States. Carlucci knew him from his time at CIA I guess or at some earlier point. This seemed a fitting place to put that for want of any other place to put it.

When the Bush administration came, they reorganized. The person that Scowcroft had selected to run African affairs was David Miller, who had been a two-time ambassador.

Q: I've interviewed David.

BEERS: David wanted to do more than just Africa. So Scowcroft asked him if he would be interested in doing terrorism and narcotics and that just seemed great to him and he also gave him UN affairs. It was an office of international programs and African affairs. David was really a dual-hatted senior director when he came onboard.

Q: In the first place while we're still on the terrorism side, I would have felt from the intelligence point of view the Israelis would have been a major source of information. I mean it was in their backyard and they'd been playing this field for a long time. Were they any good?

BEERS: Well, they were certainly a source of information, but they were only one source and they were sometimes biased in the information that they put forward. The agency was always trying to figure out whether or not their information was credible.

Q: I mean there was a concern that maybe they were giving something to promote the Israelis rather than just telling us who the bad guys were.

BEERS: Right. Or where they were.

Q: Or where they were. Yes.

BEERS: They never came up with any good information on where the hostages were either.

Q: Yes. On the narcotics side, what were your main concerns?

BEERS: There was no question that cocaine and Latin America was the principle focus of the drug effort. Obviously there was still a heroin problem in the United States, but the heroin problem was nothing in comparison to the coke problem in the United States. So our focus in that office was on Colombia, Bolivia and Peru. In that time frame principally Peru because Peru was the largest cultivator of coca followed by Bolivia with Colombia a distant and not very important third in the cultivation sense. The traffickers were principally Colombian, but they were content to get their raw material from Peru and Bolivia. The quality of Colombian coca was not very good and there was no reason for them to be interested in fostering Colombian coca if they had free access to the production elsewhere. The cultivation represented a fixed target and they didn't particularly want it in their own backyard if they didn't have to have it.

My first trip after I got to the NSC was in the summer of '88 with then Assistant Secretary Ann Wroblewski of INL (International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) at the State Department. We went to those three countries as well as Venezuela and Ecuador to talk with them about drug trafficking. That was my real introduction to the issue. I had had nothing to do with drug trafficking until I took that job at the NSC. I had worked on terrorism as I'd worked on the Middle East while I was in the bureau of political military affairs, but not drug trafficking.

Q: What could you do or what was our policy at that time and what were you doing?

BEERS: Well, our policy at the time was basically to encourage those countries to undertake rigorous enforcement activity against the traffickers within the countries. There was in Peru and Bolivia the beginnings of an alternative development set of projects, mostly in Bolivia to get the farmers interested in producing something other than coca. That always represented a challenge because the return on anything other than coca was far less than what the farmers could get for coca. To some degree you had to come up with a willingness on the part of the government to suppress the cultivation by some means. During these periods they were reluctant to put direct pressure on the cultivators. So what they offered in Bolivia was a certain amount of money for the voluntary eradication of coca plots and a pledge not to plant again. The farmers in Bolivia showed the government agency that was responsible for this activity where the plot was. The government agency measured the amount of area in order to determine how much remuneration should be made. They would then observe or come in afterwards and verified in fact that the coca bushes had been cut down and dug up and that there was no coca growing on that particular plot of ground and then make payments. The weakness of that part of the strategy was that the farmers cut that down, got the money, but went someplace else and planted coca and continued to manage that while getting this payment

from the government and getting some government assistance to grow other crops on that ground.

Over the course of 10 years there actually was a benefit from this policy because what it meant in the principal growing area in Bolivia was that an economy which had been essentially 80% coca driven and 20% licit economic activity, shifted and became essentially a licit dominated economy. That was not the diminution of the amount of coca that was grown. It was the expansion of the amount of legitimate agriculture that was created there and the efforts by the government supported by AID to create markets for the product that was legal there. So the farmers weren't just taking a risk to grow bananas or pineapple or heart of palm or whatever the product that they grew was, they were buying into a marketing system that really did give them something visible to participate in. So after 10 years of this, when the government, or several governments later in this case, decided that they were going to take on a much more aggressive policy against the illegal cultivation of coca, it meant that there was a clear alternative that was working, that was positive.

The president of Bolivia during this initial period was Jaime Paz Zamora. His vice president was Hugo Banzer. He had previously been the president by coup and was rehabilitating himself as a Democrat and a leader of a political party within Bolivia. The minister of finance was a young guy named Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga. Paz Zamora went on to be noteworthy for having been involved in drug trafficking and having his visa revoked by the United States although he is now one of the dominant political players again in Bolivia. Banzer went on to become the president of Bolivia until his death and his vice president was Quiroga. He convinced Banzer to actually go and cut down the coca. This is why for a good part of the last five or six years Bolivia's coca production has gone way down relative to what it had been before. It was because they had 10 years of alternative development that showed the way that people could do something else when they finally decided that they were going to take on a policy of involuntary eradication.

Q: The drug producing areas always point to the United States in saying, you know, the real problem is you create the market. Was the NSC looking at this thing to do something about the market in the United States?

BEERS: I think most of the people who worked on the enforcement side did believe that there needed to be more aggressive demand reduction programs within the United States, but it was never in the purview of the people who were advocating this to actually do it. I mean it was another part of the government and while governments may have given lip service to demand reduction, there really wasn't as much effort as might have been devoted. Bush had a lot of support for his volunteerism during the first Bush administration and there was a lot of good material that came out in the Reagan administration. Nancy Reagan's just say no policy I think was important. There was a major drop in the number of people who consumed cocaine during that period because of the heavy publicity. That reduction in use seems to have been mostly among people who would be called casual users rather than hard core users. It's not clear during this period

that the amount of cocaine consumed in the United States dropped. It is clear that at least insofar as survey data was concerned there were reports of far fewer people using cocaine during this time period. That really was a reduction that occurred during the '80s and the early '90s until it finally stabilized and now it's been in a fluctuating period ever since. Sort of put abations around a constant level suggesting that what we have is a hard core user population that obviously replaces itself to some extent because the people don't live forever. The amount of cocaine used here may have gone down. There may actually also be a reduction in the amount of cocaine use, but the data on that is much harder to come by than the data on numbers of users.

Q: On the NSC proper, you arrived Colin Powell was the?

BEERS: National Security Advisor?

Q: Yes.

BEERS: Then Brent Scowcroft replaced him.

Q: What was your impression of Colin Powell?

BEERS: I really didn't have that much time with Powell. He was very popular. He was very engaging. When you met with him, which for me wasn't a whole lot, you felt like he was very responsive to what you were doing and what you were saying, but this was by then clearly the end of the Reagan administration. George Bush was running for the nomination and then the presidency. There wasn't a whole lot going on. Cleaning up on the arms control side was probably the major thing. Holding steady on Lebanon hostages, nothing much on the drug area.

Q: Brent Scowcroft during the time you were the Bush administration. How did he run his ship?

BEERS: He ran, I thought, a very disciplined, straightforward organization. He had the issues that he cared about. He worked on them. He left other people to run the issues that he didn't spend that much time on. This is a period in my own mind watching the NSC in which the deputies committee replaced assistant secretaries as the principal place in which interagency policy got decided or discussed at least before it went to the principals. There were other interagency working groups. The assistant secretaries still held meetings and would continue to do so, but the deputies became the principle agency for decision. Part of that was the deputies meeting in near constant time, during the first Gulf war and making policy there. The second aspect of it was that the secure video conference facility that Ollie North had put in place finally began to be used by senior level people as opposed to the intelligence community. Bob Gates discovered it during the failed coup attempt in the Philippines during this period and then used it, not on that constant basis, but it became another way for deputies' meetings to be called instantaneously to consider issues. I think Scowcroft deserves a great deal of credit for making the system work effectively. He had a Secretary of State who was a confidant of

the president for a long period of time and certainly had an ego that was well known in Washington. Scowcroft had a dear and deep friendship with his deputy, Larry Eagleburger, until Baker left and that made the system work effectively. He didn't have to press Baker. He could talk to Eagleburger. Cheney was Secretary of Defense and Powell became chairman of the joint chiefs by the beginning of the Gulf War. He had gone from the NSC, National Security Advisor position, to be the head of forces command. He was a junior four star in the army at that time, but Bush didn't want to wait another two years to appoint him and simply decided to make him chairman. They all worked pretty well together and Scowcroft I think made it work because Scowcroft never sought to put himself in a public limelight. He knew that he could go and talk to the president at any time. He didn't need to be any public spokesman. He probably didn't want it. He's still not much of a public person. He writes, but he doesn't speak.

Q: It's probably the most competent team that we've had.

BEERS: Oh, I think so. In terms of discipline when you think about the Clinton administration or this administration and all of the fighting that occurred, all of the leaks that occurred and you look back at that it was a very disciplined organization.

Q: Well, this is probably a good place to stop, but I'll put at the end here, we really haven't talked about the Bush administration, what you were doing there. We've talked about the end of the Reagan administration. We've talked about your narcotics work and your terrorism work, but maybe there's something more you want to mention here.

BEERS: Yes, what I want to talk about is the fashioning of the first major counter narcotics policy with respect to Latin America that occurred at the beginning of the Bush administration.

Q: Okay, we'll do that then. Great.

Today is the 2nd of June, 2005 after a certain hiatus we're back in business. You were, just to put me back in the picture, what were you doing during the Bush administration. This is early Bush I administration.

BEERS: Right. As I indicated earlier I had gone to the NSC to take over the position of director for narcotics, counter narcotics and counter terrorism. The Ollie North position and office once removed. Ted McNamara sat in the chair that Ollie had had and had been responsible for the terrorism and narcotics issue. We represented an office element of the intelligence directorate and that was an artificiality of the post Contra NSC. Frank Carlucci had chosen as his senior director for intelligence an old CIA hand named Barry Kelly whom he had known I believe when Kelly was chief of station in Moscow. He had at an earlier time in his career been an undercover agent, that is he was not under official cover. He was non-official cover who had had some dealings with terrorism. He had gone to Beirut posing as an anti-war dissident trying to make contact with Lebanese and/or Palestinian organizations that might have been engaging in terrorism. This was a period of time in which we had a number of individuals who had been either killed or taken

hostage as part of a Hezbollah effort in Lebanon. So Carlucci brought this guy on. It seemed logical to him, since he had had some practical experience, that the terrorism element of the old political military office would migrate there. That didn't last in the Bush administration. The Bush administration came in, and Scowcroft thanked everybody and said that they should look for other work, that the new president wanted to move on and reorganize. Most of the people moved on except for Nick Rostow who had been counsel and myself. I ended up staying because I was relatively new, that is I joined the NSC in May of '88, so I hadn't even been there a year and wasn't particularly identified as being a Reagan NSC person. The arrangement that Scowcroft had made with a guy named David Miller, a former ambassador to Tanzania and Zimbabwe was that he wanted him to do the African directorate and David said no. He didn't want to do that if that was all he did, but he would be very much interested in terrorism, low intensity conflict, counter narcotics and things like that. Scowcroft said fine and basically created a composite directorate of African affairs, UN affairs and counter terrorism and counter narcotics. When David came into the office and met me he was interested in having some continuity in the office and I struck him as a person that he wanted to continue to work with. He kept me on and I retained that portfolio and didn't move my desk or anything else.

Q: You did that from when to when?

BEERS: My total assignment at the NSC was from May of '88 until August of '92. David is the senior director from February of '89 until December of '90 I think. My memory is it wasn't two years. Then there was an interregnum in which I was the acting senior director. Then Ted McNamara, who had been the ambassador to Colombia after he left the job that I succeeded him, came back as the senior director in the summer, that would have been the summer of '91 I guess. I was there essentially for four plus years. On the narcotics side, we had had an off and on policy to try to do things, but nothing that was more than individual activities either by DEA or in one case we had military evolution in Bolivia that was designed to try to go after the drug traffickers there. We had a lot of reports about how the cocaine industry was doing better and Americans were doing worse as a result of that. David was certainly interested in taking an active role. I had had some experience in trying to pull together policies that would be both politically salable and effective, politically salable in the sense that this was going to require some resources and how do you mobilize people to actually provide those resources? So, basically what we did was to come up with a proposal for a several billion dollar multi-year program that would provide essentially military assistance along with some economic assistance to Colombia, Bolivia and Peru in order to do two things. One, to get the military more involved in a counter drug effort because of the concern that the police were basically ineffective or just plain corrupt and figuring that it would also be an activity which would give the military something to do that was constructive as opposed to simply sitting around in their garrisons and possibly being available for changes of government.

On the economic side, AID had concluded that they could become involved in some agricultural and small business activities through the window of support for counter narcotics effort.

Q: This is tape five, side one with Rand Beers. Yes, you were saying?

BEERS: AID saw this as a way to carry out some agricultural and small business activities and protect those funds because they would have the political support of being part of the global counter narcotics effort. This was viewed as a protected source of funding in particular because we were putting together a major program. It was beneficial for them to be part of it just as it was an opportunity for U.S. southern command to have some opportunity to provide programs and assistance to the military in those three countries. That became the basis of the plan as we wrote up some goals and objectives that we wanted to accomplish. We worked closely with the newly minted ONDCP (Office of National Drug Control Policy), which was run by Bill Bennett.

Q: That was under the Department wasn't it?

BEERS: No, no, ONDCP, the director's office, was directly in the executive office of the president. They had offices over the McDonalds on 17th Street. ONDCP together with the Latin American bureau in the State Department, elements of the Pentagon and DEA all saw this as an opportunity to mobilize support. The people who had the problem were the budgeteers in the State Department. It was going to dislocate their carefully parceled out budget with the various bureaus either in the systems security area or in the economic assistance areas. The chief financial officer was sent over by Larry Eagleburger to try to work out a deal and the final language was in essence that this program of several billion dollars over three years would be funded on a best effort understanding. This was the finance guy's way of making sure that even though it was going to be signed by the president, and we could have gotten the president's signature probably over his objection, to have some wiggle room to get out of it and that's partly the relationship between Scowcroft and Eagleburger which was extraordinarily close. I mean Scowcroft obviously talked to Baker, but he had a drop line to Eagleburger. This means that he had a phone easily picked up and it rang at Larry Eagleburger's desk and vice versa. If the finance guy, which he did, had gone to Eagleburger and said I've got a problem, then Eagleburger would call Scowcroft. Scowcroft would tell Miller and then we would have this meeting to work out the precise wording that the presidentially signed document would have.

Q: What job did Eagleburger have at that time?

BEERS: He was the Deputy Secretary. Then we went about getting the money to start flowing and the program officers to start thinking about how to spend that money and the contacts to be made in the various countries. This was all done in the context most critically of the fact that President Barco, President Barco's successor; he was at the end of his term. The first candidate of the liberal party was assassinated and the plane was blown up with all the passengers being killed. Caesar Gaviria became the new liberal

party candidate and then ultimately the successor. President Barco declared a state of emergency and the United States rushed some military assistance to help the Colombian government push back; it was a form of assistance called 506A which meant that it was equipment that was in the possession of the United States military, but could be turned over for emergencies, if you had to declare an emergency to a foreign government if the military was prepared to declare it excess. Generally it ended up in ammunition; it could also be weapons in some cases. It could be vehicles or aircraft, helicopters. As those of us who were looking for what amounted to free goods within the U.S. government came to appreciate this program, it became an almost knee jerk response to contingencies. We ended up getting congress to modify the law to say that while the original emergency language was characterized as military emergency there was a second justification which became drugs or refugees, disasters. So that in the case of drugs it would be military equipment, but in the case of natural disaster it would be blankets and rations and tents. Thus relief organizations could get an immediate dispersal by presidential signature of the first order of relief supplies in very difficult situations.

There was a huge explosion of coca cultivation in Peru. The final refining and the major traffickers were all located in Colombia. Very little of the coca that was grown for that final refinement was grown in Colombia. It was mostly grown in Peru, to a lesser extent in Bolivia, and it was then flown from those countries to final processing in Colombia. It took the coca leaf at the source of production and made it into a paste in a pit in the ground called a pozo pit. They stepped up and down on it with their bare feet after having poured sulfuric acid and kerosene and a bunch of other stuff. I mean they have boots I guess, but it was not a particularly healthy activity on the part of the campesinos who actually did it. They would then load it in airplanes and fly it north. Then it would come out the other end, planes or boats or in shipping containers and arrive in the United States. We were basically trying to change the dynamic in the drug trade by getting the peasants to stop growing the coca. The basic challenge was that no crop could compete with the value of coca for the campesino as long as there were no other intervening variables. The value of the coca was judged to be 10 times the value of the next best agricultural crop. That's why it became a gold rush in remote areas of Bolivia and Peru as well as Colombia. Areas that were not very densely populated suddenly started attracting lots of unemployed and migrant labor. So that in a town in Peru called Tingo Maria became a boom town. There were car dealers and electronics stores in a town on the eastern side of the Andes in Peru where the campesinos, if you could even call them that, are or at least were originally indigenous Indians. The population of Peru had primarily been a dense coastal population. Lima is of course on the coast and so are several of the other major cities. There were extraction industries further south that may have been inland, but they had all to come to the sea in order to move out the extracted material. Also you'd have some tourist industry in the Andes in Machu Picchu. The old Inca ruin, was the principal draw down there. On the eastern side the Amazon Basin was another alternative to moving the coca out by river. You could move it further north by river if you wanted to. There were some roads there. In some cases they were built in Peru straight enough that you could land an airplane on them. They were built in Bolivia by the InterAmerican Development Bank, clearly not for aircraft. But they were new and straight. It was flat and there was no danger of mountains because it was outside of the

mountain area. The road went to Santa Cruz, which was the major entrepôt in eastern Bolivia. The coca growers would put their leaf or their paste right along the road either for vehicular or air pick up and you could see it if you flew over the area.

Q: What was the situation in Peru and Bolivia governmentwise?

BEERS: In Peru we were talking about the end of the Garcia period and the beginning of the Fujimori period. In Bolivia we were talking about the end of La Paz as the center of administration and the beginning of the Jaime Paz Zamora administration with the coalition that he had with Banzer as his vice president.

Q: How did, let's take Peru first. What were our relations? We had had very poor relations.

BEERS: We had very poor relations with Garcia. Fujimori came in wanting to reform and saw this as a problem and was also looking for ways to spur the economy. So, on one level he knew he had an irritant with the United States that he had to deal with. He saw the possibility of getting some forms of assistance more broadly than the assistance that came from the counter narcotics effort if he were accommodated on this area. He wanted to be seen as doing something for the indigenous population east of the Andes so it was a convenient thing for him. He also knew as Garcia knew at the end of his own administration that he had a serious problem with Sendero Luminoso and he was going to need some kind of help in dealing with it. The U.S. certainly regarded the Sendero at that time as the greatest threat for instability in Latin America. The FARC and ELM and M19 had certainly been forms of turbulence in Colombia, but it didn't appear that the government was going to be threatened. There were serious discussions about whether or not the Sendero might be strong enough, along with its urban parallel organization Tupac Amaru, to actually overthrow the government or to truly take control of areas of the country. They appeared to be or have some relation with the drug traffickers or at least the production of the coca as defenders of the campesino when they weren't killing them. There was a CIA concern about the insurgency threat; there was the counter drug community concern about the drug threat. There was the issue of just plain old governments in Peru. Garcia for all of his populism hadn't been a particularly vigorous democrat. Fujimori turned out not to be much of one either. The military had continued to be involved in human rights abuses, all of course in the name of fighting the communist insurgency. It was a questionable time.

Then we had a continued post-Vietnam, post-Contra aversion to an involvement in insurgency activities. But the drug issue gave us a rally point in trying to deal with instability insofar as it was drug related. That was sort of the nature of the relationship there and in Colombia. There were no insurgents at this time in Bolivia, just drug traffickers. It wasn't an issue there, but it was let's get the military involved in something productive instead of simply being a drain on resources of the state.

Q: Well, in trying to deal with this 10 to 1 ratio.

BEERS: The notion was that you had to do two things, one you had to have some form of an eradication program and in Peru it was manual eradication, guys with machetes carted around in trucks or helicopters supported by a security force who went in and chopped down the coca. Obviously they were viewed by the campesinos as forces of repression. They were, in the sense that they were taking away the livelihood of these people. The second thing was a concerted effort to try to interdict the traffickers. That didn't really become a successful program until we hit on the aerial interdiction program which comes during the Clinton administration. At this time it was DEA trying to organize interdiction forces that would operate in these remote areas. In the case of Peru and Bolivia, paramilitary organizations of police would go out and try to catch the traffickers. Or they would go out and seize the paste regardless of whether it was still in the possession of campesinos or had gotten to the traffickers. Then they would understand, particularly if you seized it from the campesinos, that the sweat equity that they had put into this production effort was for naught. They would be at risk, and while they didn't get as much money from growing whatever, they at least would know that they could work hard and get something back for what they did that was not at risk to seizure. There was an economic dynamic: recognizing that at the end of the day, if you were successful and there was a smaller and smaller amount of production, the price of the coca leaves would rise even more. So people might be more willing to take that risk in order to realize that level of return. What happened in Bolivia was different. The Bolivians at that point didn't really want to engage in forced eradication and nobody wanted to engage in aerial eradication.

Q: Why not?

BEERS: My fancy is that they were concerned about the environmental effect, in the sense that it would be indiscriminate so that it would kill more than the coca, which is true, if it's not applied carefully. Secondly.

Q: We're talking about spraying?

BEERS: Yes.

Q: Agent Orange.

BEERS: Right, yes. So the second part was that the Agent Orange stories and what kind of harm might come to individuals or the environment longer term as a result of this. This was even though the supporters of aerial eradication appeared to demonstrate that there was a long history of aerial eradication of spraying in the United States on our agriculture for the purpose of killing weeds that was labeled acceptable by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Q: Did you see the movie North by Northwest?

BEERS: They were not interested in having to deal with the kind of questions that might arise. Also, the manual eradication was an employment generating function. There was

an additional economic benefit from that and I think in that regard they simply felt that they would be taking on too much. They were all of course sovereignty conscious about the United States dictating activities to them and just calling them an activity would be pretty apparent as having come from the United States. In Bolivia, they said we will offer farmers a payment in agricultural extension assistance if they will eradicate or allow us to eradicate with their permission their coca product. A bureaucracy arose responsible for measuring coca plots and determining that they had been eradicated, compensating the campesino, and making sure that they were on the list to receive agricultural extension and to some degree making sure that they in fact got some of that. In the case of both Peru and Bolivia, the campesino reaction was to simply go and grow it someplace else, including the people who took the money from the Bolivian government to cut this plot down here and just move their plot a little further off the road. So you could see this sort of displacement of the crop. There were efforts to intercept the planes while they were on the ground or to make sure that planes that were on the ground were appropriately licensed in the country since the aircraft that came from Colombia tended to be Colombian licensed. There was a presumption of illegal activity because why else would Colombian planes be in either of those two countries in remote areas. There were efforts to test for narcotic substances in those planes and then use that as the basis for seizing the plane to try to reduce the flow. Of course the amount of money that a pilot could make to fly in would be such that they could probably have paid for a new plane every 10th flight. The premium there was also pretty high.

Anyway, that particular plan went on for a part of the Bush administration. Most of the Bush administration with general support, but never quite at the levels that were promised. Congress, which was still Democratic, went along because it seemed like a reasonable approach. It wasn't just repression. The military, which was never particularly pleased with counter narcotics activities, went along with it because it was at least a way to increase the amount of cooperation and contact with foreign militaries. DEA sometimes had problems because they didn't actually get any money out of this particular activity and were still left to try to scrape for their own money. They were fighting the battle in their own bureaucracy between those who served overseas and those who served in the United States with service in the United States being a more career enhancing activity. You generally had actual drug busts in the U.S. to show for your record whereas when you went overseas most of your activity was eaten up in what would be called diplomacy for diplomats and liaison activities for other members of the country team. You often didn't get that many cases that you could claim and you didn't get that much credit for the seizures that the foreign governments made unless you could show that it was directly the result of information that you had provided them that they had acted upon. While the agent in charge in an embassy had a somewhat prestigious position, it was still low down on the embassy pecking order. There weren't a lot of people who took it on and you had to have Spanish skills.

The people in DEA who served in Southeast Asia had similar problems trying to fight heroin trade so there was always this tension. We were trying to help their prestige, but we hadn't figured out a way to get them additional money. There was later on an effort

by Judge Bonner, the Bush administration head of DEA, to get the military to give DEA some black hawks.

Q: You mean helicopters.

BEERS: Black Hawk helicopters so that they would have their own air mobility that they could use at their own direction as opposed to being dependent upon others to move them around. DEA, while it had some aviation, did not have very much and most of it got used in the United States. Mobility was a premium in trying to do stuff about the drug trade in these countries. When we would go out for tours of the drug growing areas, the only way you could realistically get a sense of how significant the cultivation was to get up in the air and see field upon field upon field of coca growing either in the upper Huallaga Valley in Peru or in the Chapare in Bolivia. If you were going to chase drug traffickers you had to be mobile enough to get to where they were when they were there because they weren't going to stay around very long when they were moving the drugs. The objective is to get the drugs, and move them away so that you're not with the evidence that's going to convince you of drug trafficking. That came a cropper. There was an initial reaction of favorability on the part of Scowcroft. Then we explained to him the DEA really didn't have any infrastructure to take care of the aircraft and the ideas that they were proposing were cost ineffective in terms of trying to go after the traffickers. The notion was they would somehow be informed of an airplane that was landing at a point and they would get in their helicopters and they would get there before the plane took off. That has so many assumptions built into it that could break down, that it was particularly difficult for any expectation to work. The success of interdiction as more than an irritant never was successfully proven. They didn't get their black hawks and it was partially a result of our office opposing that diversion of resources to DEA for that particular purpose. We weren't against interdiction, but felt that the premium of resources sent overseas should be devoted to trying to decrease the production rather than to try to interdict it as it moved to the United States. This was at a time in which the amounts that were moved were in relatively small amounts on small aircraft or both. There became a time later when the traffickers started bulk movement in large cargo aircraft. At that point we felt that aerial interdiction might be more cost effective particularly as we had a real opportunity using air surveillance to spot the aircraft in flight and the flight was long enough that we could martial an arrival party to get to the site that they touched down before the trucks could pull up to the large aircraft and move the cargo. We tracked the planes and we helped the Mexican government get an interdiction force at that end. The Mexicans of course were not prepared to have DEA run those operations. They were going to run them for a variety of reasons. That's a later part of the story. This is the first Indian initiative. It was a result of both the state of siege in Colombia and the expansion of coca cultivation in Peru and Bolivia. In association with that we had two drug summits during the Bush administration. The first one was at Cartagena. It was Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. It was Paz Zamora; Alan Garcia and Barco. It was a huge deal because the Secret Service was petrified that George Bush would be attacked by drug traffickers. You don't stage secret summits.

Q: No.

BEERS: So it was on a presidential compound on a peninsula in the harbor or the bay of Cartagena. There was a Marine helicopter aircraft carrier offshore in case a rescue operation had to be mounted. The Colombian police threw up a huge net around there and everybody was chopped in. They all met and agreed to work hard together. Then we invaded Panama and Garcia was furious that he wasn't told. Then we had a second summit near the end of the Bush administration in San Antonio in which all five of the Indian presidents and Mexico came again to try to create a greater sense of solidarity and common purpose with the usual communiqués that come out of these summits of high purpose and strong resolve to deal with these problems. I don't mean to sound so diminishing because I do think that they have a value in mobilizing the bureaucracies to support the efforts in terms of building contacts, and getting heads of state to make commitments that can be used to drive programs subsequently. They do have a value, but they also do consume an enormous amount of time and effort on the part of diplomats and bureaucrats in order to make them come off successfully. You want everything already taken care of by the time the heads of state come. The actual summit may be all of two or three hours while they sit around the table and each make some remarks and then sign a document at the end of the summit.

Q: In the first place, why wasn't Brazil a problem or was it?

BEERS: Coca wasn't growing in Brazil in any significant way at all. We looked with satellites and with aircraft and we listened in the sense of either electronic surveillance or confidential informant to see if there was any indication of trafficking. On the one hand it may be remote, but you can't hide it. You can't hide it either physically.

Q: It needs sunlight doesn't it?

BEERS: It needs sunlight, yes, and you can't ever assume a level of operational security that somebody won't talk about. Now, it is true that this was a period in which the drug use was beginning to get far worse in Brazil, but it was only the beginning of that particular process. By the late '80s preoccupation was with marijuana. If you remember Colombia, for example, Colombia was known as a producer of marijuana. Colombian gold it was called. Well, that went away. Aerial eradication. In Colombia they were less concerned about those issues and were willing to do it themselves. Then coca became the drug of choice. The coca cocaine user, the crack user, tended to be violent instead of passive which is more likely what happens physically with marijuana or heroin. It was also seen as a source of instability and crime in this country so we have this huge reaction to that. Brazil didn't have a cocaine problem, didn't have a crack problem of the level that it does today. We talked to the Brazilians, but the problem was essentially seen as Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and oddly enough coca had been grown in Ecuador and it turned out to be ultimately done away with. The Ecuadorian government somehow, or probably the traffickers found it more cost effective to simply move stuff from the large field growing areas in Bolivia and Peru rather than what hadn't really taken hold as a massive growing area in eastern Ecuador. So the Ecuadorian government was essentially able to

get rid of it and the traffickers were never prepared to try to push to make it work there, which is strange, but that's simply the way it took off. Venezuela is the same situation.

Q: Yes, well, was there ever any thought, I mean consider the massive effort we're putting in say to go into Bolivia and buy the coca leaves.

BEERS: There was a discussion of that and it came as I heard it from John Sununu who asked Scowcroft why we couldn't buy up the crop. The economic analysis of that solution was that it would only expand the cultivation, that we would be competing with the drug traffickers and the price would rise.

Q: They had deeper pockets.

BEERS: And the cultivation. At the front end of the process we could have put more money more quickly into it if we had chosen to do that, but we would have had to have insisted that the people who grew it stop growing it and we couldn't enforce that. I think that that proposal would simply not have met the laugh test for people who spent more than five minutes trying to think about it.

Q: Then, what about say the Bolivian farmers who were taking this payment not to grow stuff, but actually growing it up the hill a little farther on, during the time you were there, were we getting a handle on that?

BEERS: If you took the government's money you weren't supposed to grow coca again. If you could in fact determine that the owner of this plot was the same person who had agreed to the eradication of another plot elsewhere then that would be a basis for arresting that individual. If you started growing coca after a certain date you were in violation of the law. This was a transitional regime, which was to say all coca currently growing will be compensated. New coca will be eradicated and you the grower will be in violation of the law. They never seriously enforced that law. 10, 12 years later there was no coca growing in Bolivia that was old coca because the coca bush doesn't produce for more than 12 years. All coca was in violation of the law, which was eventually one of the things that caused them to go to forced eradication. They could go back and point to the previous law and say this was no longer the case. It was just an ineffective or a conscious effort not to enforce those laws. They feared social unrest that they might create along with the need at the same time to at least have some ability to tell the United States that they were making an effort. There are lots of books that have been written about the levels of corruption. Paz Zamora of Bolivia at one point lost his passport to come to the United States after he left the presidency because he was judged to have had some affiliation with traffickers. Fujimori's Intel chief, Montesinos, was regarded as having links to traffickers. Samper, after he was elected president of Colombia was determined to have received some money that he was believed to have known about that came from drug traffickers. That's at the top of each of those three countries. The level of corruption below that has also been reported on and is probably underreported because you know from your own Foreign Service experience around the world that corruption has been a significant problem in terms of economic activity in a number of countries, including the

United States. It's just the question of the level and the pervasiveness of the corruption as opposed to some sort of off-on switch. There's no off switch on corruption.

Q: While you were dealing with this during the '88 to '92 period, did you have much of a handle, I think we did talk about terrorism the last time, but just to reprise, I mean narcotics was sort of the major place where you were making progress or doing things?

BEERS: I spent more time on the narcotics account than I did on the terrorism account, that's true. We also had a DEA agent who worked in the office time that we had several, I mean in succession, one at a time. We usually had somebody who also worked on the terrorism account in addition to myself and David Miller or Ted McNamara. On the terrorism side, the first thing was that the Bush administration entered office with Pan Am 103. It occurred on the 21st of December of 1988. Bush was still the Vice President, but he had been elected president and so one issue was what to do about Pan Am 103.

Another thing was our number of American hostages in Lebanon. Then there was just the more general issue of Palestinian and or Iranian instigated Hezbollah terrorism. Because of our policy of not negotiating for hostage release we basically ended up looking for clues to figure out where they were and whether or not we could rescue them. McNamara thought he'd come pretty close near the end of his tenure, but nothing was actually done about it. We continued to try to figure that out, but I don't remember much in the way of success. David Miller had an idea, which I presume he's recounted to you, about helping Peggy Say find her brother, Terry Anderson.

Q: Peggy Say was sort of the burr under the saddle of the whole hostage situation.

BEERS: Yes, she was the burr under the saddle in the same way that Jennifer Harbury was the burr under the saddle about CIA collusion with Guatemalan intelligence authorities and she was a public person. She spoke out critically. David's notion was to invite her in.

Q: Peggy Say.

BEERS: Peggy. And say, Peggy, we're not doing much, we're not being very successful in helping you find your brother and we're not going to negotiate for his release. I would suggest that you go and find somebody to act as an interlocutor on your behalf. Have that individual see whether or not there is a negotiated deal that you can use to get your brother out. I'll help you find a lawyer. He called up his friend Greg Craig of Clinton impeachment defense fame, among other activities, a former Senator Kennedy staffer and a well-known Washington lawyer. So, Greg was sent off to see if he could find something to do. Then somehow the Iranians and/or Hezbollah came to the view that the hostages were no longer of much benefit to them and began releasing them in sort of episodic fashion. Terry finally got out that way along with the Anglican priest and several others who were still alive. Sadly, Lt. Col. Rich Higgins, a Marine, was executed during this period and obviously others were killed as well. Essentially by the end of Bush's term the hostages were released. It was probably through the good offices of the United

Nations that that in fact came about. Bush certainly believed that Perez de Cuellar and his people, and I'm not disagreeing with that, were instrumental in getting the hostages released. Nobody gave anything of value and we certainly weren't negotiating for their release so it all happened if you will under the.

Q: Well, you certainly were also laboring under the Irangate.

BEERS: Sure, the cake and the bible and all of that.

Q: All of that stuff. I mean that's.

BEERS: And the notion that the White House didn't engage in operational activities.

Q: Yes.

BEERS: Even the fact that David Miller had contracted with Greg Craig to do this, while known by Scowcroft, was probably a crossing of the line that the White House didn't do operations. But it was probably the only way to convey to Peggy that the administration was prepared to try to find some way to give her some aid while she was being so critical. She wouldn't have taken any assistance if it hadn't come from the White House. She expected to be treated appropriately by the highest leadership in the country. All of that came along. There was at one point a call that came into the White House from somebody who said that he was Rafsanjani and there was a big flurry about this.

Q: He was president of Iran at the time.

BEERS: About whether or not we should take the phone call. I went across the street and said if this is Rafsanjani, you do not want the President of the United States taking the phone call. Well, he ended up taking the phone call anyway and it was a nobody. I have to go back and look at Ken Pollack's book, because he has the story in there, to remind myself what was exactly the circumstance, but it was one of these situations: is this a real windfall and can we actually get something out of this. Can we get this off the table in the same way that Jim Baker hired Bernie Aronson as assistant secretary for Latin America to get rid of the civil war in El Salvador. Just get it off the table. We don't need, this administration has too many other important things to deal with in the world without having to worry about that civil war which has cost the Reagan administration so much of its credibility. Bernie to his extreme credit did exactly that in a reasonable fashion. So it was the same thing with the hostages. They were part of that legacy from the Reagan administration that had caused it so much trouble. With people like Peggy Say around to remind Americans around every day that it was still a problem, we wanted to take it off the table. I mean just for the sheer humanity of getting the people who were hostages out, but it was also a political irritant, there's no question about it. It was fodder for the press all the time.

The main story ultimately ended up being Pan Am 103. When it first happened, the reports were that the Iranians had sent a congratulatory note to Hezbollah. The Syrians

seemed to have done something like that. The group in Germany called the _____ group which had been fiddling around with bombs in radios appeared to have been fingered as the likely group since the plane came out of Frankfurt first and then just stopped in London. I think it was the same plane and then took off and disappeared over Lockerbie. All of that buzz got leaked. Everybody who was scurrying around in the public domain trying to have something important to say focused on that. The families of the victims came to view that information as the basis for how the United States should proceed. So we should deal with Syria and we should deal with Iraq and they had to be responsible. Why aren't we doing something? Why aren't we doing something?

Meanwhile, the FBI and the British put the plane back together. Because it was late taking off it happened still to be overland. They had set the timer so that it would have blown up at sea and there would have been no wreckage to be retrieved. For Pan Am 103 they put it back together and they found where the hole had been blown. They knew that that was the cargo hold that was next to the wall there. They picked up all of the pieces that had come; that they could find that had been in the hold. They found the powder burns where the explosive charge had gone off so they knew the garments that were likely to have been in the bag. They had found a piece of the timer that had been involved in setting off the charge and it was a Toshiba radio. So, aha, the _____ group clearly is responsible for this and the Germans thrashed around making raves and got a couple of their agents blown up because there were in fact explosives that this group had been fiddling around with and all that. That seemed to confirm the story until the FBI gave the timer piece to CIA. The CIA looked at it and said, this is just like this one we had found in West Africa. These seem to have been made by a Swiss firm. That West African one was associated with Libya so they went to the Swiss firm. They had sold X number of these timers to the Libyan. The person that they had sold it to appeared to be an intelligence agent. So they'd been seeing where did all the baggage come from. They knew what was in the bag that had blown up. They wanted to figure tracing back to where all the baggage had come from if they could find in fact where that bag had been put on the plane. With the Libyan connection, and the fact that some of the bags had come from Malta, and the strands of this one sweater that had been in the bag that had blown up, they found a shopkeeper in Malta who remembered that he had sold a sweater to somebody. He remembered that he had sold that sweater because he said, this sweater, nobody was buying it. I was so happy to unload this sweater that I remember it. It was the sweater and they figured out who it was and in turn had somebody who ratted on how the operation had been conducted. All this was part of the ultimate prosecution's case. Fhimah and Megrahi were turned over by the Libyans for trial much later.

Q: Much later, but it still is a continuing.

BEERS: We struggled with this and so when we came to the conclusion that it was Libya you had this huge expectation on the part of a lot of people that it was Iran and Syria. Then the issue was how do you connect Iran and Syria to Libya, when in fact we could determine no connection, and can only surmise that if the Iranian intercept had in fact been intended to congratulate Hezbollah, it was wrong. We were never able to establish it. To this day there are people who believe that somewhere in the CIA we knew that

there was a connection and we're just not telling people because we can't handle having to blame Iran or Syria for this act and that Libya ultimately was a convenient pariah to blame.

Q: This of course we're talking about people with strong convictions about conspiracy theories.

BEERS: Oh, yes.

Q: But these became a reality. I mean as far as what you have to deal with particularly in terrorism.

BEERS: Yes.

Q: Where did you go then by the way?

BEERS: I went back to State for six months as a deputy assistant secretary in PM and was replaced by my friend Richard Clarke at the NSC and then went back to work for him.

Q: Okay.

Today is the 24th of June, 2005. Rand, Pan Am 103 sanctions.

BEERS: Yes. We had originally thought that the Iranians and the Syrians were complicit with whoever it was that blew up the plane. There was intelligence about the gang of terrorists in Germany and indications of bombs in radios and so on. It appeared that a radio had in fact held the bomb. We went down that path for probably a year. I don't remember exactly the right time. Sometime in the spring, summer of '91 it became clear because the CIA had been able to identify one of the chips in the timing device as being the same brand as a chip that they had somehow acquired from a bomb device in West Africa that was traced back to the Libyans and so with some good footwork investigative footwork we then had a pretty strong case that the Libyans were responsible. We had traced the bag that was put on Pan Am 103 from Malta. We had turned a Libyan agent and gotten him into protective custody in the United States. We had identified the fabric of a garment that was in the bag and found the place in Malta where it was bought and the owner of the shop remembered it being purchased by one of the two principal suspects. I don't remember whether it was Fhimah or Megrahi but he remembered it because it was a garment that he couldn't sell and he had not been able to move it and then one day this guy came in and he bought a bunch of stuff very quickly.

Q: Just to pack the suitcase.

BEERS: Just to pack the suitcase. So, he remembered this sweater and the guy who bought it and could pick him out from a lineup. He was the other principal witness and we then had a debate within the government about what to do. The debate went back and

forth below the cabinet level about whether or not we should take military action and should that be another bombing of Tripoli or should it be a naval blockade or should we try some other route for example through the United Nations and would that in fact work? The nature of the debate was, well, it's now 1991 and that's almost three years since the actual attack occurred. That's a long time to come back and undertake military action. We would essentially be responding for their action, which was presumably in response to our earlier attack on Tripoli that was in response to their bombing the La Belle discotheque in Berlin. The families that were most vocal clearly wanted some major form of retribution; it wouldn't necessarily have to have been a military strike, but a blockade. They didn't know about this yet because we hadn't made this information public yet. So the issue was teed up for a cabinet meeting and the president participated.

Q: The president being at this time?

BEERS: George Herbert Walker Bush. He set the tone essentially for the whole meeting by stating at the beginning that he did not want to continue this cycle of violence. He in essence ruled the military strike options off the table. The debate then was between whether or not we would impose a naval blockade or we would go to the UN.

Q: Would a naval blockade entail because you had oil going to Western Europe.

BEERS: That's right.

Q: This would not sit well particularly with the Italians and other places.

BEERS: That's right. That was obviously one of the considerations, but the principle consideration was, well, what is the objective of the blockade. What are we trying to do and how long are we prepared to impose this blockade, at what cost to ourselves? Yes, what complications would it bring. Now, remember there were a number of nationalities on Pan Am 103. It was true that most of the people were Americans, but they weren't just Americans. There were Brits and there were French and there were others. Anyway, the principal hawk that I remember was the attorney general Bill Barr who came to the lower level meetings. He was so incensed by this particular issue. Anyway, there was a decision basically to go to the United Nations and to set down a certain set of requirements that the Libyans would have to meet. We would impose sanctions that would restrict trade with Libya until they renounced terrorism, gave up the suspects, helped with the investigation, compensated the families that were concerned. We then went to the Brits who said they would go with us on this issue. It was not clear where the individuals would be tried and there was to some degree a minor dispute within the administration as to whether or not we would insist on having the trial, if and when the suspects were turned over, in the United States. As opposed to Britain since the act occurred in Britain, or at least in British air space, and it fell in Britain and it killed people in the town of Lockerbie.

Q: Yes, it killed people there.

BEERS: Right. In addition to the Brits that were on the plane. We never really settled that issue, but there was a view that it would probably be better to try them in Britain because the jury didn't have to be unanimous in its verdict. That that was believed to be better, but it would be in Scottish law and people worried about how that was different and all of that, but again we never really settled the issue. I don't remember whether it was the Brits who proposed this or we thought of it. We then went to the French. We went to the French because of the UTA aircraft that was blown up by the Libyans coming out of Ndjamena.

Q: It killed Bonnie Pugh.

BEERS: The wife of the American ambassador, Bob Pugh.

The French had a similar issue and the idea was, well, if three of the permanent members of the Security Council came, maybe we would have a chance, but no one had a high degree of confidence that we could pull this off.

Q: Was there a fall back? Okay, if they don't do it we'll do it?

BEERS: Well, remember we had already imposed our own sanctions. These had gone back to when we got some intelligence suggesting that they were trying to kill Al Haig and then we imposed them after La Belle disco. The U.S. already had sanctions so that the next thing would have been to get countries to impose the sanctions individually to extend the range of sanctions. Anyway, we then began a series of meetings. They took place in Paris because the Brits thought that that was great. They could fly over to Paris and have dinner or take the train to Paris and have dinner and then we'd have the meeting the next day. The meeting was always set on Saturday morning. We met in the Élysée when the French came onboard.

Q: The Élysée for the French is like the White House.

BEERS: Yes. The foreign office was not particularly; the Quay d'Orsay was not particularly keen on this. They had their own Arabist group there just as all of our foreign offices have people who have served in the Arab world and have frequently been found to argue in favor of maintaining harmony and so on.

Q: The French president was Mitterrand.

BEERS: Mitterrand at the time, yes.

Ted McNamara was my boss and we took turns flying to Paris. It was either Ted or myself and Peter Burleigh who was then the coordinator for counter terrorism at the State Department. I would go the airport and catch the 6:00 PM Pan Am flight and arrive in Paris, drive into the city from Charles de Gaulle Airport, have coffee at Avis Bolen's house because she was the DCM at the time living in the house that she had lived in as a girl. We would take somebody from the embassy along and we would meet the Brits

outside the Élysée and we would go in and have coffee and croissants and discuss strategy. We did this for about four or five weeks in the December time frame. We then took a trip around Europe. We went to NATO and we went to a bunch of the capitals of the countries that had citizens onboard Pan Am 103 to rally support among the Europeans. Then we took it to the UN and to the surprise of everyone it passed the Security Council 15 to nothing.

Q: Our UN perm rep obviously was very much engaged in this.

BEERS: The resolution essentially said everything that we wanted and it was affirmative. That meant that it could only be revoked by another resolution which was truly key so that we didn't have to go back for renewals.

Q: What was happening with the Arab world supporting Libya or?

BEERS: No, basically what happened was when we presented the evidence it was sufficiently compelling. The only trick was we couldn't give away the fact that we had turned this Libyan in and he was sequestered in the U.S.

Q: There must have been some intercept factors as well or not.

BEERS: I don't remember there. I think we basically had these witnesses. We presented it at the Security Council and we presented it around the Arab world and there was sufficient reaction on the part of the Arab world to the horror of this particular crime that we really didn't get much in the way of a negative reaction.

Q: Did you get any feel for Syria at this point because Syria was number two suspect, wasn't it?

BEERS: Right, well, I think that they were just happy to be taken off of the list. What was odd was that the victim's families had become so invested in the Iranian-Syrian involvement that they never gave that up. They wanted us to prove to them how Iran and Syria were connected with the Libyan plot and we went back into the evidence and we couldn't. We were unable to find anything, which isn't to say it isn't true, but we were unable to find any connection between either Syria and Iran and Libya on this. It appears that the Libyans had undertaken an almost perfect copycat operation from stuff that was circulating at the time to pull the wool over everybody's eyes. It took a long time before the FBI, which had together with Scotland Yard put the plane back together and picked up this chip, but didn't show it to the CIA until about a year later. It was that particular transfer that broke the case because the bureau couldn't identify where the chip came from.

Q: When we were trying to with sanctions, setting up what had to be done for them to be lifted, I mean, you had I would have thought a matter of great debate, what about Qadhafi because here is a state that is controlled by one man essentially and you're

condemning the state and you want to get the guys who did it and what about the supreme leader?

BEERS: Well, you see that was supposed to be satisfied by the notion that the state would then assist U.S., Britain and France in the future investigation of how the crime was carried out. We said in that particular process it will be revealed the extent to which Qadhafi knew about it or didn't know about it. That's the one condition that was never met. The Libyans announced immediately that they had ceased any connection with terrorism and denounced it while proclaiming their innocence. They began feelers that they would pay compensation and they said that they could not turn over Fhimah and Megrahi because it was against Libyan law. That went on for years and years. Qadhafi finally decided that the sanctions weren't going to go away, and while they might not be so perfectly honored, they were a sufficient irritation to business that he negotiated the deal to have Fhimah and Megrahi go to trial and that's what ended up happening. They went and one of them was convicted and the other was acquitted. The Librans agreed to pay compensation [of \$10 million for each of the 270 victims or \$2.7 billion in total].

Q: This goes looking into the future, but was the feeling this is the tipping point where Libya stopped all the terrorism business.

BEERS: Yes. It did turn out that they stopped terrorism essentially except for the plot against the crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

Q: Which was just recently.

BEERS: Which is recent. They certainly did not stop their involvement in various insurgencies and what not in sub-Saharan Africa. They are by no means a country that has clean hands in terms of instigating instability and violence.

Q: Going back to when you were dealing with this, what was their reading on Qadhafi?

BEERS: He was a dictator who had pretty firm control although I think we felt that there were some limitations on how far he could go. We actually did not think that he would do what the sanctions required of him. We thought that the sanctions would be in essence permanent sanctions, that he would never do that. We really thought of him as an autocrat who essentially ran the state directly. We felt that all of the actions that Libya took were either known by him or in some way done under his general guidance. His intelligence services were essentially troublemakers around the world and that he used his oil wealth in an attempt to become one of the preminent leaders in the Arab world or in Africa. He went in both directions at one time or another either wanting to run the OAU or the Arab League. It was interesting that the reactions in both directions were by and large negative. We certainly had to do some strong-armed diplomacy from time to time to keep Libya off of the Security Council since they could play either the African or the Asian card. The hardest one was the African card when it became the turn of the African group to elect the Arab to the Security Council as opposed to the Asian group. You know the arrangement I'm talking about?

Q: Well, you might tell.

BEERS: The non-permanent members come from the various continents and they're elected by the groups of countries in that continent. Our caucus is called WEAOG, Western Europe and Others Group. There's the Asian group, there's the African group, there's the Latin group and they each have two. There must have been an Eastern European group. They each have two and there's an unwritten agreement that either Asia or Africa will have an Arab so that there's always an Arab country on the Security Council. If its Africa it has to be the littoral and if its Asia it has to be east of Suez, but that's the arrangement. For the Libyans it was trying to get the African seat when it was time to have another Arab. They hadn't ever been a member of the Security Council. They thought it was their due and we had to spend a significant effort among the African nations to prevent them from getting what should have been under any other circumstances a rotational seat. That was the kind of thing that we spent the next basically 10 years doing.

Q: Were we, the NSC now I guess, and moved on to what for six months or so?

BEERS: Six months. It was the end of the administration and Dick Clarke had been fired by Jim Baker, or in more polite terms, because it was never formally called a firing, asked for his resignation after three years.

Q: What was the relationship between Clarke and Baker?

BEERS: It varied, but Dick had managed to irritate Janet Mullins and Margaret Tutwiler both. That was a pretty potent group to fall out of favor with.

Q: Janet Mullins being the?

BEERS: Congressional.

Q: Congressional, right.

BEERS: That along with some other actions one of which I'm told and I will tell you what I was told, I'm not sure that I have it right. I've been told that at one point in time Dick was in Germany I believe and Baker wanted him to go to Moscow. He, knowing what was going to be asked of him, refused to take the phone calls to go to Moscow and talk about some arms control issue. That can't have any favor with Baker. He then also got into trouble with the inspector general over what the inspector general, this is Sherman Funk, declared was a willingness to look the other way with respect to Israel's transfer of technology to China. Dick's side of the story is quite the contrary. He blasted the Israelis, but he did it in private, that they couldn't continue to do this kind of thing, but he didn't sanction them, that's true, and he could have sanctioned them for that.

Q: I wouldn't think Clarke would have been that I mean it's almost a political issue more than a.

BEERS: Of course it was.

Q: And I wouldn't have thought that Clarke being the fireball that he has the reputation of being. I mean that's the move of a political operative, not of somebody who is trying to stop a real danger to the United States.

BEERS: He was basically under instruction.

Q: As I say, we're both sitting here looking at this and knowing that I mean it seems though from what I've heard about the gentleman it seems so atypical.

BEERS: Yes. He had the authority to impose the sanctions on his own, but obviously given our relationship with Israel it was a political decision. Anyway, he was out of a job and I'd been looking for a job for about a year. The job that I'd wanted at the Pentagon ended up going to an in-house transfer. Carl Ford, who had been the East Asian Deputy Assistant Secretary, moved over and became the Middle East Deputy Assistant Secretary. The new guy who was going to be running ISA, Jim Lilley, was an Asian hand. Carl didn't want to be a DAS for a guy who was going to run his own Asian policy in the Pentagon, so he basically asked Wolfowitz to transfer him to this other job. I looked at the Latin American job in the Pentagon because I'd been interested in that and that went to someone else. So when Clarke left PM, I knew that Bob Gallucci was going to replace him. I had worked with Bob, we'd been fellow office directors together and worked on a couple of projects. I called him up and said was he looking for any deputy assistant secretaries? He said, really glad you called, yes, would you like to be one? I took that job. I don't know whether Clarke was going to the NSC then yet or not, but my departure gave Scowcroft the opportunity to put him in as my replacement.

Q: Well now, your job was what?

BEERS: I was Deputy Assistant Secretary in PM regional affairs and export control. I spent most of my time worrying about export control. It was a hugely complex cast of thousands and thousands of cases with the defense industries constantly complaining about how long we took to process the cases and the failure to communicate guidelines clearly or a whole list of other things. Trying to get our hands around that particular process ended up taking up most of my time. I did a little bit on regional affairs, but mostly it was export control.

Q: Well, I mean something like this shows in a way a problem of the system of people moving in and out because this is the sort of thing you think a civil servant would have grown up in and groomed for many years.

BEERS: In fact the office director was a career civil servant. He had retired from the air force as a colonel and had gone to this office in the '70s and had been running it for some

time. But part of the problem was that there had never been enough attention about him to this issue because it was so unpoliced an activity. It was sort of a paperwork administrative activity and the people who supervised him didn't pay a lot of attention. The congress didn't give the bureau the kind of support for managing it until the complaints from the defense industry got so loud. They allowed the State Department to charge a user fee to the contractor so that when they submitted their applications they had to provide money to pay for the processing. This allowed the office to expand and to get computers, but even there the process of actually getting them and everything ran into all kinds of bureaucratic snafus.

Q: Well, I've understood that there's almost a kabuki dance went on on this sort of thing. The Defense Department was saying no to everything. The Commerce Department was saying yes to everything and that put the State Department in the middle.

BEERS: Well, you're right. I mean in terms of the policy processing of it, that was the general alignment if it was going anywhere that was slightly questionable. Slightly questionable meant that the technology might leak to the Soviet Union or China.

Q: Maybe too the Soviet Union is still, well, it actually was still or was it?

BEERS: Yes, we're after the fall of the Soviet Union so the world is changing. China is still of a serious concern, but Russia hadn't been ruled out as a potential advisory. And we had concerns about selling it to any Arab state that might somehow use the technology against Israel. Those were still considerations and the system still continued to get hung up on enough of the cases that there were still complaints.

Q: Where were the as you looked at this, where were the trouble spots and what were the trouble issues particularly?

BEERS: You mean with respect to export control?

Q: Yes.

BEERS: China, the Middle East, Russia, those were the main.

Q: What sort of things.

BEERS: Then countries that were under sanction like Pakistan.

Q: What sort of things were coming across your desk in your office?

BEERS: I actually made very few case decisions. I spent more of my time trying to get the process to be more accountable, but the ones that tended to come to me were China during this period.

Q: Was the feeling with China, was it looking to improve its military capabilities or was this just an offshoot of getting the latest computer technology?

BEERS: It was the latter. It's like the export control issue that blew up about China space activities. It was dual use kinds of stuff. No, we weren't selling weapons to them. It was technology.

Q: Were you feeling the heat from business?

BEERS: I certainly was visited regularly and made a point of talking to private sector companies or associations to hear their concerns and complaints. I wouldn't call it so much heat as trying to establish a working relationship to make the system work better for them, recognizing that we were going to say no on some things. They said we would rather you tell us no quickly than string it out so we don't waste time and money pursuing something or even having to keep track of it.

Q: Was it hard to say no?

BEERS: No. When we said no, I don't remember ever being questioned on a no. It was the process that was bothersome.

Q: What about business in particularly so many of the more complex things have gotten very international and you've got a French lab and a Japanese lab working with an American lab on X process and all that and how did this fit in?

BEERS: Well, the issue is U.S. content. The regulations set out if there was this percentage of U.S. content then they had to have a license. That was how the process was supposed to work and teaming up with another country didn't protect you from having to get the license.

Q: What about the Israeli factor, did you get involved in that?

BEERS: I certainly had discussions with people in the Israeli Embassy about making sure that they kept their hands clean. I had the other part of my job on regional affairs. We also had a series of meetings on an annual basis with the Israelis.

Q: Looking at this, had there been a significant effort on the part of the Israelis to sell equipment with American content in it to the Chinese or to the Russians?

BEERS: Not to the Russians. Yes, they had sold stuff to the Chinese. We had to remind them that as part of the agreement when they received the technology or the equipment that they were obligated to seek our approval for its transfer to another country. They would claim that the sales of things to other countries were of weapons and technology that they had built or designed. We argued that it was based on technology that we gave them and that they were still obligated. They couldn't simply take that technology in and tweak it a little bit and claim that it was their own. During that period, and still to this

day, we have not just sold them stuff. We have also given them technology so that their own defense industries could produce things for themselves. Because of the small Israeli market for which they're producing, their own armed forces had sought to be a global arms manufacturer in order to make their defense industries more viable. That's the nature of the problem that we ran into: that their desire to sell planes and missiles and what not, with what was in essence in our view U.S. content, was a serious issue.

Q: During the time you were there did you run into any buzz saws in this?

BEERS: No, not that I remember. It was not a particularly satisfying job. That is why I left after six months.

Q: You left when?

BEERS: I formally left in February of '93.

Q: This was a new administration that came in, had just come in.

BEERS: Right. Right.

Q: So, then what did you do?

BEERS: Well, I went back to the NSC and essentially took the job that I had had before. Clarke had been asked by Tony Lake and Sandy Berger to stay. The Clinton administration had inherited the Somalia intervention and Dick, because he had the UN portfolio, was its coordinator. He also had the African portfolio at that time, but the Clinton administration took the African portfolio out of that office and had a separate African directorate. They brought Dennis Jett in to run it temporarily until the woman who was in Africa could get back to the United States. She was ambassador to Niger at that point in time. Anyway, so, Dick was doing peacekeeping and terrorism and narcotics. I came back as his deputy, but spent most of my time on peacekeeping in that reconfigured office.

Q: Could you give a feel for the atmosphere when a new administration comes in? It's sort of like in the beginning there was chaos, I mean how did you, I don't know, but with the NSC how well did the Clinton administration set up at the NSC?

BEERS: I was there for the transition from Reagan to Bush and from Bush to Clinton and in both cases there were minor reconfigurations. The policy process engaged in the broadest sense by asking for studies to be written on major policy issues. The crises de jour are then managed by the people who are responsible for them. The Clinton administration came in with some views about wanting the UN to have a significant role in the post-Cold War world. To a very large extent Somalia was viewed as a real opportunity to prove that the UN could play a significant role in resolving crises and creating stable countries around the world. The Cambodia example had essentially been completed by that time. It was used by many as an excellent case in which the UN had

performed well and brought a country through a difficult period. So the idea was to make Somalia work in the same way. It became a pretty complicated process. The level of coordination between the Pentagon and the State Department was a challenge and Democrats hadn't been in power for 12 years. The challenges of that kind of coordination were greater I think for the Clinton administration in those early years. Clinton stubbed his toe on the gays in the military with the, don't ask, don't tell business at the very beginning. That represented an additional impediment in terms of coordination with the military. The resource issue in terms of where do you get the money from to do what was an additional challenge. Bush had done a good job of trying to resolve the UN dues issue but it wasn't perfectly resolved. Helms was still quite adamant.

Q: Senator Helms.

BEERS: Senator Helms, in his opposition to the UN. So how were we going to pay for these activities? When the Security Council voted for a peacekeeping event it created a financial obligation for the United States. Congress was irritated that the executive was creating these obligations which they were supposed to pay for. Then blithely coming up to the Hill and saying give us the money. There was that challenge that was running at the same time trying to figure out how to do Somalia financially as well as to do Somalia from a policy perspective. That created a second train of challenges for the new administration with all of the related questions of what was happening in the rest of the world, a president who didn't have very much foreign policy experience. A group of players in the White House as a whole who hadn't been in government either at all or for a very long period of time trying to learn how to run government. There was a certain amount of chaos and there was just a certain amount of squirreling around. A lot of the new team, who were not part of the National Security Council, but who were accustomed from the campaign to participating in the decision process, wanted to be involved in the decision process of the National Security Council. So there were occasional meetings in which others would come along.

Q: I'm told too that particularly early on the president was open to almost anyone. This group would come up to him with bright ideas and stuff.

BEERS: Yes, he exercised a very open, this is _____. Sometimes, though, it led to decisions not being made.

Q: As you got there I guess Somalia was your big issue wasn't it?

BEERS: Somalia, UN dues, and alien smuggling were the three issues that I got involved in from the beginning.

Q: Let's talk about Somalia first.

BEERS: Okay.

Q: Where did the Somalia, where was it when you got there?

BEERS: The U.S. intervention had essentially run its course and we were in the process of handing the operation over to the UN. I don't remember whether it had actually been transferred or was being transferred. The U.S. force content was being reduced and we were working with the UN as to how they were going to take it over and what they were going to and what their goals and objectives were. The original intervention was for humanitarian crisis. People were starving. The food was being taken by the various militias and used either to feed only their own people or sold in order to gain money for the militia leaders. There was an armed intervention, which was international, but with a large U.S. content, to insure that the food could be distributed. This is the first intervention that the U.S. had participated in of this nature. We had not done this kind of thing before. We relied upon the UN in this particular case. We intervened as a coalition force authorized by the UN with a large U.S. force content. The U.S. forces were being reduced and brought home and the UN mandate was being written at the Security Council in New York. Madeleine Albright was in place and her peacekeeping person was Mike Sheehan, an army major I think. He'd been actually in the NSC office that I was in and that Dick ended up taking over. He was recommended to Madeleine probably by Bob Oakley in part because Mike had worked on the Somalia issue at the NSC with Dick. Oakley had sort of negotiated a truce in Somalia and this transition was underway. The issue then became what were all of the things that needed to be done to secure stability for the longer term in Somalia. We created an interagency working group called the executive committee or the EXCOM in order to discuss these issues. Dick was the chair of the executive committee. This was an unusual arrangement in the sense that normally the State Department would have chaired these kinds of committees. However, it was very heavily a U.S. military involvement. So it became at least initially politically important for the meetings to be chaired out of the White House so that the State Department wasn't seen to be ordering U.S. forces around.

We went through the whole raft of different kinds of issues. What do we do about disarming the militias? What do we do about creating the police force? What do we do about building institutions in Somalia that work? How do we make sure that the people from the various regions of Somalia all begin to have some stake in the government of the country and what not? What's the U.S. financial obligation to do this? What's the UN's responsibility for doing this? How do we make stability operations actually work? It was for us as a government the first time that we seriously looked at these issues at the end of the Second World War when we were responsible in Japan and in Germany for a post-war occupation/reconstruction. The UN had done it in the other instances and we had basically just paid for it, but we had not had a high level of force involvement or a feeling of direct responsibility. This was a brave new world and began the learning process for the United States for how do you think about and deal with post-conflict reconstruction.

Q: I will say that if you're going to pick a country to reconstruct, Somalia is probably the world's worst.

BEERS: Oh, Stu, you're absolutely right.

Q: I used to be INR's desk officer for Somalia.

BEERS: The agency would come down regularly and say this, and we just didn't want to hear them. We were bent on making this damn thing work and the notion that a country is ungovernable was unacceptable.

Q: We might add now we're talking 2005 and the last I've heard is it still isn't governed.

BEERS: That's right. It was a very sobering experience for the Clinton administration. We much wanted to make this work to prove that the United Nations was the wave of the future.

Q: I mean just on the nuts and bolts, were you, in the first place, where were you getting your information? You mentioned the agency, how about the State Department, the desks? What were you getting?

BEERS: What we were getting was information from the agency. The U.S. forces there included agency types. One of the first deaths in Somalia was a CIA agent who was referred to as a contract employee of the Defense Department. They actually had people on the ground. There were signals intercept capabilities so the information was coming. They were pretty much the Intel eyes and ears for the military forces although there were military intelligence officers there as well. Then there was the UN. The Ethiopian and the Eritreans and the Kenyans were providing information. Ourselves, the UN and the adjacent states were the principal sources of information, but you know the country is divided up into clans and subclans and families and what not. The understanding of what's going on is obviously a significant challenge. This was why Oakley was put in in the first place and then brought back after the.

Q: He'd been ambassador.

BEERS: He'd been ambassador there. He negotiated the settlement when U.S. forces went in the first time to stop the fighting and allow the forces to come ashore without people challenging them. Then he was brought back after Mogadishu. We had very few people who had served there even though at some point the State Department decided it was going to be the regional center. So it also had an administrative structure for budget and finance. I don't know whether it was just East Africa or whether it was the whole continent and they had built a wonderful embassy there. I guess was Jim Bishop the last ambassador?

Q: Jim Bishop was yanked out of there by helicopter as they were coming over the wall.

BEERS: Yes. It was complicated when Bob was there. It was obviously complicated when Jim was there and just getting your hands around what the country was a challenge for any diplomatic staff that served there.

Q: It's been cited I mean this became a pivotal issue for us much, I mean it's known in shorthand terms as Black Hawk Down became a very major issue of what to do and what not to do, but was the conflict when you came in and later became very of concern, mission creep, in other words we essentially went in there for humanitarian purposes and then started to get into nation building.

BEERS: No question about it.

Q: I mean when you came in was it still humanitarian?

BEERS: No, we were on to nation building by that point in time.

Q: Were you still believers or did you feel that you could nation build there?

BEERS: The new team wanted to make the UN into one of the central elements of security and engagement in the post-Cold War world. This represented an opportunity to prove that the UN was capable of undertaking these kinds of tasks. The country had fallen into chaos after Siyad Barre was taken out of power. It had become a humanitarian disaster area because of the lawlessness. Couldn't the UN work to create a transition to stability? The fact that Somalia was so much of a challenge was I won't say downplayed. People understood that it was a challenge, but they weren't prepared to simply say it was beyond our capability to do anything about. I think that all of us, I certainly felt that this was something that we really could and should try to make work.

Q: What was your impression of the UN effort and what Madeleine Albright was doing and all that?

BEERS: One of the things that a lot of us came to understand fairly quickly was that the UN had a lot of institutional weaknesses that added to the challenge of working in Somalia. Kofi Annan was the head of the peacekeeping office at that time. He was a very hardworking, thoughtful administrator and a real joy to work with, but he did not have much in the way of support within the peacekeeping office. They did not have an operations center; they did not have much in the way of permanent staff.

Q: Not much military.

BEERS: And not much military. Every mission that they undertook they had to go out and build from scratch because they had no permanent infrastructure. Getting the forces, supporting the forces, paying the forces and then having both military and a civilian side that had to work together were all challenges that made the whole task more difficult. Going around and finding the countries who would contribute the troops. Making sure that they got there in relatively speedy fashion and that there were places for them to live in a logistic system that backed them up. At the same time you were also trying to start programs that actually made the country more governable both from the taking to the militias, but also, keeping the food flowing and talking about building police forces and local government and worrying about disarming the militias, all of those things at the

same time. The U.S. military didn't think that we ought to be engaging in a disarmament process because people might get killed if you had to actually enforce the disarmament. So we would have discussions about what guidelines we ought to come up with for reducing the violence and restoring order given the fact that there were a lot of guns floating around this country.

Q: Wow. Well, what was your role?

BEERS: Up until Black Hawk Down, I was a participant in the process of running the executive committees for Dick's substitute, but I was really doing alien smuggling and reorganization of the peacekeeping function within the U.S. government. It wasn't until Black Hawk Down happened that.

Q: You better explain what Black Hawk Down was.

BEERS: Okay. How far do you want me to go back to explain this? I know about the whole history of it because I participated, but it was not my primary duty.

Q: Well, still you were a participant. I think you ought to go into the Jonathan Howe business and all that.

BEERS: All right, that's fine.

Q: From the perspective of the NSC.

BEERS: Because the U.S. wanted to make this work, we wanted to have the special representative of the secretary general be an American so that we would be able to coordinate more closely because of the common nationality than if it were someone else. Somewhat analogous to the dual chain of command concept of SACEUR being an American and responsible for U.S. forces up the U.S. chain of command to the secretary of defense and the president and being the NATO commander for the whole of the alliance. Not that Howe was going to command U.S. forces. Dick and I had worked for Jonathan Howe when he was the director of the bureau of political military affairs in the Reagan administration. We had also worked for Howe when he became the deputy national security advisor after Bob Gates moved to CIA. He was one of the hardest working people that we'd ever met in terms of the amount of time that he spent in the office. So Dick, with my support, convinced Berger and Lake that because he was a military officer, because he had.

Q: He was an admiral.

BEERS: He was a four star admiral. He had been the commander of NATO's southern command, which was the Mediterranean, one of the three major NATO commands.

Q: CINC SOUTH.

BEERS: CINC SOUTH, yes. Not to be confused with CINC SOUTH in Latin America. This is a U.S. position. This is a NATO position. He had served on the military committee at NATO. He had served in the joint staff. He'd served in the navy staff. He'd served in the State Department. He'd been on the NSC. He was not just a military officer, but he was a military officer and that was sort of a logical jump because he was viewed as a good administrator. We convinced Kofi to support him and he was given the position. He went out to Mogadishu in the spring.

Q: Spring of?

BEERS: '93. He began to try to organize the civilian side of this particular operation. Very much in tune with trying to make this thing work, recognizing that he was going to be the sort of functional equivalent of a colonial administrator or viceroy in the British context and to try to pull the country back together. He got challenged by Aidid who killed, whose militias killed some Pakistani peacekeepers over the issue of a radio transmitter being shut down. That then led to a Security Council resolution, which declared Aidid an outlaw in effect, which then meant that we were going to try to capture him and remove him. The U.S. military inserted a special operations force, which was designed to find and capture Aidid somewhere in Mogadishu. They were inserted outside of the UN chain of command. They were not UN forces; they were U.S. forces under a U.S. commander reporting up through a U.S. chain of command. They had been tracking Aidid or trying to track Aidid for some period of time. They were inserted in, I believe, August and they thought they had discovered where he was. They sought to capture him and one of the operational helicopters was shot down.

Q: Which was a Black Hawk.

BEERS: Which was a Black Hawk. This led to an effort to rescue the pilot and crew and the special operations people who were on it out. The Aidid people had discovered that they could shoot a rocket propelled grenade at these helicopters and if they were good enough in their aim they could bring them down. It was a pretty crude anti-aircraft device, but helicopters don't fly very fast. So, from a rooftop, when they're just a few feet away, trying to not be targets by flying close to the ground, they brought it down. That led to the insertion of other forces to try to rescue them and an effort on the part of the UN to get a larger extraction force on the ground to rescue the rescuers. This led to an overnight battle in which thousands of Somalis were killed. But Aidid and his people captured one individual alive, a warrant officer who was the pilot or the co-pilot, named Devine. They dragged him through the streets of Mogadishu and it was recorded on television and created a huge stir here in the United States. The actual battle caused thousands of Somali casualties and was militarily a defeat for Aidid. But it was a political victory because it led to an appreciation on the part of the United States that we couldn't continue this kind of military activity against Aidid. We were going to have to back off and to pull U.S. forces out. The next phase of activity was first of all to get to Somalia and get Devine back and convince Aidid to back off. For that task Bob Oakley was brought back again as the U.S. representative. I went along as his White House accompaniment. The NSC met with the president, decided that we would withdraw U.S.

forces over time, but I mean the decision was made and we were going to announce that we would do that. Oakley would be sent out to talk with Aidid to tell him that he had better stop screwing around or the wrath of the United States was going to come down upon him and he would be wise to give back Devine and not to hold him hostage any longer. We would then seek political reconciliation through peaceful means. That was the essence of what Oakley was to communicate. Bob and Tony Zinni and I were then put on a small jet flown from Andrews Air Force Base. We got to Cairo and went on to Addis Ababa and talked to Meles, the president of Ethiopia. We may have already gone to Eritrea. Yes, we did because we picked up a diplomat from each one of those countries on the way in. Both of those countries, but particularly Meles, were quite troubled by the instability on their southern border. So they were very much interested in resolving this issue and stabilizing the country.

We all then flew into Mogadishu and met with John Howe and began trying to get a meeting with Aidid. The word was put out through the contacts that the agency had that Bob, Tony and I wanted to meet with Aidid and we had a message from the President. Aidid agreed that he would do that, but obviously he was not about to come into the UN perimeter for this meeting which we knew was going to be a disaster. He said the deal was I am not going to tell you where you are coming. You will be driven to this point. You will get out of your vehicle. You will get in one of my vehicles and my vehicle will take you to where I'm going to be. In effect we put our lives in his hands as our earnest of peace and we were then driven in those trucks that they drove around with the 50 cal.

Q: They're called technicals.

BEERS: Technicals. Yes. To his location. They didn't make us get out of our vehicles they just put us in a convoy with technicals all around us and we were driven to a house somewhere in Mogadishu and ushered into a room and then Aidid showed up. Whether he'd been in the house before or not is not clear. He must have known that we could identify where the house was, but he figured he had these hostages if anybody tried anything. Aidid knew both Zinni and Oakley from his time there as ambassador as well as during the first effort to try to get the intervention force in. He knew Zinni as one of the military leaders of the original U.S. intervention. We had a pretty straightforward meeting. Oakley delivered his message. Zinni told him that we really did want to resolve this issue. Aidid did not commit at the meeting, but gave every impression that he would do this and Devine was turned over I think the next day to the Red Cross. The U.S. then also brought in another planning team to undertake the military withdrawal. Interestingly one of the members of that planning team was a Marine Corps Brigadier General named Peter Pace.

Q: Who's now chairman of the joint chiefs.

BEERS: The plan was, oddly enough although it makes perfectly good sense, we need to bring in more forces in order to withdraw because the forces that we have here are not configured in a way to effect a safe withdrawal. So we brought in tanks which was one of

the issues about why the ground extraction force was unable to get to the Black Hawk people.

Q: The Clinton administration had been criticized at a later date because they had refused to send tanks.

BEERS: That's right. Les Aspin, Clinton's first Secretary of Defense, had basically had decided not to send tanks because he was concerned about our deepening involvement in Somalia. This was during the summer and people were already starting to ask whether or not we'd made a serious mistake by declaring Aidid an enemy and creating a war when in fact all we had was a lot of violence and instability.

Q: I was wondering was there a point or maybe it was unfair, but Jonathan Howe was accused of focusing too much on Aidid and getting us involved or was this a far bigger than this one man's decision?

BEERS: It was a far bigger thing than one man's decision. It is certainly true that Lake and Albright understood and agreed with the declaration of Aidid's enemy ship. It was not Jonathan Howe's idea alone. I'm not in fact sure it was even his idea. I think he had to be convinced of that. I think we may have instigated that idea. I cannot tell you whose idea it was and the three people who are suspects here are Albright, Lake and Clarke. I wasn't doing this full time at that time, so I don't actually know how it was made.

Q: Well, Howe has been tarred with this brush to a certain extent. What was your impression of Aidid?

BEERS: He was a leader. He had had a military career in Siyad Barre's army, so he had military experience. He led a sort of council which was probably related to the clan structure that he sat on the top of. He carried himself very much as a leader and I suspect that his military training had a great deal to do with that. I know from my own military experience that officers are taught very clearly that the way that they carry themselves in official capacity is part of the leadership ethic. I think that Aidid had the same kind of training. He spoke clearly; he did not over promise or under promise. There was no small talk. It was all pretty straightforward about what the issues at hand were. I don't remember the meetings being particularly long. We did our business and we got out. That began my own personal involvement in Somalia. By the time it was over I'd been there six times. I went with Oakley two or three times. Then I went with Jim Dobbins for the remainder of those trips. We tried to broker some kind of political reconciliation out of this chaos and at the U.S. participation in the peacekeeping operation and then obviously at a later point in time. But I'd moved on to Haiti by that point as the UN gave up and withdrew.

Q: While you were taking these trips, talking to various leaders, did you feel there was something to work with? Was there something or not?

BEERS: The more time I spent, the more I understood how difficult Somalia actually was. We hopped around the country and talked to the different clan leaders in the different areas, down in Kismayo up to the place on the Gulf of Aidan.

Then we went to a place in the center of the country and met with the local leaders there and talked about what their aspirations were and whether or not those aspirations included being part of a country. It became more and more clear how much of a challenge it was for these individuals who lived in their own clan structures to think beyond the boundaries of their clans or their families. The notion of nationhood was not necessarily part of their outlook. The people who had done the Intel briefing had said this all along, that it was very clear or was more clear as we went through this process how accurately they had described the situation and how great the challenge was. We were trying to get the people to stop fighting. We wanted them to begin to think at least at the clan leader level that there might be some value in terms of coming together. We said the international community might actually aid them if they could get beyond their clans and create a sufficient degree of order and stability that the international community in fact could help them. To some degree some of the strategy that we were pursuing involved creating local government organizations so that there was some local structure for order within the clan as opposed to across clan boundaries. This went on for the next nine months. There was a peace conference in Addis. Oakley and I went out on a limb and sent one of the Marines who was along with us on this trip down to Mogadishu to get Aidid to come to the peace conference. We flew him on a U.S. aircraft from Mogadishu to Addis because that was the only way we were going to get him there. There was hullabaloo back here that we would actually fly this guy who had killed Americans on a U.S. aircraft. We figured if we couldn't get Aidid to participate in the conference there was no use to having the conference. The other factions might agree on anything, but he's sitting in central Mogadishu, the capital of the country and just blocking everything. So, he came and he made nice and then went home and things went back to normal. The violence had calmed down, but the willingness to work together in any structure never ever coalesced.

Q: Well, the humanitarian crisis had been taken care of.

BEERS: Oh, that was really taken care of.

Q: Which was the real reason for intervention.

BEERS: In the first two or three months and then it was trying to think through how to restore the economy, keep people from starving because of the drought and reduce the violence. The precipitating event had ceased.

Q: We've really basically covered most of your participation in Somalia and we'll pick up trafficking and what, human?

BEERS: Alien smuggling.

Q: Alien smuggling.

BEERS: Now called migrant smuggling.

Q: Migrant smuggling and UN dues.

BEERS: Right.

Q: Today is the 12th of January, 2006. Rand, what period are we talking about now?

BEERS: We're talking about the beginning of the Clinton administration and one of the several issues that I was involved with. In the case of alien smuggling I worked with a gentleman named Eric Schwartz who had been a Steve Solarz staffer on the Hill. He had come in with the transition team in the Clinton administration and in fact been one of the people who had been in the State transition team and then got a position in the NSC. His background among other things was refugee issues. So he was very much interested in what was going on in Haiti. The issue of alien smuggling was an immigration issue as well. He and I both got involved in that because there was a question of both what legal positions we had and what legal positions the smuggled aliens had and what position the smugglers had. We don't call it alien smuggling anymore. We call it migrant smuggling these days. Alien was regarded as a politically incorrect term.

Q: Well, we're talking about you are going after people who are moving this merchandise, human merchandise along as opposed to stopping the individual.

BEERS: Right. We're talking about going after an increased flow of Chinese labor out of mainland China. They come aboard ships either directly up on the coastline of the United States or to Mexico or Central American countries. They are then transported overland into the United States to major cities in the country. They work in a variety of activities, but often associated either with the restaurant trade or the garment trade. The individuals in China were coached that because of the one child rule that they had a near automatic claim of asylum because they were being discriminated against from having more than one child. They were predominantly economic migrants. They paid a fee to the smugglers who were called snakeheads and they were put aboard ship in near slave crowded conditions. We intercepted some of them at sea. We intercepted some of them as they were coming ashore, but that was usually when the ship foundered or something like that. I remember one instance where the ship was having trouble in San Francisco Harbor. There was another case in the New York area again where a ship came aground and individuals got off.

We were trying to close down the smuggling trade which was a criminal enterprise. Part of the problem was that so many of the people who had come in illegally had been able to pay off their loans. They were sending money back even though the actual labor that they were involved in meant that they were probably working at or below minimum wage in sweatshop kind of activities. They didn't have much overhead because they were living in cramped quarters and they were paying rent and they were getting a little bit of money.

So these people kept coming. We were trying desperately to figure out how could we stem this tide of illegal activity and illegal immigration. We were asking the Coast Guard to be watchful for small boats that appeared to be riding low in the water because they had so much onboard or with lots of people on deck as indicators of this migrant smuggling operation. We asked the intelligence community to do what they could to determine what these rings looked like. Were there any signatures in transit that might give them away and pinpoint their location so that we could turn the traffic around and stop it. This was part of the Clinton administration's effort to convey the sense that they were strong supporters of vigorous law enforcement. This was in part a political position which I think ultimately the Clinton administration was fairly successful at in terms of if you just look at the endorsements that they got from law enforcement organizations during the '96 election. We were involved in this.

We were in an awkward position when we caught these groups of individuals. We were incarcerating them because we wanted to be able to send them back to China. But if you are told that an individual wants to make an asylum claim, the traditional response had been to take their name and tell them to come back for their judicial administrative law review at such and such a time. Then they did or didn't come back. A lot of them didn't and disappeared into society. We knew if we allowed that to happen then we were going to reinforce the notion back in China that it was really easy to get into the United States. Even though detention facilities were not a large volume enterprise, we ended up putting where we caught ships that had actually come ashore and grounded.

Q: This is tape seven, side one with Rand Beers. Yes?

BEERS: They would have hearings with administrative law judges who would determine whether or not they had a well-founded fear of persecution which was standard judgment as to whether or not a person had a credible claim and could be given political asylum here. Those who did not we sought to return to China. If they were caught at sea.

Individuals on the boats were often not brought ashore in the United States. We sought to bring them ashore in Mexico or in other locations and then make arrangements with the international organization of migration out of Geneva and the Chinese government to transport the individuals back to China. It was an irritant in our relationship with China. They initially claimed that they had nothing to do with this and they saw no reason to take these individuals back. They had after all fled. We had had some indication from the Chinese that they weren't going to be discriminated against when we returned them except if they were obviously fleeing justice in the Chinese system. We undertook this kind of activity for about six months to a year. Then we seemed to have enough of a handle on it that what seemed to be a peak traffic in the early days of the Clinton administration backed off. While the policies that were put in place continued to be carried out it was not the same kind of near crisis atmosphere as in the first three to four months of the administration.

Q: In the first place I imagine you're looking over your shoulder at the situation in Haiti.

BEERS: Oh, yes. Oh, very much.

Q: This one was of a different caliber, but there are a lot of people in China. How did you find the cooperation with the INS and with the Coast Guard?

BEERS: I can't think of an instance in which it was ever other than a pleasure to work with the Coast Guard. They were in my experience the most can do service oriented organization in the U.S. government. Their motto is *semper paratus*, always prepared. While they may not be quite always prepared, they're certainly prepared to lean into getting the job done. INS, at least until its reorganization in the DHS, has been a two part organization. Its major thrust is to bring people into the United States, to find ways for lawful immigration to occur or to move people expeditiously across our borders. There is also the enforcement arm, which had been the less prosperous part of the organization. If they were the major thrust of the organization you would probably have heard a lot more about arrests of illegal aliens within the United States, which we don't hear about. That's because we don't spend a lot of time, effort, money, people on that part of the immigration mission. Doris Misner was the administrator of INS then. She was very cooperative. We were as rigorous as possible in making sure that we weren't overlooking real claims of asylum, but I think everybody agreed that by and large this was another form of economic migration. China is a large country. If everybody in China gets the idea that they can easily come to the United States and that life is better here and economic opportunity is greater, that would be a serious problem.

Q: Oh boy.

BEERS: Because you're right, Haiti was bad enough. We really didn't want to find ourselves in that kind of a problem when the major flow was illegal migration from Mexico. These individuals were also coming across the Mexican border as well as coming directly into the United States.

Q: How much connection was there with illegal migration and the people that came in, Chinese Mafia and all, and how much were there because it sounds like most of the people are coming in a rather benign way. They weren't going into prostitution and they weren't going to leech off the government for unemployment benefits and they weren't going to be engaged in illegal activities.

BEERS: No, you're right. It was primarily benign. The people on the receiving end were like a lot of other employers in the country who were looking for a cheap source of labor. There was an ethnic connection obviously because almost all of them went to work for Chinese bosses, in part because they didn't speak the language and so whoever was talking to them, at least until they learned the language, if they learned the language had to be able to communicate in Chinese. No, there was not much report of them being engaged in illegal activity when they were in the United States.

Q: You were with the NSC this time from when to when?

BEERS: This tour I arrived in February of '93 and didn't go back to the State Department until January of '98. I was in this particular office from February of '93 to May of '95 when I went over to the Intel office and became the senior director. This is while I'm working with Dick Clarke in the office of what ultimately became the office of transitional threats.

Q: Well, then let's talk about this '93 to '95 period. Were there any other pieces of the action we haven't discussed?

BEERS: There was the effort to define the overall policy for peacekeeping and there was Haiti. There was some association with the drug issue and some association with terrorism, but mostly I worked on peacekeeping and migration issues. Haiti became both of those. As a result of us being involved in this effort, a boat called the Golden Venture came ashore in the New York area. Individuals were incarcerated in some federal facility I believe in Pennsylvania. Some well-meaning attorneys on a pro bono case took up their petition for asylum. They tried to make a case that Eric and I had issued orders to have these individuals detained outside the scope of our office and authority as part of the general proposition that these individuals be unfairly treated because nobody was ever detained when they came in and made an asylum claim. They were always released on their own recognizance to come back and be heard by the administrative law judge. It was the first time that I had become involved in a court proceeding. Eric and I were both subpoenaed and gave depositions in the case. There was a report that somebody made a complaint that Eric and I had issued this order in some interagency meeting. We certainly talked about wouldn't it be nice if we were able to detain these individuals so that we could insure that there was a speedy dealing with their cases and INS chose to take that as a suggestion. I suppose if you want to make something out of it it's a little bit like Henry II and Thomas a Becket. Neither Eric or I thought that our apparently lofty status would be accorded such a response. In fact, we both felt that this was what we would regard as a consensus decision by an interagency group when everybody knew that anybody could stand up and say I'm not going to do that. Everybody knew, if they had been around long enough, and the people who came as the senior representatives at INS certainly knew, we had no authority to order them to do anything. If you were a back bencher you could have come to that conclusion even if you didn't know how these interagency processes worked. INS by and large was never invited to any kind of foreign policy, national security, interagency meeting. This was a relatively new issue for INS to be invited to meetings at the White House.

Q: How was this resolved?

BEERS: The case was eventually thrown out. I don't know whatever happened to those individuals. Never found that out. I should ask Eric if he knows.

Q: Well, then on the Haitian side, you might describe what the problem was.

BEERS: The Clinton administration came to office with one of the peak periods of migration and was trying desperately to figure out what to do. Again the Coast Guard got

deeply involved in this. The people who worried about drug enforcement were worried that the Coast Guard was doing less on the drug enforcement side. They had to put so many vessels in the area around Haiti and up into the Bahamas and along the Florida coast. We were getting rafts and what not coming aground, filled up the chrome detention center in Florida again. We tried to the extent possible to detain the individuals and to get an agreement from Aristide. He was not in Haiti, but was living in Washington above the Landsberg Theater. We asked him to say that he had no objection to our returning these individuals to Haiti because the Cédras de facto government wasn't making a stink about this issue. He agreed. At some later point we even signed an agreement with him. We returned as many of them as we could. We had asylum hearings to see if there were any well-founded fears of persecution from the Cédras government. Most of them were economic migrants. Because of the rickety nature of the sea craft, that in some cases couldn't even be called vessels, trying to get to the United States a number of them grounded in the Bahamas. The Cubans were particularly irritated by this and some of them just sank. In some cases the Coast Guard vessels themselves became overcrowded when they took their people off of the vessels. The vessels or rafts or whatever they were were so unseaworthy that they couldn't be left on there for towing back to Haiti.

That then went into a trough. There was a related incident during this time, which is at the time of Black Hawk Down in Mogadishu in October I believe, of '93, we were sending a detachment of military aboard the USS Harland County to Haiti. It wasn't an invasion force, but it was certainly intended as a clear signal to the Cédras government that we were running out of patience. An unruly mob, incited by the Tonton Macoute, showed up at the dock. In the face of what had just happened in Mogadishu, the Clinton administration pulled the ship and sailed away. It might have been the beginning of a much more hard-nosed policy with the Cédras government, but it basically ended up stopping that hard-line for almost a year in effect. We went from the Black Hawk Down period, while we were still trying to figure out what to do about Somalia, through this down period of Haitian migration to another peak period in the summer of '94. We were getting a higher level of Haitians coming here than we had had in the '93 peak period. We were running projections of what that might look like and it was getting pretty bad. During that period the Clinton administration decided they were going to take military action to remove the Cédras government. We began the diplomatic campaign within the United Nations as well as the military preparations in order to undertake his expulsion and the return of Aristide to his elected position as the head of State there: a goal which the Clinton administration came to office wanting to effect independent of the issue of migration. They felt that the Bush administration had simply not had enough will to prevent Aristide from being thrown out by the defacto government run by the military. So in the name of reassertion of democracy in the hemisphere they wanted to find a way, obviously and preferably without the use of force, to restore Aristide to power. During the spring and summer, while we were trying to mount the effort to drive Cédras from power, we were also trying to figure out what the heck are we going to do with all these migrants. At first the military did not want to put them in Guantanamo because they would be an imposition on the base. It would create a precedent. But all our lawyers felt that it would at least protect us from getting in a situation in which the supporters of asylum seekers in the lawyer community would have an ability to tie up the system of

returning the individuals to Haiti. We made three forays to find other detention locations that the Coast Guard could deposit people at. One was in the Turks and Caicos on Grand Turk Island. One was in Panama and one was in Surinam. In the case of the first one, I was sent to negotiate with the government of Turks and Caicos. A military cargo plane took me and three or four military people to Grand Turk Island. The airport on Grand Turk Island was smaller than this building that we are in. A one-story thing with a little tower on top of that one story concrete brick building. The runway was in need of repair if you were going to have any high volume of traffic there.

Q: We owned it?

BEERS: The British. It had been a British colony. They had a very robust and now even more robust tourist industry on Providenciales. Grand Turk is at the eastern end of the island chain and Providenciales is at the western end. Beautiful reefs.

I entered into a negotiation with the elected head of state there and we said we would like to build a detention facility there. We looked at a part of the island where it could be located that was away from the tourist part of the island. We said we would pay all of the costs of developing the area including a sewage system for it. This would ultimately, after the camp was no longer necessary, actually be an area that they might do some tourist development in. I told them that we would give them an extra million dollars in economic support funds much to the consternation of the State Department and this facility was deemed to be built to a capacity of about 1,000 people. We came to an agreement in principal and then subsequently an agreement to sign. The facility was built and it was never used because we never got to the crisis point that we could exercise our right to detain people there.

The second place was Panama and Jim Dobbins was the first negotiator. Jim went down to Panama and he talked to the government and got agreement in principle that we would locate in the Canal Zone a detention facility for Haitians. Jim couldn't go back to Panama for some reason about a week to 10 days later. I was sent to close the deal. Well, in the timeframe between when Jim had negotiated the agreement in principle and my arrival the deal had become public. There was an outcry in part because the Panamanians were not particularly pleased with the notion of having dark skinned Caribbean people in their country. They remembered that there was a Haitian labor force associated with the digging of the canal and it wasn't a particularly pleasant memory. The government remembered that the principle plank of their party was no more U.S. access in the Panama Canal Zone. By allowing us to do this they would have been crossing a threshold of greater access for the United States in the Canal Zone. They told me that they were backing out of the deal. I go back to the embassy and Barry McCaffrey is the U.S. southern commander. We huddle and try to figure out what to do. We decide that we will go visit President Endara in his house that night and so we have a midnight meeting with President Endara in his house. It was his foreign minister who delivered the message to me the first time at a dinner earlier in the evening. Endara reiterates what the foreign minister said, no, we're not going to do this deal. It would be against the principles of my party.

Anyway, a long story short, I leave the palace. We call Washington the next morning and this is so high priority an item that the vice-president is enlisted to become involved in this process. This is Gore. Gore gets on the phone with Endara and the phone keeps having the call interrupted. We understand from Endara's end that he thinks that it's the vice president hanging up on him on more than one instance in this conversation. Anyway, he tells the vice president that an arrogant, imperialistic American is down here and beating on them. He's not going to take it and he is about to go on television. Gore asks him to please reconsider and Sandy Berger and Strobe Talbott are both in Gore's office along with Dick Clarke coaching him on things that might be helpful to try to get Endara to back off of this, but Endara won't. An on and off conversation that probably lasted two hours. I'm sitting in the embassy with a through line to Gore's office so I know what's happening at Gore's end of the line. Finally Endara says, no, I'm going to go make this announcement on television. He goes on television and again blames me for a highhanded intervention down here and he is going to stand up for the Panamanian people. That's the end of it. It ended up nothing coming of it. I got a wonderful, or not so wonderful, write up in the Washington Post by Guy Gugliotta. He got an interview with Endara and reported Endara's side of the conversation. He reported Sandy Berger saying anybody who knows Randy Beers knows that that's not the kind of person that he is. My son, who was working on the Central American desk in the Latin American bureau, thought surely I was going to lose my job after reading this article in the newspaper. Several friends called and asked if I was all right when I came back. I had to be secretly brought out of town and McCaffrey got me on one of his C130s so that I did not have to go through commercial transportation and flew me to Surinam. By that time we decided we would go on to the next location which was Surinam. I had had this strange encounter with Surinam during the Reagan administration. I was planning the invasion of Surinam and was reminded of Operation Market Garden because there were a number of bridges between where the air assault was to have gone and the capital city.

Q: Unsuccessful Allied operation in World War II.

BEERS: Yes. The airport in Surinam is 10 or 20 miles south of the city. The city has a series of canals around it or through it and the seaside is just small. It would be nearly impossible for an amphibious landing, not of U.S. forces, they would have been Dutch. I now finally got to see what the country looks like that I was planning the invasion of with the Dutch government. The airport there is also a one-story airport, but it's slightly bigger, but also generally uninhabited. We went in to town and talked with the government and got agreement in principle to have a detention facility in Surinam. We talked to the folks in the foreign ministry and an agreement was subsequently concluded. I don't remember whether the facility was actually built because in this time frame the Defense Department finally caves in and says okay, we'll use Guantanamo. Even there we were running into problems and we ended up hiring cruise ships to hold some of the Haitians, one in Jamaica and one outside of Guantanamo, plus a large encampment in Guantanamo. So not I know where the current Taliban and Al-Qaeda folk are being held in Guantanamo because it was the same area that we used for some of the Haitian migration facilities. So the military is dusting off all of their plans and finally in the fall

the invasion of Haiti is ready to go. The UN support is found. People go around and try to get other countries to be participants in the peacekeeping force. Jimmy Carter and Colin Powell and Sam Nunn and Larry Rossin from the NSC, the Haitian desk officer who had been stationed in Haiti before that. They go down and try to tell Cédras to leave. He says, no. We'll help you get out of the country, blah blah. He finally is persuaded to leave and gets on a plane. The invasion force actually took off at one point and that was what brought the final closure for the deal if my memory is correct here. Cédras was not going to do it, but he had agents who were observing the runway at Fort Bragg and knowing that that's where the force was going to come from. So, he left peacefully. The intervention force entered peacefully. The UN backed it up and we began our second experiment in nation building during the Clinton administration. Hopefully having profited somewhat from the mistakes in Somalia. Well, we had a government that was clearly the government as opposed to Somalia, which meant we had a group of people whom we were dealing with.

There were great ceremonies when Aristide was sworn in and when Clinton visited him in Haiti. We began the task of trying to both insure that the people were fed, that the government infrastructure was stood up, that the military was demobilized, that the police force was turned into a real force for law and order and that the country would be able to stand on its own. Aristide of course had ideas that weren't always the same as our own. One case that I was directly involved in was we thought that we all agreed that the military should be dissolved. But the military was really not an army it was more of a police force anyway. On the one hand we dissolved that and we tried to keep some of the people who were purely in police type functions. Aristide tolerated our desire to do this and we went through all of the people by name and if anybody had a clear criminal record then they were given a ticket out also.

After about three months he just decided he was going to fire all of them and issued an executive decree and fired them. As we were going to train additional police to supplement this group and then eventually demobilize them as well we had to start essentially from scratch. It was both a daunting and in some ways an invigorating task. There was so little employment in Haiti that we got enlistees among young people who were well educated by Haitian standards. High school graduates. Enthusiastic and eager and seemed particularly suited for this new task of creating a new Haiti under Aristide. That went forward for several years before it also got caught up in the cronyism that was as rampant in the Aristide administration as it was in the previous governments. Not as bad as that Papa Doc and Baby Doc, but it wasn't, as we know, a particularly terrific example of restored democracy.

Q: I just finished about two months ago a long set of interviews with Les Alexander who was chargé down there for most of his time. He was saying that every Haitian who was detained would claim fear of persecution so his embassy, his mission, was spending most of its time sending officers up to villages or somebody would say my sister has been raped and my mother and father were killed and they'd go to the village and they'd go up and start asking or the woman would come up and say who said I was raped? You go ask my mother and father over there, they'll tell you I wasn't. You know, in other words,

there just wasn't the retribution because there wasn't, it wasn't that type of society. The other thing was that Aristide was a very difficult person. He had a lot of support within the black caucus which is important of course if you think of early Clinton, but the reputation was pretty dubious as far as his devotion to democracy and being a benevolent person. Were you getting this?

BEERS: It was clear that the political strata of the Clinton administration had a far more favorable view of Aristide than the intelligence community or the career Foreign Service who had either served there or who were long-standing enough hands in the Latin American bureau. They had heard the stories that surrounded his first period in office before the coup. Again, in the same way as happened with Somalia where the intelligence community was saying whatever you would like to do in Somalia you need to understand how fragile and dysfunctional society exists in Somalia. The same was true in terms of Haiti and the intelligence community's view that Aristide was not this model of democracy that he preached. At that point he was just as much of a manipulator and political demagogue as the next guy. We certainly tried to work with him in those early days and it was difficult both in terms of dealing with him, but also because you know, the intervention occurred just prior to the Gingrich congressional shift.

Q: This was the election of?

BEERS: '94.

Q: '94.

BEERS: The Republicans took over the House and the Senate. As a result of that, it wasn't very long before Haiti was one among many of the issues that became heatedly partisan with respect to our foreign policy. A mounting number of restrictions on assistance to Haiti were levied making whatever efforts to create a climate of reform in Haiti all the more difficult. That by and of itself wasn't the real drag. The real drag was that our partner Aristide and his government were weak at best and corrupt certainly at some levels. There were individuals who he hired for sensitive positions who the intelligence community indicated were corrupt or involved in drug trafficking or other activities. Now, you can say, well, what were the sources. And it's true that there were a lot of efforts to settle scores that played through intelligence reporting that the agency and defense intelligence agency was getting out of Haiti. But in the end there was a lot of corruption. We certainly know that well before Aristide who was driven out for the second time last year.

Q: Well, going back to the time when Aristide came in and the military, there must have been a feeling within yourself and others on the NSC and all, what we did, I mean a certain amount of elation.

BEERS: Oh, yes, absolutely. Cédras was a slug and the people around him were not nice people. The restoration of democracy was regarded as a real triumph no matter what you thought of Aristide. That was also a desire to see if we couldn't get right what we failed

at in Somalia. We were organizing an interagency effort to put together a real assistance package that would give Haitians a chance, give the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere a chance. AID was extraordinarily positive in their efforts to work things here. The assistant administrator for Latin American, Mark Snyder, was one of the real heroes in trying to make things work down there. We overcame some of the dysfunctionality between State and Defense there. The J3 of the joint staff was Wes Clark. Learning the lesson from Somalia suggested that in addition to the military operational plan that was being put together that he would like to participate with the rest of the U.S. government in a planning effort called a pol/mil plan. It was the first time that we tried to do it. Each agency indicated what sort of role and mission it had; what kind of programs and activities it would have, and what timeframe they needed to get into Haiti in order to be most successful. And what kinds of resources and whether or not they were going to need any military support in terms either of moving into Haiti or maybe some engineering support from military engineering units or things like that. That idea was so successful that it became the guideline for how to plan the civilian side of military operations. So in Bosnia and in Kosovo and in Timor, those ideas were undertaken. There was some of it in Afghanistan. But by the time we got to Iraq and the disinclination of the Bush administration toward nation building, they just threw that out and General Garner got responsibility for what little bit of pol/mil planning was undertaken with respect to the Iraq operation. There was a presidential decision document for Haiti which laid out all of the things that needed to be done. So we weren't in a situation in which the military goes in and there's nobody behind them to take over. That was certainly another success that people looked at and really felt was a good thing.

We touted it and got good media attention for those kinds of things and it was a very positive environment probably for the first year of that intervention. Kofi Annan sent a special representative of the secretary general, one of the senior and highly regarded diplomats in the UN system, to run the operation. His political advisor was a military officer named Mike Sheehan. He had been seconded to the U.S. UN mission and then seconded to work on in Haiti. Everybody was sort of hand in glove and then it all sort of dissipated.

Q: As things tend to do in Haiti.

BEERS: Sadly it appears to be the case. It's also to some degree a function of our country's attention span, our inability to stay focused on an issue when new crises arise. The media's moving from old news to new news makes that kind of long term effort very difficult to sustain. And because our foreign assistance tends to dwarf everybody else's. We go in as the preeminent donor and in this case it was also the Western Hemisphere. So there was no basis that we were going to be other than the preeminent donor under any circumstances. We certainly wanted to get as much support from as many other countries both within the hemisphere and globally as possible and we did to some degree at least in the early days. I mean where are we now? We have a UN OAS force there and the commanding general just committed suicide and the elections have been pushed back again.

Q: I'm trying to think, when you're talking about peace, another part of what you were doing was peacekeeping.

BEERS: Yes.

Q: How was peacekeeping seen when you came onboard?

BEERS: It was seen as the example of what might actually have been meant by George Herbert Walker Bush when he decreed the new world order after the fall of communism. In other words that with the end of the bipolar world the role of the U.S. in association with other countries an international organization was to create a sense of stability, support democracy, end dictatorship, deal with poverty, crush disease and the crisis points around the world would be dealt with by international peacekeeping. Iraq, Gulf I was an example. Somalia, humanitarian operation was another example. Haiti restoration of democracy was in fact a third example. Mind you that the other issue and the one which the NSC was devoting the most time to, all during this period, was Bosnia. If you looked at the logs of what the purpose for deputies committees were even though you had Somalia and Haiti during this period, it was Bosnia. They met more on Bosnia than any other thing during this period.

Q: We were still very much playing the game of don't touch that with a 10 foot pole weren't we or not?

BEERS: No, the Clinton administration came to office wanting to correct the failures of the Bush administration in the sense of Scowcroft and Eagleburger that this was not our problem and their thinking that the dissolution of Yugoslavia was a bad thing. We wanted the country to stay together. One of the early foreign policy missions for sending Warren Christopher to Europe was to try to get the Europeans to participate in some kind of a peacekeeping activity there or at least some kind of show of force to stop the killing and what not that was going on in Bosnia. It was clear we did not want to do it alone and it was frustrating that we could not get the Europeans to move forward with us. All of that is going on as we're conducting these two other peacekeeping type operations and trying to come up with a peacekeeping policy. Now, that particular issue had the conundrums that every time the U.S. voted in the Security Council for a peacekeeping mission we incurred a financial obligation based on an automatic assessment for the peacekeeping operation. Our share of that assessment was in the upper 20% of the total assessment, higher than our General Assembly share of dues. The Republicans in congress, even before the Republican majority, were already screaming bloody murder about the cost of Somalia and the prospective cost of Haiti and other peacekeeping missions around the world. You remember George Herbert Walker Bush made a deal to try to pay off our UN arrears. While it was generally honored, the Clinton administration was driving the cost of new missions up. That was to some degree infuriating to Senator Helms and others that we were simply throwing foreign assistance monies over the side. We had that issue to deal with.

The second issue we had to deal with was the command and control issue. While there was not really a question in Somalia because Jonathan Howe was the Secretary General's special representative and a U.S. citizen. And the predominant military force in Haiti up through Black Hawk Down was U.S. and Delta Force was there in a separate command mode. Because there was the question of the UN tanks not getting through to rescue Black Hawk Down, the Republicans made a big deal about U.S. forces being under UN command. The U.S. military never gave anyone the notion that they felt that they were under anybody else's command. We had these very erudite arguments about what was administrative command and what was operational control and things like that, so it was something that the Republicans beat the Clinton administration about. We were forced into trying to come up with an overall policy that would be able to govern the way that we undertook peacekeeping operations. It eventually came to be what was called presidential decision directive 25 which was pretty much made into a declassified document. It talked to the issue about consultation with the Hill before we went and agreed to any peacekeeping missions so that it would not be a sort of *fait accompli* without giving the Hill an automatic veto right on our voting for a peacekeeping mission. We came to a clear understanding of U.S. forces would not be put under UN flags. They would have a U.S. chain of command up to the president. That sort of decision was along the lines of this administrative control, operational control arrangement, so that operational control meant that the President of the United States would order them to do whatever they did. Administrative control meant that they could be affiliated with the UN peacekeeping mission.

We took Colin Powell's principles of popular support, clear exit strategy, and overwhelming force as ingredients for how peacekeeping operations would be run in a clear effort to try to be able to continue peacekeeping. Then in effect we did not join another UN peacekeeping mission as such after that. What we did was we moved to coalition warfare where the coalition is created and perhaps has an endorsement from the United Nations, but it is outside of the UN structure. We came to that in part because if the U.S. was actually going to involve U.S. forces, and we were going to adhere to the overwhelming force rule, we would have pushed the UN peacekeeping operation up high and it would have had to have been funded through the State Department as opposed to the Defense Department. But when you join the coalition it is funded through the Defense Department. We tried an effort called shared responsibility in which we said that Chapter Six peacekeeping missions would be under the State Department and Chapter Seven peacekeeping missions would be under the Pentagon and they would actually be run by that. The interagency committee that drew up this shared responsibility solution had a State Department representative. When Wendy Sherman and Warren Christopher heard about it, they felt a foreign policy mission had been taken away from the State Department. They undermined the effort on the Hill to get the Hill committees to agree to fund peacekeeping through the Defense Department which is what we were really trying to accomplish. Because that fell apart we really did not have any other options. While there was a UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, if you recall 1) it wasn't very good and 2) when we finally decided to intervene, we intervened as a NATO force. The NATO force had its own rules of how you paid for them and they were through the Pentagon. In effect we moved away from the blue helmet form of peacekeeping, but we didn't cease to

be involved in peacekeeping. We sought UN authorization for that through Security Council resolutions empowering those forces to be there on behalf of the international community.

Q: Well, two things. One when you were trying to put this together come up with an option six or option seven or whatever, you know.

BEERS: Chapter Six.

Q: Chapter Six. Were you in consultation or was there a representative of an appropriate congressional staff or something there?

BEERS: No. This was all done before '94. The concept of shared responsibility was drafted in an interagency committee working group before the Republicans had control of congress. We did go to the congress after it was drafted, but it foundered really on the issue that the people in the armed services committee didn't want to have to pay for peacekeeping to the Defense Department. And the people on the State Department authorizing committees didn't want to give up responsibility for that. The State Department didn't want to give up the mission although the Defense Department was prepared to assume it. Yes, we probably would have been better, but I cannot think of a case in which a deliberation of that nature had congressional people at a working group level before the policy was set. Now, individuals might consult with individual members or individual staffers, but no formal consultation process that I can remember having started while a policy was still in formulation.

Q: Well, looking at peacekeeping, the UN. In Bosnia I've heard people say, you know, prolong the agony rather than solve it by not being able to come to any conclusion and allowed the Serbs to run all over everybody.

BEERS: Oh, I think that that's true. I think that the frustration simply got worse and worse over time because the UN was ineffectual. We weren't going to put troops in under the UN. We couldn't get a large enough force to be able to actually stop the killing and so people simply sat by including in Sarajevo where the Bosnian Serbs controlled the high ground and just pummeled people in Sarajevo including the airport which was at the very foot of the mountain. It was just from a military perspective a horrible an untenable position for the Bosniaks to be in. Nobody was prepared to use the level of force necessary to stop the killing.

Q: What was your attitude mainly of your colleagues in these early days of Bosnia as you're looking at the problem. I mean did you see that eventually we'd have to go in, did you see NATO, I mean what were you looking at?

BEERS: Well, first of all, let me make a disclaimer. I didn't actually work on Bosnia. The people who did Bosnia were the regional people instead of the functional people. The reason that Haiti and Somalia were done by functional people was because the regional people didn't have the background or the expertise and they weren't as

numerous. EUR always regarded itself as the preeminent bureau and certainly had a lot of pol/mil experts because it was hard not to be involved in NATO activities whether you were at USNATO or in RPM or in one of the European embassies. It was both run out of the European directorate in NSC and by the European bureau and we really did not get involved until Kosovo. That was in part because of pol/mil planning requirement that became part of that. _____ who worked on Bosnia was in our office for a period, but then he moved over to the European office to work on Bosnia there. Having given you that disclaimer, yes, I think the sense was we were going to have to find a way to mobilize enough support that we could stop the killing. It was how do we get from here to there through both the diplomatic and Washington political wickets?

Q: Did you feel within the NSC and your masters above and all, this disinclination to get involved in military matters in the early days of the Clinton administration?

BEERS: No, not at all. I think that's a misimpression created by a couple of incidents that occurred along with the don't ask don't tell decision on the part of Clinton. The White House staffer who told Barry McCaffrey that the Clinton administration came to power so that people like Barry wouldn't be at the White House or something like that. The draft status of the president during the Vietnam War. But Tony Lake and Sandy Berger and others were willing to try and figure out how to use the military. There were people who worked there who also understood. While Les Aspin may have ultimately been a failure at the Pentagon, he certainly knew the inside and out of America's military, having served in the House and had a lot of oversight over military activities. He had some really good people working for him. There was a charge that there weren't that many people in the NSC who had military experience. But the guy who ran the defense directorate, Bob Bell, had been in the military. I had been in the military. There were several other people who were either active duty or had been in the military.

Q: We're also talking about you were the beginning of a generational change. I mean 10 years before, five years before people of my era for example, any male who is my age, 77, you assume they've been in the military.

BEERS: No, no, right.

Q: It didn't necessarily mean that you were any more capable, but it was the experience.

BEERS: Right, nor did it mean that you were in Korea or Vietnam.

Q: Yes.

BEERS: You could have been in the naval reserve like Don Rumsfeld.

Q: Yes.

BEERS: Yes, that is true and it is so now that there are few Washington people, except for the people who have made the military their career and have stayed in the national

security arena after that, that you find people with military experience. All NSCs have active duty military members on the staff there. It is one of the input sources that provides staff. Just as somebody like John Gordon was on the first portion NSC staff and became the deputy director of the CIA so Don Carrick started off as the Bosnia desk officer on the NSC staff and also rose to the rank of lieutenant general. He would probably have replaced Gordon in CIA if Sandy Berger hadn't needed him to replace Jim Steinberg when Jim decided to go into the private sector near the end of the Clinton administration. That's a bogus charge, but it's certainly one that had a lot of currency in it. There certainly was always the question of not so much how about the staff, but how much did the president feel he could lean on the military to do things that the military didn't want to do. Then the withdrawal from Somalia seemed to confirm that notion. In fact, it was probably one of the more astute decisions of knowing when to fold vis-à-vis the military in the same way that, although our current president (G. W. Bush) denigrates it, the Reagan administration was right to pull out of Lebanon after the barracks bombing. If we had stayed there we would have been in the killing field for years to come although all of the people in NEA said it will come back to haunt us and bin Laden still cites it as one of the sources of American weakness, but the notion of staying there.

Q: Yes, well, I mean the folding down of Somalia apparently gave rise to a lot of optimism on the part of the Milosevic's crew in Serbia that we wouldn't really do anything in Kosovo. Of course we bombed the hell out of it, but they didn't think it would happen because they thought that we didn't have the guts to do it. As it turned out we didn't lose anything. There wasn't any guarantee.

BEERS: In many ways it was a cautious policy. The Clinton administration really didn't commit military force to situations that it couldn't dominate after Somalia. The policies may not have worked out in the end as in Haiti. I think most people would say it isn't that pretty, but Bosnia and Kosovo are both successes by most stretches of the imagination and East Timor is an out and out success.

Q: Yes. Well, then what else were you involved in during this particular time?

BEERS: I worked on some of the decision making with respect to the drug issue. The one thing that I did work on was to create the legal basis for what was called the shoot down policy with respect to drug trafficking in the Andes.

Q: This was Bush I.

BEERS: Bush I, had authorized us to support determinations in both Colombia and Peru that governments there were going to shoot down civilian planes if they were suspected drug traffickers. The Clinton administration came in. The deputy assistant secretary for counter narcotics and special operations and low intensity conflict office in the Pentagon, a young man named Bryan Sheridan, discovered the exact nature of what was going on. He had his lawyers look at it. They came to the appropriate conclusion that in the Montreal protocol as a result of the shoot down of KAL 007, we agreed that it was illegal to shoot down civilian airplanes. As implementing legislation, our own law said that it

was a felony offense to aid and abet the shooting down of civilian airplanes. This meant that any U.S. government person that was involved in this kind of an activity was committing a felony offense, but we were giving them the radar tracks to help them get in the vicinity of these planes. We weren't shooting them down. We never did shoot any of them down, but we were giving them the radar tracks. We then beat a hasty path to the Hill for consultations to figure out what we could do as well as some diplomatic discussion with the two governments in question, but we stopped the program. On the Hill was an interesting conversation. The guy who was the assistant legal counsel in the NSC during the Bush administration, who was then a Hill staffer, had actually had some knowledge of this program during the Bush administration. He mentioned to me, why were we getting so excited about this thing? There was enough of a willingness on the part of people in congress to accept a draft piece of legislation. It said if the country just declared that there was a national security emergency related to drug trafficking, and if they took the following precautions in order to make sure that they weren't making a mistake: coming up alongside the aircraft, trying to talk to the pilot on the radio, trying to make hand and arm signals, trying to make the guy land. Then if an appropriate command level above that, after all of those methods had failed, said that the pilot was authorized to shoot down the airplane, then the airplane could be shot down. And we used to say and there was supposed to be regular reviews of the program. The lawyers on the NSC staff bit their tongues. They did not want to do this, but Tony Lake wanted to do this. The decision document was sent around to the various offices in the U.S. government. The only agencies that supported this effort to change the law were the office of national drug control policy and the CIA. The State Department, the Defense Department, the Justice Department, the Transportation Department were all opposed to this change. The vice president supported it and the president signed it. The law was passed. It went into effect. The program was set up. We negotiated written protocols with the two countries about what the procedures would look like and we then turned the radar on again. We all used to say the worst possible outcome is if we were to shoot down a plane full of nuns. That was the exact phrase that we used to use and I was involved in all of that. We can talk later on about what happened because I was then the chief investigating officer for the U.S. government about the tragedy of shooting down in fact a missionary aircraft.

Q: Horrible. But now, just to clear up a point, when these other agencies, State and Defense and all were opposed to this, were they opposed to having a policy or were they opposed to putting out a law rather than just sort of going on the way things had gone on?

BEERS: My best estimate of what happened was that all of the legal counsels of all of those agencies were the driving force in the agency position. They were horrified at the notion of shooting down an airplane not just because of the Montreal protocol, but going back to one of the basic rules of jurisprudence in this country which is you don't shoot a fleeing felon unless the fleeing felon is putting your life at risk. So, even though this plane was a felonious aircraft, it should merit the same consideration in legal terms as we would give to somebody we clearly knew as a criminal in this country who was fleeing the scene of a crime.

Q: Now, did the Colombians and Peruvians have any problem with this? You're shaking your head.

BEERS: No, they didn't. I mean they were trying to crush the drug trade. It was one of the most successful drug policies that we have ever undertaken in that it crushed the cocaine trade in Peru for almost a decade. Totally drove the people who grew coca into other enterprises because no planes came to pick up their paste and they did not have any other way to market their goods. They were entirely dependent on the Colombian traffickers flying from Colombia to pick up the paste or the base, the leaves were mashed into something and therefore the volume shrinks. That was what was transported. The Peruvians adroitly didn't allow it to be processed into cocaine hydrochloride outside of Colombia so that they could maintain control of the distribution from final processing to market. Good business.

Q: Oh yes.

BEERS: When the pilots who weren't the traffickers, they were employees, when they found that they were putting their lives at risk and it didn't take very many planes to be shot down, they stopped. They wouldn't fly and that's what led to increase cultivation in Colombia.

Q: Well, then where did you go after this?

BEERS: No, I did terrorism, too.

Q: Oh, yes, terrorism.

BEERS: So, I'm there for what, one or two weeks and the first World Trade Center bombing occurs.

Q: This was when a bomb was set off in a truck in the basement.

BEERS: In the basement, right. The bureau did a fantastic job in terms of cracking that case and finding.

Q: You're talking about the.

BEERS: The individuals involved.

Q: Yes, but the bureau was the FBI.

BEERS: The FBI did what they are so good at: throw investigators at this and figure out, okay, we can identify the vehicle. Therefore we can find out where the vehicle came from therefore we can find out who rented the vehicle and one of the people foolishly came back to get a deposit on something. He got picked up and we found residue in the place

that they mixed the stuff and everything to make it an open and shut case except for the people who actually fled the country.

Cantor Fitzgerald, one of the leading bond traders in the country, had its offices on the top floors of the World Trade Center. It later was one of the offices that was totally devastated by the 9/11 World Trade Center bombing. In this first bombing the building was closed because there was so much smoke in the building. Cantor Fitzgerald had open positions in the bond market of several billion dollars. The fire marshal of New York City closed the building. Cantor Fitzgerald was desperate to get back up and rescue the tapes. They did not back their material up at that time anywhere else. A person who is an interior decorator who knew the head of Cantor Fitzgerald was called by him. He had done something for the Clinton family in the White House. He called Hillary. She talked to Bill. And Bill called New York. He told the New York authorities to have the fire marshal allow Cantor Fitzgerald to get back to the top floor and take out the tapes so that all those trades could be closed. Then we wouldn't have this large amount of money just floating without any clear completion of the transactions, which would have had a perturbation in the market that would have not been minor.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So when I later worked on the issue of cyber security we used to say that that was the first cyber-attack in the terrorist world on our critical infrastructure, because everything was done electronically --

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: -- but this critical node was taken out of the network at a point that left things quite vulnerable.

Q: Oh boy.

BEERS: Then there was Oklahoma City and the roadside assassinations outside the CIA headquarters in Virginia. Still, we thought at the end of the Bush Administration that with the end of the hostage crisis in Lebanon, in the tamping down of Palestinian associated terrorism, and the move in the direction of a peace process with respect to the Palestinians in Israel, that we were in an end game on having to deal with terrorism. Little did we realize -- and it wasn't apparent at the time of the World Trade Center that that was in fact the start of the opening salvo of, of --

Q: Well, was --

BEERS: -- al-Qaeda.

Q: Terrorism, per se, was not very high --

BEERS: Warren Christopher brought in a suggestion with his management team that perhaps some reorganization of the State Department might have involved the merging of the Counterterrorism Office and the Narcotics Bureau. And that was mostly predicated on the presumption that terrorism was down and that narcotics was going to be more important. And what stalled that was more to do with the people on the Hill who were hawks toward Hezbollah than anything else. So people like Ben Gilman and Henry --

Q: Israeli connected --

BEERS: Yeah.

Were opposed to this diminution of attention to terrorism. Remember, while we had put the sanctions in place with respect to Libya, we certainly hadn't resolved the Pan Am 103 bombing by that point. That really wasn't until late Clinton that the trial was finally brought to bear. So there was still that residue and that idea died very quickly. But I mean as we look back on it now we all didn't see it coming.

Q: You were there in the NSC (National Security Council) when the Oklahoma City bombing took place?

BEERS: Mm-hmm.

Q: Now this was completely out of the norm. I mean couple of good ol' country boys.

BEERS: Well, and if you may recall, everybody first of all thought it was Middle Eastern terrorism.

Q: Oh, absolutely. People were being -- I mean everybody looking Middle Eastern and male was being arrested in the Midwest.

BEERS: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: I mean how did that play out from your perspective?

BEERS: The FBI threw people at it and solved the case. It was regarded as an anomaly. It did create the sense though that for crises of this nature, before you were into the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) reconstruction mode, that it might be more likely than not that they would be run by the National Security Council staff, by Dick Clarke. The FBI was still in charge of the crime scene. There was no question about that. But the tie in was to crisis management that would be run out of the NSC, which was more accustomed to crisis management than anybody on the domestic side. So for example, when we get to TWA 800, again, that was thought to be a terrorist plot. But even as it became less and less, Dick still pretty much ran that, although Evelyn Lieberman, who was then one of the Deputy Chief of Staffs in the White House before she became the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy, was the overall coordinator of that.

Q: During this first period, how much of the terrorism thing did you really have much to do?

BEERS: I didn't have personally a great deal to do with any of that. I mean I was Dick Clarke's deputy during this whole period, so I had to know what was going on. Dick mostly ran that. He worked with the guy who had the terrorism and drug account, Dick Conyes, who had come from DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) and had been a holdover from the Bush Administration. Probably the main task that I had was to be the liaison with the Pan Am 103 families, because I knew all of them from the previous administration. There were always issues of potential criticism or particular pleas to do this or that. We ended building the Cairn in Arlington Cemetery. There were always families who were critical of anything than was less than bombing Libya that had to be dealt with because the press would often find ways to criticize them. I kept that function during the entire time that I was in the Clinton White House, both in this job and when I moved on to be the Senior Director for Intelligence.

Q: Tell me a little bit about that group, because they remained a very cohesive and very powerful group.

BEERS: Cohesive is not actually an accurate --

Q: OK.

BEERS: There were factions. But they had power that spanned the factions. One group can be characterized by a woman named Jane Shultz. Her intention was to commemorate the event so that people would always remember it and the families who were victims would have a memorial. And that was the crowd that built the Cairn in Arlington Cemetery. Then there was another faction who always wanted us to take a more aggressive policy. And there were several elements of that faction and they even feuded among themselves. There was the Cohen family, who were the most vocal of the critics, and who said they would not take the blood money from Libya after the settlement came at the end. Then there were some other families who were also regarded somewhat as opportunist. But they weren't part of the Jane Shultz camp.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: But as a collective, any journalist who wanted to write a story could go to these people and they would get a good story about what we weren't doing. And it didn't matter which administration it was.

Q: So it's sort of a running sore for you.

BEERS: Yes, yes.

Q: You were known as the flock catcher?

BEERS: Yep. And Tony Lake and Sandy Berger developed a real rapport with Jane Shultz. She could come in with her supporters and was very persuasive in getting them to do what she wanted, including delivering the President for memorial services.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: This is an excellent place to stop because we can move on to my being the Senior Director for Intelligence.

Q: All right.

BEERS: And there won't be a whole lot to talk about.

Q: This is because of --

BEERS: Because of the nature of what I did.

Q: All right. But I would like you at this point to talk about, before and afterwards, Dick Clarke who became quite a -- notorious probably isn't the right term, but I mean a very major figure in terrorism matters and what we were doing I think after 9/11.

BEERS: Mm-hmm.

Q: And I wonder if you could talk about your initial impressions, how you operate with him.

BEERS: OK, we'll do that.

Q: Okay, today is the 30th of January 2006 with Rand. We're talking about what -- where were you now? You were in the INTEL -- what was --

BEERS: I moved from the Transnational Threat Office at the National Security Council to the Office of Intelligence Programs. I replaced George Tenet who was departing to become the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence working for John Deutch who had appointed to replace Jim Woolsey who had had a falling out with the administration at that point. George left in May to begin his confirmation preparations and I moved down the hall basically to become the senior director.

Q: Well, first, could you talk about Dick Clarke who was with you in the previous post.

BEERS: Right, in the Transnational Threat Office.

Q: Because his personality and style of operation became a page one issue in a way and I was wondering whether you could talk about him --

BEERS: Sure.

Q: -- at that time. And that time being from when to when.

BEERS: Well, you want me to start from when I knew him first?

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Dick and I showed up in about the same time in an office which was in the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs at State. The office was then called the Office of Systems Analysis. It was set up to look at Defense Department issues in a way that the Systems Analysis Office in the Pentagon looked at those issues. This was to give the State Department a sense of what the strategic issues were and the tradeoffs, among them how the budget was put together in the Pentagon and how it affected the State Department, and so on. Dick came from the private sector where he had diverted after a brief period working in the Department of Defense. He'd gone to graduate school at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and then gone to work for a firm called Pacific Sierra Research. His specialty was arms control. His focus was on intermediate range nuclear forces. In 1979, this was a hot issue about getting the European NATO countries to agree to the deployment of Pershing and Ground Launched Cruise missiles in Western Europe. This was to give NATO an intermediate nuclear capability -- longer than the artillery or the atomic demolition mines and shorter range, obviously, than the strategic missiles. This was to try to link the spectrum of deterrence more clearly and specifically to NATO.

I got hired out of my return to the Foreign Service from my dissertation sabbatical to work in the same office. The arms control area that I was asked to work on was exotic weapons like anti-satellite weapons. And we became friends in that the office was modified somewhat to become the office of policy analysis during the Reagan Administration. And after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the arms control issue, insofar as it was related to strategic arms control, collapsed completely. START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) II was not ratified by the Senate and so we, the office, became much more focused on regional and in particular Persian Gulf issues. Dick stayed with the INF (International Range Nuclear Forces) issues for a little longer until the decision was set and then also became part of the regional office. When the office director left, Arnie Kanter, who was the Deputy Office Director and subsequently Under Secretary for Political Affairs, became the office director. Dick became the deputy office director and I was the senior action officer in the office. Other people in the office were John Gordon, later Deputy Director of Central Intelligence; Chuck Kartman, Korean ambassador; Joe Limprecht, ambassador to Albania; Steven Simon a noted terrorism expert; and others.

Dick and I became friends during that period. He always impressed people as very bright and sometimes acerbic in the sense of he almost always had a clear idea of what he wanted and was very driven and driving in trying to achieve those goals. While he was loyal to his superiors, his stronger loyalty actually was to the people who worked for him. He is known throughout the government in some ways as much for his loyalty for the

people who worked for him as he was to his hard driving personality. We worked on the Persian Gulf and relations with Israel together. And then he went off to be Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Intelligence and Research Bureau under Mort Abramowitz. He took that on about 1984 and stayed there really for the second term of the Reagan Administration. He then became Assistant Secretary for Political Military Affairs in the first Bush Administration. He was essentially there from 1989 until the summer of 1992. In the summer of 1992 he ran afoul of the inspector general for, in the inspector general's words, "an inattention to the enforcement of tech transfer issues with Israel and Israel's apparent passing on of U.S. derived technology to the People's Republic of China." There are two sides to that story. I know Dick has always felt that some of it was the Inspector General, Sherman Funk, trying to in some ways get even with him for Dick's cavalier treatment of the IG (inspector general) Office at various times during this tenure as assistant secretary. But it is also true that there was no record of what Dick did about those technology transfers because they did not want to have a record of his reprimand of the Israeli Government on the record because of the political sensitivity of U.S relations.

Q: I mean we're talking about --

BEERS: With Israel.

Q: -- something that was not -- it was simply a Washington problem, and that is the politics.

BEERS: Dick's relations with Jim Baker were not particularly good and were particularly poisoned by both Janet Mullins, who was the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, and Margaret Tutwiler, who was the spokesperson, both of whom were very close to Jim Baker. His relations with Larry Eagleburger, who was the deputy secretary at that time, were more than cordial. So when it was clear Baker asked Dick to look for another job after three years minimum expected tenure, thank you very much, Larry Eagleburger picked up the drop line that he had to Brent Scowcroft and says, "Brent, I need a favor."

And so I left the NSC to go back to the Bureau of Political Affairs under Bob Gallucci and Dick replaced me at the NSC in the terrorism job working at that time for Ted McNamara. Ted then left to go back and take over the counterterrorism job at the State Department. Dick became the senior director and special assistant to the president, and that's the job that he stayed in essentially through the events of 9/11.

Q: OK --

BEERS: We worked together again when I came back after the brief time in PM (Political-Military Affairs) to the Office of Transnational Threats. He was running that and he had been held over by the Clinton Administration to stay in that job. So we worked together on peacekeeping, on drugs, on migrant smuggling and all the issues that I worked on up to the point that I went to the INTEL Program Office.

Q: Well, INTEL Program Office you did from when to when now?

BEERS: From May of 1995 until January of 1998.

Q: Okay.

BEERS: Let me just finish off with a couple of other vignettes about Dick. While he was at the NSC I think he really came into his prime. I mean he certainly did some interesting and I think progressive things as assistant secretary of PM and when he was deputy assistant secretary in INR. But it was really taking over that Transnational Threat Office and carrying it through the entire Clinton Administration in which he made his career. I think he was the most effective spokesman or bureaucrat on counterterrorism that had ever existed in the U.S. Government. And I think that's still true. Part of that was his hands on knowledge of where or how the bureaucracy functioned, where the money was, and how you got the money to move it into his preferred programs. And keeping the issue as far forward as could be sustained during that time prior to the 11th of September. He pushed and pressed the CIA and in the FBI to be more aggressive in the things that they were doing. He found money for bio-defense when there appeared to be none to be found. In parallel to the counterterrorism stuff, I think he ran the Somalia and the Haiti peacekeeping operations. And while they certainly on reflection don't look like particularly successful programs, the way in which he ran them became the model for interagency cooperation that really exists or persists until today. The first innovation was to have something called an executive committee of the interagency community that was interested and involved in that particular issue in order to make sure that issues didn't flounder in the bureaucracy in the separate stovepipes of the agencies. And while he chaired those meetings, and today you won't necessarily find an NSC person chairing those meetings, the notion of an executive committee and a single point of contact for the government is an innovation that he was responsible for. The second one was something that became known as the political military plan. That was basically a requirement for the State Department and the non-defense agencies to come together in anticipation of military operations and plan what their requirements were going to be in order to carry out the civilian side of those operations. And while that particular presidential decision was rescinded in the Bush Administration, the slowness of activities in Afghanistan and particularly Iraq I think gives further credence to the importance of that particular decision and the risky nature of not carrying it out. Included in that general concept is the stabilization office now in the State Department. This is to try to set up a base outside of the Pentagon that had some permanency as opposed to the ad hocery, if you will, of the executive committees, which were only established when there was a particular problem. It hasn't been particularly well carried through on. But it argues that you can't just have a planning function in the military and have everything else be ad hoc for military operations, peacekeeping operations, or for other intensive political activities that involve the coordination of the rest of the government in not just diplomacy but programs as well. So I think that his conceptualization of those issues in creation of implementation entities was a real contribution for a move which is still active in the government. All of that of course went with his personality.

Q: Well, then going back to this time you were with -- on the Intelligence side of things.

BEERS: Yeah.

Q: My basic question is how did you find the Intelligence quotient measured up to, you might say, the overt analytic quotient. You know, you're dealing with country X or something and people reporting on it and not burrowing inside, but did you find there was a balance or has Intelligence sort of trump the overt side? How did you find things?

BEERS: The Intelligence community when I came to this office was in the process of a huge shift, both from the Cold War focus on the former Soviet Union and a downshift in the resources viewed to be available for intelligence. Most of the money that's spent on intelligence is spent on the national technical means of collection, the satellites that take pictures or listen to various forms of communication. And the question was how much more money did we want to put into them. Similarly, how much more money did we want to spend on the Central Intelligence Agency, which was the principal center for analysis, but also the principal collector of human intelligence in the overseas network of agents in stations or in undercover positions. We were asking what should the targets be and how do we move from what we did to what we ought to be doing. What ought the languages to be, how do we get more people with those languages in order to focus on those targets which are not necessarily the same -- they're different personnel actions, or they may be different personnel actions. Not every analyst speaks the language and not every collector is an analyst. But obviously, we needed more people who spoke Arabic and more people who spoke Chinese, if you want to name two particular areas that were far more prominent at this time. And then obviously the other languages that fell in between, like Farsi and Urdu and particular problem countries. So in that set of issues the reporting, whether it was from agents and stations or from embassies and political and economic officers, was in a major transition in terms of what a country was focused on. In terms of the balance, I'd say that we were in a deficit in both regards if you're measuring it against national levels of interest. What we did or didn't know about the Sudan when bin Laden was there, what we did or didn't know about Afghanistan after bin Laden moved there or after the Taliban took over, was certainly more than we did know about either of those. With Sudan, we had an embassy and lost it and in the second case we didn't even have an embassy after the Taliban took over. We left Afghanistan and we ran our relations out of Pakistan. When you get to a number of the smaller countries around the world, the personnel system and the resource issue at CIA led to closing of a number of stations. Now, we still had embassies there and they were the small five-person or less posts. So there was at least some diplomatic reporting that was coming out of those countries. And in some cases the closest they got to having a CIA officer there was a roving reports officer who passed through occasionally to see what was going on. In the smaller countries, it was even more limited. But having said that, there were some extraordinary sources that the agency was able to cultivate. But they usually required the agency to make that the focal point of a major collection and analytical effort. And probably the best example of that is the Bosnia effort where they really honed in on getting the information out of there from all sources in aiding our diplomatic effort, or the Bin Laden Station, which Mike Scheuer ran for a while, which

was a major effort to focus on bin Laden as if he was a country (*laughs*). But I mean basically to have people who did nothing but try to track him and his operatives, a virtual station if you will. Those I think were good examples. But as we, as we know from Iraq today and the WMD --

Q: Weapon of mass destruction.

BEERS: -- failure, the things that we didn't know in some locations were critical and we just didn't know them. Throughout this period, before and while and after I was there, we certainly knew that we had an Iraq problem. We certainly went out of our way to try to collect information. But the information that we collected became less and less good. I think we now know that when the UN inspectors left, we really lost our major window on getting information out of Iraq. So denied areas have been and I think will remain a problem unless and until we do a much better job of running agents into those areas. And that's going to mean in my view a greater emphasis on the part of the agency to maintaining an undercover cadre of agents who do not operate out of embassies, who don't ever show up at headquarters or in embassies except in their deep cover and are not necessarily even known to the ambassador as being present in his or her country.

Q: Well, was there -- I mean were you prepping to a debate that goes on between -- I'm not sure if -- the undercover agent and the technical means, you know, Americans are very gadget prone and -- but was there a -- in the intelligence field did you see a --

BEERS: There are two debates here. And one is INTEL community and the other is CIA. The debate over national technical means versus CIA human intelligence collection as a general proposition was a robust debate that was going on. The national technical means people had the great advantage of having the military industrial complex, which supplied all of that wonderful technological equipment fully behind them in the appropriations process. So to say that we didn't need another this or another that would run into the contractor for this or that during the pod with all of the subs to all of the members saying we really need to support this. Since the Intelligence budget is considered in the Defense Appropriation Subcommittee, and since the Defense Appropriation Subcommittee is the most closely related committee to the folks who sell defense equipment, it shouldn't be a surprise that despite the Director of Central Intelligence saying that we ought to make sure that we have an adequate human structure, the national technical means continued to be fully funded. In fact, while I was there became the source of that scandal where the National Reconnaissance Office asked for more money than it needed in a single fiscal year to make sure that they had enough carryover that if there was a problem with the continuing resolution or a program that Congress chose to close down that they had the termination costs already appropriated to them. And so that's not a surprise. The argument over the undercover agents was one that took place almost exclusively within Langley. And that was an argument between the people who ran the directorate of operations who came out of embassy operating base and the undercover people who were unknown to much of the operations directorate. You had an office within the operations directorate that did the care and feeding of those agents, but they weren't plugged in to the network of colleagues in the DEO, because they couldn't be.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So they had no advocate other than the office director. And the office director, at least the ones that I've known, all came out of the embassy base. And it wasn't that they were necessarily unwilling to defend them, but they were culturally un-attuned to them. You had stories about the screw ups that risked cover because people who didn't do it every day of their lives just didn't know about all of the things that you had to worry about -- even though in their own trade craft of operating out of embassies they were accustomed to thinking about all of that trade craft. But the additional requirements of cover outside the embassy were -- they were just not attuned. So that fight took place within CIA. There were people who made those arguments, but they were never entirely successful. And while people on the INTEL committees on the Hill are aware of all this and there were so champions or not, to some degree until the 11th of September we were still operating in a Cold War mentality. I mean the notion back then was you had out of embassy operations in order to run against nation states -- or economic entities of some significance and usually related to nation states. After 9/11 the issue became how do you go after non-state actors.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: We ran people against the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) and Hezbollah and things like that, and some of them were undercover, yes. But it never became so central an issue as it has become today because we were still transfixed on the U.S./Soviet relationship during that time period. And while Arab/Israeli issues were important, they were never more important than the Soviet Union was to us, and that was the focus. Now today we tell our embassies: one of your major collection requirements is terrorism, one of your major collection requirements is WMD. Well, in most cases it's not the nation states who are the actors. The only thing we may get from states is liaison information that their intelligence services have collected about those non-state actors within their own national boundary.

Q: And were all kind of on the same side but kind of blind.

BEERS: Right. Right. So this whole notion about trying to find out how to do this, so that's why we have the 9/11 commission talking about the inadequacies of this particular area. When John McLaughlin said during the INTEL reform period, "all of these ideas have been around for 20 years he's absolutely right."

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: And they were undecided during that particular time frame and people looked at them from a different perspective. And now we -- now we look at them with --

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Whereas back then we were only looking forward and unable to see the future clearly enough to see the changes that we had to undertake.

Q: Well, did you find yourself oh, falling in one camp or the other or a sty both camps or plague on both your -- I mean how did you find yourself trying to do your job looking at the balance between --

BEERS: I had always sided with the view that the Director of Central Intelligence ought to be the true Head of the Intelligence Community. He or she ought to be able to control the resources that went to the intelligence community, including being able to make decisions that couldn't be overturned by the Secretary of Defense with respect to national, technical means. However, let's recognize that even that might not be or have been enough given the relationship of the contracting world to those massive budget items for a single satellite of the high quality technology that was required for intelligence collection. And I always felt as we moved away from the Cold War that one, non-state actors had become increasingly important and two, human intelligence was becoming more and more important. I felt that the cuts to the CIA, and the way the Defense Department budget, including the INTEL portion of the defense department and budget was protected, diminished our ability to use intelligence effectively. And so I sided both with the CIA on the technical means issue and on the undercover agent side. And part of that was because I saw some of the stuff that the undercover officers had done and were doing. We needed to make sure that we had enough of them. But those issues were decided in the agencies and they were not the kinds of things that the NSC Coordination Function was amenable to deciding. The NSC did little or nothing on budget issues. And the NSC did little or nothing on issues that were within the purview of a single agency. So the budget issue between national technical means and CIA was something that we mentioned but never really had meetings on. And the struggle within CIA was only within CIA. And while Lake and Berger were aware of these issues they were not things that we spent a lot of time and effort on. The interagency process tends not to spend a lot of time on either of those issues and to some degree that is a failure. To some extent OMB (Office of Management and Budget) is regarded as the interagency coordinator of budget issues, not the National Security Council. They're supposed to do policy with the Intersection of Policy and Budget is critical, but that's the way that it has been. To take it on in so mega a fashion would have been -- and still is a major challenge. Only if you get a principal interested in taking on that kind of an issue can you get any kind of traction in the interagency community. So, yes, we talked about them and, no, nothing much got done.

Q: Did Clinton ever become engaged in this issue at all?

BEERS: Not to my knowledge. John Deutch certainly tried to get Clinton to be more interested in intelligence issues, but Deutch didn't last very long. He had been out at the beginning of the second term. Tony Lake was supposed to be his replacement. And some of that I think was Deutch's inability to find a personal relationship with the president. Woolsey had failed at that and I think Deutch failed at that as well. It really wasn't until

Tenet became the Director of Central Intelligence that that kind of personal relationship was established.

Q: Did you get any feel for what was the problem with Woolsey and Deutch? Was it the -- because Clinton is a very intelligent person.

BEERS: Right.

Q: You would think that this would be the kind of thing that he could grasp quite quickly.

BEERS: The president had the option of a daily briefing from an intelligence officer, whether it was a liaison officer of the Director of Central Intelligence. But it is reported, and I can't verify this, that early on he was less interested in that. He was focused primarily on domestic issues. And as he became more comfortable in the office and more involved in the conduct of foreign policy I think his appetite for that kind of information grew. But I think Woolsey for one reason or another simply didn't hit it off with him. And Woolsey had his own separate set of problems with the Congress, which made him less effective as head of CIA. Deutch came in with all of the energy that John Deutch has, but he just wanted to be involved in everything. I think his sort of effort to embrace all led to some personal reactions, including by the president, to his stewardship at CIA. The problems and troubles that he got into later for his laxity with classified material were essentially unknown during that period. But I remember when Hussein Kamel defected from Iraq to Jordan early on during his tenure. He felt that this was a major turning point in our policy toward Iraq and saw Hussein Kamel in effect as an intelligence asset to be debriefed and perhaps to lead the coup that would overthrow Saddam. That was certainly what Hussein Kamel's original vision of his role was. This gave Deutch a sense that he could be a player in the policy game as well as the intelligence advisor to the president. And remember, he had been the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the transition out of the policy community and into the intelligence community is never I think an easy transition if you're used to making policy, as opposed to simply commenting on it. And so I think that led to, or that was a contributing factor in his short tenure as the director.

Q: Well, now you were doing this Intelligence thing from when to when?

BEERS: From May of '95 to January of '98. The two things that I wanted to talk about are the general nature of covert action and the particular buzz saw that I ran into in the issue of Chinese influence. So let me do those two things in order.

Q: Sure.

BEERS: Covert action, while essentially a CIA activity, after Iran Contra and the scandal that that created caused the setting up of -- or the expansion of a review process that was run out of the White House and was shepherded by the senior director for the intelligence programs. And that essentially was that every covert action program had to be reviewed annually and reauthorized by the president on an annual basis. This meant that the agency had to come downtown and brief the interagency intelligence oversight community. This

was so that the programs could be taken to a deputy committee and a principals' committee meeting. They were then sent forward to the president for reauthorization and communication to the Congress. This was part of a let's make sure that these programs are not just running on autopilot. We have to know what's going on, that people outside of the agency, again, in a circumscribed network, were there to review that particular process. And so I did '95, '96, and '97 while I was there. While I can't talk about any particular programs, it was the single most regular activity for the office. In addition to that, any new program had to go through that process at its initiation. And so new programs were brought forward which either did or did not result in actual presidential findings, which were then communicated to the Congress. And I was involved with some of those. One thing about this, and it shows where the intelligence community was then, was how the intelligence community budget got put together. Some of the regional operations directors at CIA wanted to have their own covert action programs for the almost sole reason of augmenting their resources for their region. They got a budget cut out of the central budget for the operations directorate. That shaving of that budget was what led to the closing of a number of stations. And what they were looking for basically in those areas that were being contested, ways to augment that budget so that they could get back to more people under their field supervision and greater importance. Because if you had a covert action program you were obviously in an important area.

Q: To put in context of the time, an awful lot of our people in, say, Latin America and particularly Africa were watching the Soviets.

BEERS: That's right. That's right.

Q: And their people.

BEERS: Although in Latin America you did have the drug trade that was a CIA mission as well. But yes, that was essentially what they did.

Q: And that's gone. But you know --

BEERS: And that's why the stations started getting closed. So there was nobody to watch anymore and WMD didn't show up there and terrorists show up there, at least from a Latin America perspective you had the drug trade to continue to collect on. So that they were doing that. Some of the assistant secretaries of state or defense were interested in promoting covert action programs to resolve their resource problems. That is, if they didn't have enough money to do x or y in order to influence a government to do a and b, then maybe if they could get a covert action program they could use it for leverage on a government to do something that was desirable. So I'm sitting here getting requests from colleagues that shouldn't we look at a covert action program to do whatever in order to fulfill a particular need? And I'm not saying that there might not have been some merit in the proposals that I was getting. But it got to be so bad at one point I went to -- and I think Berger was the senior director by this time -- that we issued a directive that no covert action proposal would be considered unless it was requested by a principal. So that

all of these assistant secretary types had to get their principal on board before they could come hector me to start a covert action program.

Q: Well, did you have our own covert operators who are tipping you off within the thing, saying watch this one or some -- you know, in other words, I mean were you just able to look at this and use your analytical skills to say this doesn't make sense? Or was -- were these being flagged somehow by your -- I facetiously call it your undercover agents.

BEERS: Both. In some cases when the -- when the non-CIA assistant secretaries would come to me the agency would say (*rejection noise*). And in some cases -- usually when the DO office director came to me, that person had already enlisted the regional assistant secretary. They were just as interested in augmenting their information base in areas of neglect and recognized that they were also impotent in getting more resources to put more State Department officers overseas. This is the period in which people came to realize that the presence of other U.S. agencies beside State in embassies was almost always greater than the State Department presence. The non-state in aggregate.

Q: I mean the resources were really being stretched.

BEERS: Right, right. And they had a huge capital expenditure requirement, if they were listening to the various committees after embassies got blown up, about what they needed to do there. And all of that was in the State Department operating budget. This put a lot of pressure on how do you divide up that pie with an appropriation subcommittee that never seemed to be appreciative of the role of the State Department.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: I found myself in a curious situation and that's an interesting story. And I want to talk about is the Chinese influence peddling. This was my second claim to notoriety after my trip to Panama and Endara calling me an imperialist. In 1996 the bureau briefed me that it appeared the Chinese Government sought influence in the United States through use of campaign money. The focus of this activity as described to me was on members of Congress. I asked them whether or not they were running this both as a counterintelligence program and as an effort to sting members of Congress for improper receiving of campaign money. And they assured me that it was not intended for the latter. It was only a counterintelligence mission. I said, "Had they briefed members of Congress who they thought might be subject to these particular importunes?" And they said, no, they had not. I said, "Come back to me when you have more information." Then we learned in the early -- in December of '96 about Riady and other --

Q: Riady being in Indonesia.

BEERS: An Indonesian of Chinese extraction who had given money and supposedly had connections to Chinese Intelligence, also doing similar or related kinds of activities and Vice President Gore's Buddhist temple visit and other things like that. So it comes out that I was briefed on this and that I didn't pass the information up. Well, my own

thinking, in terms of what I had heard from the bureau, was that's all very interesting, but it doesn't seem like it's gelled enough to brief. And it's not dissimilar from activities of other countries that are doing similar things, and I don't mean one or two, more like four.

Q: Well, think of the Nationalist Chinese.

BEERS: Exactly. Exactly. And I'm sure that the Chinese motivation here was to counteract the Nationalists.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So in any case I did not tell Tony Lake or Sandy Berger. So that became public and my deputy, an FBI officer who was detailed, told White House counsel, who was investigating this matter for the White House, that we had actually been told not to brief senior people, that it wasn't ready for that. I don't remember that being said, but I didn't take notes and he did. He thought he had it in his notes. Anyway, that then became the basis for a further evolution of the spat between Louie Freeh and the White House.

Q: Freeh being the --

BEERS: FBI director. Bounced back and forth as that particular information became public. And my name showed up in the press again in an unfavorable light, phone calls from friends and relatives saying, "What happened to you this time?" And one very amusing piece in which the post reported that I was a CIA employee. So I am stuck in this truly awkward situation of being neither able to confirm nor deny that I am a CIA employee because that would be going against the rules of the road.

My son, however, is really irritated and he calls up The Washington Post and says, "That's just flat wrong. We have two sources on this."

Anyway, so at a later point when I applied to work at the United Nations, Sandy Berger had to call Kofi Annan and say, "Should you run a LexisNexis and discover this piece of information, let me assure you that it is untrue."

Q: That's funny. You know, a book came out in the '60s I think called Who's Who in the CIA. It was actually run by the East Germans who published the book. And I remember seeing the thing, casually looking through it, and there I was.

BEERS: I am sure that when I was a deputy political advisor at NATO, the Soviets probably thought I was a CIA officer.

Q: Okay, today is the 25th of June, 2007 with Rand Beers.

BEERS: When we last left off I was going to talk about critical infrastructure. To give you a little bit of the history in order to get up to the pieces that I got involved in, at the end of the Bush Administration --

Q: This is Bush I.

BEERS: This is Bush I. We had a meeting which Scowcroft chaired and Mike McConnell was head of NSA (National Security Agency). There was a discussion of whether we needed a special program for encryption. Private sector encryption was getting to be as good as the government encryption, and there was a deep fear that the private encryption would make it difficult to impossible for the NSA ability to crack codes.

Q: I might -- just to put in here, this whole problem was in the press. So this is nothing --

BEERS: Exactly. This is not a classified piece of information. The solution proposed at that early time was called Clipper chip. This issue then carried over to the incoming Clinton Administration. Clipper chip proposed a private encryption program to be sponsored by the U.S. Government. It would be marketed publicly. It would have a key within it which would be available to the National Security Agency if it was determined that the communications' decryption was vital to national security. So it was an idea to have a process to dominate the market with this Clipper chip kind of encryption to protect financial deals and whatnot. There would still be a way to break the code with the presumption that the big firms, like Microsoft, would then buy this and put it into their systems. The Clinton Administration took it up, but it basically died. And as a result of that there was a flurry to look at other solutions. That particular function was primarily handled by the Office of Intelligence Programs at the NSC. So it was something that I came back to when I took over the office in 1995. Also, there had been a terrorism study by the Terrorism Office in the Clinton Administration as a result of the World Trade Center bombing -- the first World Trade Center bombing -- and the Oklahoma City bombing. The study was to look at, quote, "critical infrastructure." It was given to the attorney general and, and her then deputy, Jamie Gorelick.

Q: Janet Reno is --

BEERS: Yeah, Janet Reno and Jamie Gorelick. They, working with the Pentagon, looked at physical sites, but it became clear to them that we also needed to look at cyber security.

Q: Could you explain what critical infrastructure meant --

BEERS: Critical infrastructure --

Q: -- at that time?

BEERS: -- would be, for example, if the New York Stock Exchange activities were interrupted physically by a bomb, or a major bridge or tunnel into New York was blown up, or the electrical power grid collapsed as it did as a result of a tree high up. During the first World Trade Center bombing the New York fire commissioner evacuated the building. And he evacuated the largest bond trading company in the country called

Cantor Fitzgerald. So they all evacuated the building and they did not have a backup system. So they left open, in bond trades, several billion dollars. President Clinton ended up calling New York and said you got to let these people get back to their floor. So they walked up and brought all the data out, and closed the trades. But that kind of disruption is an example of where an attack or an accident could cause a major economic disruption of activities in the United States and possibly also lead to a significant loss of life. That's why it's called critical infrastructure. So in the process of Reno and Gorelick completing this study, they made a major point that the country needed to pay more attention to cyber security. That study then married with the discussion about what to do about the future of Clipper chip. Then it merged into a presidential commission called the Marsh Commission, led by an army four-star general, which looked at the same thing that the Reno/Gorelick group looked at: critical infrastructure and what do we need to do to protect it, primarily looking at cyber security. They deliberated about six months and delivered their report to the president. As the Senior Director for Intelligence Programs, I was responsible for both monitoring their activities and providing the memorandum to the president indicating what their conclusions were. Their principal conclusion with respect to security was that if we were going to be attentive to this particular problem we had to recognize that the critical infrastructure was almost all in the private sector. They were not Government property; they were not controlled by the Government. The Government had some ability to regulate them, but, but they were essentially private. If we were going to develop a higher level of security, we were going to have to work with the private sector. So the notion was public-private partnership. The grid, if you will, was divided into eight sectors: there was a financial sector, an energy sector, a sector for first responders, which was more on the physical side of the infrastructure rather than the cyber side. There was water.

Q: Transportation, I suppose.

BEERS: Yeah, transportation. So for example, you say what's the issue with respect to energy? The energy grid is controlled electronically. A system allows somebody sitting in a major metropolitan area to flip a switch that's out in a remote area that says that the energy flow or the gas flow or whatever goes in this direction instead of that direction or is turned off. So, for example, if you had a gas pipeline disruption it showed up on the system. The control person would close that gas system at the two closest closure stations so that there would be no more leakage out of the system. Or petroleum, for that matter. No more leakage out of the system except where the point of break was back to where the control point was. So these were all things that were subject to disruption and could have been disrupted in a cyber-attack, just as much as they could be disrupted by a physical attack on the pipeline or whatever. Clearly, there had been reports at this point about people stealing large sums of money from banks by illegal transfers by simply manipulating the system. So these were all concerns of that particular report. The recommendation was that there ought to be an interagency process which would write a presidential decision document for President Clinton to sign, which would establish the policy of the country with respect to cyber security. I began that process in the fall of 1997. There was a draft presidential decision document circulating after a series of interagency meetings at the time of my departure for the State Department. And I handed

that off to my friend and colleague, Richard Clarke, who was in the terrorism office. This was actually a long planned transition. If you were talking about the principal conclusion of a presidential commission saying that there ought to be a public/private partnership. Clipper chip had floundered because of the intelligence community's involvement in it. It made no sense for the responsible office within the White House to be an intelligence office as opposed to some other location. Clarke's office had a range of activities beyond terrorism, including narcotics and peacekeeping and other things, and he was very much interested in the subject. So it was an easy transition to simply hand off the document process to him. He then carried that to conclusion. He had the PDD (presidential decision directive) written and then began work on the national strategy, which was finally published in February of 2003 at the time of his resignation.

Q: When you were working on starting this project, given the state of affairs today when the mood of the country is pretty God awful, what was the mood of business and all? I mean were you considered the enemy, a helper? What? Can you describe what you --

BEERS: There was a wariness. It was: if we're going to protect our proprietary interest in what we, the private sector, do to protect ourselves, we will be divulging to the Federal Government our protection plans, which will then be subject to freedom of information.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Or simply leakage. Outside a system that we are no longer able to control, how can you guarantee to us that that won't happen? And so one of the provisions that was written into this whole process was that the material would not be FOI-able.

Q: FOI-able (laughs), Freedom of Information Act.

BEERS: Yeah. Could not be accessed through Freedom of Information of Act because it was private sector proprietary. The second of this was how much of this is in fact an intelligence program? And therefore, we're wary of it. The whole reason for shifting the office, the whole idea for having private-public partnerships that were open and reasonably transparent, with exception of the proprietary information, was to try to do that. The use of the FBI as the agent for intersection from the Federal Government with respect to the system as opposed to either the CIA, NSA, or the Defense Department. Even though this was clearly viewed as a national security issue at large, the notion of it being seen as an activity of any of those agencies was seen as a limitation and therefore something to be avoided. We're talking about 1998. The PDD was written in 1998. Clarke started the process. It took him, after the PDD, basically four years to write the strategy through a process of public hearings around the country, with discussions with people in the private sector, particularly discussions with the major software purveyors in order to try to get the system protected. Both in terms of giving the private sector some indications of where the vulnerabilities were and the private sector working hard to try to protect against those vulnerabilities I think is an indication that that wariness was there before. And whatever wariness there may be now is only added to that. Part of the reason for the slowness of this process is that it's very complicated. When you think of the

number of millions of lines of code in the Microsoft operating system you get a sense of the enormity of the task to try to protect this. Everybody else has their own encryption or security software that's put on top of whatever operating system they're working with. This means another layer of complexity. This is why this thing has been slow. While you can do regulation that the private sector agrees with as a general proposition, this administration, the current Bush Administration is less inclined to look at regulation as a tool of government in order to regulate the marketplace. So I think that that's part of the issue and that's certainly why the strategy that Clarke prepared took so long to actually be approved by the president.

Q: This is tape nine, side one with Rand Beers. Yeah.

BEERS: The strategy could have been published probably a year earlier if the current Bush Administration hadn't been so careful in their review of the process and the document to make sure that they weren't going to create any irritants, either from their friends in the private sector or from a perspective of the ideological cast of the administration.

Q: Well, during the time you were dealing with this, did any particular sector, firm, or other group give you particular problems? For you know, for legit -- whatever reasons?

BEERS: No. While I was supervising absolutely not. In fact, the financial community was particularly interested in getting something done with respect to this. How far they were prepared to go was never tested because I left before we really had completed the PDD. And the PDD then became the vehicle for establishing the public-private partnerships.

Q: Well, as you got into this what about say, Europe? You know, you always think of the gnomes in Zurich playing around with, you know, I mean they're -- we're not the only people doing this. In fact, much of the innovation has come out of Europe and maybe Japan. I mean were these causing problems?

BEERS: They were certainly issues that were going to have to be dealt with. We had a dialogue with other countries. Clearly, Canada and Mexico as neighbors and Europe and Japan as major players and the use of the internet were going to be critical. Because there were so many of our own companies which were multi-national and were stationed in Europe as much as in the United States, or the reverse, which was foreign based companies, which had activities within the United States. So efforts to secure the system within the United States ultimately were going to require some broader level of global security.

Q: Were you working with your counterparts in Europe or Japan?

BEERS: The discussions were really just at the beginning stage during the period that I dealt with it.

Q: Well, in '98 you left this for a while anyway. Where'd you go?

BEERS: I went to the State Department. I was initially the acting Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and then was confirmed and became the assistant secretary. In January of '98 we were two months away in the narcotics process whereby we had to certify that countries were cooperating or not cooperating. So with certification being a major threshold in each year, they wanted somebody who could take over that particular process. And since I had done certification from the White House perspective a number of times in the Bush Administration and the Clinton Administration in my earlier jobs, they knew that I knew the process well enough to take it over and run it smoothly. That's in the end why I was asked to take this job. I was interested in doing something else. I'd been at the NSC from February of '93 until January of '98 and really wanted to do something else. So I took the job and, and went off to a crash course in learning all of the things that the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau did besides certification.

Q: Well, first place, you did this from when to when?

BEERS: I had the job of assistant secretary from January of '98 until August of 2002.

Q: Now, this is sort of toward the end of the Clinton Administration and you'd been -- worked both in the Bush Administration, had reflections of at least the certification process. Did you see any -- was there a different perspective, outlook, attitude in the State Department at this point in time than you'd noticed from the NSC or not?

BEERS: The certification process had gone through a series of ups and downs. It was legislated by the Congress because it was felt that the administration, any administration, wasn't tough enough on countries who either were cultivating -- not the country itself -- in countries in which there was major drug cultivation, or countries in which there were major trafficking activities. And so Congress wanted the administration to say that a country was or was not cooperating. If they were not cooperating then they lost their development assistance with the exception of counternarcotics money and humanitarian money and the U.S. was required to vote against development activities for them in the World Bank or regional banks that we were a member of. So it had a stringent impact if it was used. There was something called a national interest waiver as well, which said a country didn't cooperate enough, but we find it in the national interest not to decertify them for whatever the reasons were that were used as the justification for decertification. The program started out with only pariah states being decertified, so Iran, North Korea, and Lebanon, Cuba, that --

Q: Yes.

BEERS: -- that sort of country. And the other countries were usually deemed to be OK. There were a few national interest waivers given. The Clinton Administration decided when they made Bob Gelbard the assistant secretary that they were going to be really tough on this issue. And so there was a move, for example, to find other countries. The

major decision was when President Samper became President of Colombia and there was a disclosure that he had knowingly received campaign contributions from drug traffickers. Colombia was decertified. That was a huge deal.

Q: Was that during your watch?

BEERS: I was at the NSC, no. It was already decertified when I took over. So that was going to be a decision that I was going to have to make a recommendation on.

Q: This is the yearly review.

BEERS: This is a yearly review. And I would make a recommendation to the Secretary of State who would make a recommendation to the president. So that was what the process looked like. Having watched this process for a number of years I felt it needed some revisions. I thought that decertification was better as a threat than as a reality -- that the threat of decertification in the first three months of a year often caused countries to take actions that they might not otherwise have taken. Then we simply had to hold them to those actions over the remainder of the year and not let them fall back, rather than decertifying them. And in particular with respect to Colombia, we were facing the fact that Samper was only going to be in office for another three or four months from March 1st because of the one-term rule, which existed then. My notion was it was harder to certify a country in the middle of the year than it was to give Colombia a national interest waiver at certification time. So with respect to Colombia, I made the argument that we wanted to give them a national interest waiver so that when the next president came to office we would be able to do more with respect to that country in order to encourage the next president to work with us. It was somewhat of a bet because the candidate from Samper's party, which was the liberal party, who had been his minister of interior and conceivably had had some knowledge of the campaign contribution, was their party's candidate. But as it was, the conservative candidate, Pastrana, won. And that became the beginning of what became Plan Colombia. But let me finish up on the certification process before I talk about Colombia. The second major issue with respect to that year's certification, as it had been for the preceding four years, was whether or not cooperation by the Mexican Government was in fact sufficient to certify them or were we going to have to give them a national interest waiver or decertify them. There was no stomach for decertification. There was a push on the part of the Justice Department and some other agencies, probably Treasury, to do a national interest waiver. The Western Hemisphere Bureau, within the State Department, was adamant about not doing that, and the Mexican Government was obviously seriously concerned about the loss of face from being declared an insufficient cooperator. This is all in the context of the Mexican trafficking organizations having basically taken over trafficking in the United States from the Colombian trafficking organizations with the demise of the Medellin and Cali cartels.

Q: They're still getting their supplies --

BEERS: They're still getting their supplies from there, but in the older period Cali and Medellin actually ran the deals into the United States. After they were taken down, while

there were organizations that replaced them, they didn't have the same network. The Mexican cartels basically took over running the drugs into the United States. Most of the drugs came into the United States through Mexico because U.S. interdiction efforts had succeeded in closing down most of the flights and boats that went to the Bahamas or to the Bahamas basically and then came across to Florida. There were still some planes that managed to get through. But the principal flow of drugs was across the U.S./Mexican border through regular commercial traffic. Some that came in containers into this country. Some came in commercial airliners. But the bulk, to the best of our ability to know, came across that border and the Mexicans controlled that. So was the Mexican Government ever doing enough to deal with that? The stories of the corruption of the Mexican Police and of Mexican Government officials has been noted for years and years and years. And so this was a major effort to try to deal with this. And the question was: what was likely to get the most cooperation by a Mexican Government, any Mexican Government, given the weak institutions that existed within the Federal and State and local structures. In the end, the decision was to give them full certification and to defend that as the Mexican government at the top was cooperating. There were weaknesses and deficiencies elsewhere in the government that would have to be attended to. The Mexican Government was trying to deal with that. Cup half full, cup half empty. You could have gone either way. It was a political decision.

Q: Could you give me a feel for the interplay between your bureau and that of the geographic bureau, Western Hemisphere, but particularly Mexican desk? I mean how did this work?

BEERS: That really requires a broader discussion. The law says that the secretary of state will make the recommendations to the president. That law had been interpreted by previous assistant secretaries to mean that the determination would be made almost entirely within the State Department. Oh yes, you could listen to the muse of other agencies, but it would be done essentially as a closed process within the State Department. I wanted to prevent the situation that a recommendation from the secretary of state to the president would be criticized by leaks in the press by other agencies who didn't agree with the secretary of state's recommendation. So we had an open process. All the agencies that had a reason to be involved were involved. And my objective basically was to come to a consensus decision about every single one, and if I couldn't, to represent the views of the agencies. In the end, I never had a dissent in all of the five certification processes that I ran. So when you ask what's the interplay between the Western Hemisphere Bureau and INL (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs), we obviously never ultimately disagreed on Mexico or Colombia. The disagreements were on Jamaica or Guatemala where basically we said to the Western Hemisphere Bureau you either deliver more cooperation in the next two months or we are going to have to recommend decertification. And to make the bureau, geographic bureau, involved more in getting the cooperation that would allow us to make those determinations. And that was a general strategy that I pursued throughout the entire process. If we thought that a country wasn't doing enough then we would go to the geographic bureau and say, "You're going to have to say this problem or we're not going

to be able to help you and we're not going to be able to defend you." And that always worked.

I also thought that we had inadvertently or consciously put countries on the list that we used in some cases as a form of punishment because they were pariah states, or in some cases they were inappropriately on the list. Two decisions that I participated in were to take Hong Kong and Iran off the list. The list was do you have x thousand actors of cultivation within your border, then you're automatically on it. Or were you judged to be a transit country. And then the judgment was a transit country to the United States, not a transit country. So CIA one year did a survey of Iran. They determined that what the Iranian Government had said was true, which was that they had pretty much wiped out cultivation of poppy within Iran. And so we took Iran off the list, even though they were a transit country to Europe, not to the United States.

Q: Well now, did doing this -- we're facing this now, but going back to the time you were taking Iran off the list, Iran -- because of the hostage situation and all that -- there's been sort of a -- we had no relations with it. It's sort of for us an enemy or a pariah state or something. And particularly there's a wing within the political spectrum which sees Iran as the implacable enemy or something. Did you run across that?

BEERS: Oh yes. Oh, there was a huge human cry from the Republicans in Congress. Dani Pletka, who was on the Newshour with me, worked for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at that time and she was livid that we had taken them off. Roger Noriega, who was on the committee at that point, and who then became Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, was furious. But I said, "Look, the law says if they have less than the amount prescribed of cultivation and they are not a transit country to the United States, regardless of what you think of the regime, they don't belong on the list."

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: "So I'm taking them off. And you can ask the Intelligence Committee to resurvey next year and if they have that much cultivation next year I am happy to put them back on the list. But let's abide by the law. Let's not make this another way in which we can sanction states that we don't like."

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: With respect to Hong Kong, they made a major, major effort to control the transit of drugs through their port. And it was documented --

Q: Hong Kong by this time was --

BEERS: Part of China.

Q: Part of China, yes.

BEERS: And DEA went along with it. Even though they have always had a major trafficking office there, now to some degree in part of because of the limitation on the number of DEA agents in China problem. But in both of those cases what we were doing is we were limiting having to go through a process on countries that really didn't belong on the list. The other country that was taken off before I got there was Lebanon. Again, there had been a poppy crop in Lebanon; it had exceeded the total. The Syrians, for whatever reason, ended up causing it to be reduced. They were trafficking in country, no question about it, but it was all to Europe. And they were taken off as a result of that.

Q: Well, now what was your relationship with the Drug Enforcement Agency? And does Drug Enforcement Agency come under the Department of Justice?

BEERS: Yes.

Q: What was your relationship with those two entities?

BEERS: DEA was always judged a full participant in interagency deliberations having to do with narcotics. However, when it came to a deputies committee meeting or a principals committee meeting, then the agency representing those interests would be the Department of Justice. And the head, the administrator, would come as the second, the backbencher for the deputy attorney general or for the attorney general. So they were always accorded an opportunity to be involved. This was particularly important as well because any of the monies that the State Department had for counternarcotics spending in a country had at least in some way to be coordinated with DEA. Now, it was almost never done exactly the way the DEA would want. Because what DEA would have wanted to do was actually control all that money, which would have meant that it would have all gone to their counterparts. And we viewed the counternarcotics mission as being broader than that, particularly because by then INL had become responsible for all of the development assistance money that was judged to be counternarcotics related. That was a deal that was cut when Gelbard was assistant secretary. AID (Agency for International Development) felt that it needed the protection for that assistance that INL could give it that AID would be more vulnerable to cuts. AID had been involved in alternative development, which is their word for drug crop substitution. They were worried that even though it had the mantra of counternarcotics, it was susceptible to being cut by people who did not like development assistance. So they basically gave it to INL figuring that INL would be able to protect it better and that INL then would transfer the money to AID as the executive agent for that.

Q: This gives somebody who's reading this a sense of what you do in a bureaucracy. If you've got something that's unpopular, in a way, which sounds like aid to a country which is susceptible to being cut, you pass it and give it a different name and pass it to a different bureau, which is thugs and drugs. And so you're on the side of the angels and so they don't cut your money.

BEERS: Exactly.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Exactly. So I inherited that particular aspect of the counternarcotics mission and, as I said, DEA could care less about that kind of money. But yet, that was really vital to the program. As I mentioned earlier, we had a program in Bolivia, which had been underway for maybe 10 years or longer before it finally crossed the threshold of real success. It was initially just a crop substitution program. The farmer said, I have this many hectares of coca, come watch me cut it down, give me a payment for eradicating that coca, and give me the agricultural assistance to create another crop that I can sell to market. The weakness of the program was that there was no enforcement behind it. Well, the government registered all of the cuttings and they were in fact eradicated. The farmer could then go over the hill and plant another coca crop out of sight, continue to receive the benefits of selling the coca, get a one-time cash payment for the eradication, and get government assistance to grow pineapples or heart of palm or whatever crop that they were growing. What happened in the 10 years was that the economy of this area, called the Chapare, which is west of Santa Cruz but in the lowlands, changed from being 90% drug to being more than 50% legitimate crops. Then Quiroga, who had been the vice president under Hugo Banzer, became president when Banzer died. He decided to enforce the law, passed in the '80s, which said any coca that's growing now will be declared safe from enforcement while you can participate in the program to eradicate it yourself and get your payment. But any new coca will be judged to be illegal and the government may come and forcibly eradicate it. Given the amount of time that had passed, Quiroga basically said, "Ain't no old coca any longer; those bushes don't last that long. And so all coca is now illegal coca," and began an eradication program. Started in the national forest, because it was government land, and then moved into the other areas. The campesinos (farmers) were given an opportunity to get cash for their eradication. The amount of cash that they got decreased as time passed. So if you went in at the beginning you got the most, six months later you got 50% of that, six months after that you got 25% of that if the government didn't cut it down on its own. And basically that combination flipped the entire Chapare region into a 90% legitimate crops. It also became the basis for which the current president of Bolivia rose to power. He was part of the Cocalero population and organized them to say that they had gotten a raw deal. And all of the other machinations within Bolivia ultimately caused two presidents to have to resign and then he was popularly elected president finally. So the success of the program may also have bred Evo Morales being the current president of Bolivia and making the argument that he wasn't going to enforce the coca laws any longer. That remains to be seen over time. I haven't seen indications of how much of an increase in coca cultivation there has been in Bolivia.

Q: Yeah. Moving back to this, you mentioned Lebanon, Iran by not growing enough crop, cocaine crop to -- poppy, I guess poppy, to be decertified. And there are sort of transit points going to Europe. Now what were you getting from -- did you have counterparts and counterpart type laws in Europe, for example? I mean was this a whole process or were you kind of a lonely voice?

BEERS: No, we were a lonely voice. We were the only country that had this kind of a punitive law about drug trafficking. There have been efforts on the part of other countries to participate in international judgments about whether countries were cooperating or not cooperating. But none of them in the area of pure counternarcotics had sanctions associated with them.

Q: Well, was there any movement -- or what was the political atmosphere that caused say, France or Britain or Germany, which obviously were suffering from the drug trade, why weren't they -- looked like we had a fairly effective system. Didn't they do the same?

BEERS: They could have. But they have a different outlook on drug use. They are perfectly prepared to use the enforcement arm to go after major traffickers. They regard the major element of their approach to drug trafficking as trying to reduce demand by trying to get users to stop using or to get them into programs where drug use is more controlled. It's a different approach.

Q: Well, were there connections that you had with other people in your trade -- not the drug trade but the counterdrug trade -- in other governments, say in Europe, who are looking and saying gee, I wish we had something like this or maybe this is the approach? Or do they say actually our approach is better? Were you part of a discussion or were you, you were on your own, they were on their own would you say?

BEERS: We had a very good relationship with the British. Tony Blair was very strong in counternarcotics effort, but he wasn't prepared to participate in sanctions. We had discussions with the EU (European Union), particularly during the Spanish presidency. Spain was one of the stronger counternarcotics countries because they were also gateway for drugs coming from Latin America into Europe. But again, the predominant view was demand reduction, which isn't to say there wasn't a push for demand reduction in this country. Barry McCaffrey, who was heralded as a strong supply side advocate, ended up becoming the strongest demand side advocate of any individual who --

Q: Demand side advocate, going after the consumer --

BEERS: No, not going after the consumer. Trying to reduce demand by drug treatment programs.

Q: Oh.

BEERS: No, the distinction is supply side is enforcement for eradicated crops, demand side is drug treatment.

Q: What was your reading on this? Drug treatment?

BEERS: There are a lot of studies and it is hard to argue that a dollar spent on treatment is more effective than a dollar spent on enforcement. When you add the cost of enforcement up, which is police, courts, and prisons. And you look at recidivism. The

costs compared in a cost benefit ratio to treatment are much higher. In fact, that's including the notion that a drug treatment program is deemed to be successful if 40% of the entrance into the drug treatment are drug-free for five years. That's what the statistics measure in terms of dollar spent. And the chief analyst of this is a guy named Peter Reuter who wrote for Rand and writes for the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative --

Q: I was going to say, coming out of there. How did you feel on this?

BEERS: I sided with McCaffrey on that. We need -- my job wasn't drug treatment in this country.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Although we had some drug programs that we were supporting overseas. And when you talk to those law enforcement people in DEA they believe that we need to be spending more money on drug treatment as well. But Congress sees it as throwing away money. Remember the press about the midnight basketball program.

Q: Yeah. Explain what that was.

BEERS: The midnight basketball program was a drug treatment program that got folks in the African American community to play basketball during the night in order to get them off the street and get them out of trafficking situations in the hope that that would help them stay drug free. And the Republican Congress thought that was a ridiculous waste of money. And the Clinton Administration argued that there was a basis for saying that it wasn't. But it ended up sounding like one of those silly programs that some government bureaucrat comes up with that had no value.

Q: To me it makes eminent sense. I mean you're after young men who are going to be pushers and users.

BEERS: Right.

Q: And get them involved with something else. Yeah. Still sticking to the drug thing, you're up against an awful lot of perceptions. I mean people with very fixed ideas probably didn't know a hell a lot about it. I mean I'm looking at Congress and their constituents and everybody has an idea of what -- and often it resolves around either the do-gooder, you know, let's just be nice to these people and give them a nice treatment, it'll all be fine, to the hardliners, let's stick them in jail and really, really bear down on them. And these initial perceptions don't particularly come from experience, but just how they look at the world.

BEERS: And once come to are very, very hard to change perceptions about. It requires an enormous amount of countervailing information to be thrust in folks' faces in order to change their perceptions on fundamental issues such as this. And so the tendency is when

the issues become more salient people tend to dig in their heels more unless there's something that really allows them to change their perceptions.

Q: What about the other side of what you're dealing with? What's it called law or --

BEERS: Law enforcement.

Q: OK. Well, we'll pick this up. We're talking about the '98 to 2001 period when you're an assistant secretary. And a couple questions I want to -- we've really talked I guess, unless you can think of something else, about the drug side, but let's talk about the law side, what were the issues and all. And the other I want to ask, since the secretary you've had, according to the charts, access to the secretary of state and the undersecretary. Would you talk about that -- and also the change of administrations and outlooks and how this affected you as dealing with essentially a technical matter, but politics obviously got into it, and how that came about. And then obviously we'll move into 9/11 and --

BEERS: OK. I'm going to come back though, we'll talk about law enforcement, the role of the assistant secretary, the transition. Also, not obvious when you say law enforcement is an important peacekeeping responsibility that I now had. It's in the law enforcement training side, but it was significant, started in Haiti, and then went through the Balkans, and Afghanistan is now actually in Iraq.

Q: Oh good.

BEERS: And then the other thing that we haven't talked about that's really significant is Plan Colombia. And that will also allow me to talk about relations between the Clinton Administration and the Republican Congress and my relations with the Republican Congress.

Q: Okay, today is the 11th of July, 2007. Rand, it's all yours.

BEERS: When I became assistant secretary, acting assistant secretary actually in January of '98, one of the clear problems facing the United States in the area of drug trafficking was the increasing role that Colombia was playing in drug trafficking and the limited nature of the United States' response to that problem. We had basically shut down cultivation in Bolivia and Peru as a result of some successful programs there: principally the program which allowed Peruvian and Colombian, but mostly Peruvian Air Force pilots to shoot down trafficking aircraft after they had been challenged and told to land. If they either fled or didn't follow orders then the aircraft were free to shoot them down. That meant that there was no way to move the coca from Peru to Colombia. As a result of that, Colombians began increasing the amount of cultivation in Colombia to compensate for the loss of cultivation in Peru as the principal growing area. So then the Colombian traffickers, who had dominated the cocaine trade as it went north from Colombia to the United States, because the final processing was done in Colombia, now had a fully vertically integrated production base because they now grew all of their own coca. At the same time, we had gotten into a confrontation with the government of Colombia because

the President of Colombia, Ernesto Samper, had taken money in his election as president from drug traffickers. And it had come out during the campaign and eventually we decided that we would break most relations with him, although the ambassador remained in country. In the winter and spring of '98 they were getting ready to elect a new president. So as we were assessing that, both the process to elect the new president and to figure out what to do about Colombia, we had a study of about six months to decide what might be done. At the same time the administration was trying to rebalance its relations with Congress on the drug issue. There had been a series of disagreements between a Republican-led Congress and the Clinton Administration over policy toward Colombia. The Republicans felt that we, the executive, were not doing enough to aid the Colombia National Police who were the favorite children of the Republican leadership in the House.

Q: Do you have any feel of what caused this relationship? Sometimes it's a staff member or sometimes it's just something else. Did you ever look into that?

BEERS: Oh yeah. It was -- it was pretty clear that Representative Ben Gilman and Representative John Burton --

Q: These were --

BEERS: Gilman was the Chair of the House International Relations Committee, and Burton was the Chair of Government Ops, I think it's called in the House, but anyway the committee that does investigations. They had a couple of staffers who had become very close to the Head of the Colombia National Police, a guy named Jose Serrano. They had made their own trips down there to talk about what they could do for him. It was still possible to give counternarcotics assistance even though other forms of assistance were cut off to the government of Colombia. The Head of the Colombia National Police wanted some Black Hawk helicopters. Black Hawk helicopters were sort of top of the line helicopters. They were both well-armed but also they could carry more troops than the old Huey helicopter from Vietnam, which is mostly what the Colombian National Police had. As a result of this desire on the part of the Colombia National Police to have Black Hawk helicopters, Congress put in the appropriation for fiscal year '99 what's called a "soft earmark." This means that you ought to do it because you may be penalized if you don't in the following years' appropriations, but you're not required by law to execute that particular earmark.

Q: Any particular reason for this type of thing, I mean this type of earmark?

BEERS: I think that they could not get a hard earmark through conference.

Q: Uh-huh.

BEERS: I think that the Senate was not inclined to the same degree of micromanagement that the House wanted in the appropriations process. And the appropriators weren't interested in those kinds of hard earmarks in this area because they weren't their earmarks. They were earmarks by the authorizers. And so they weren't prepared to give

them the same degree of support. In fact, even the appropriators differentiate among who the appropriators are in terms of whether it's a hard earmark or a soft earmark.

Q: It boils down to a certain amount of turf battling.

BEERS: Oh, absolutely. So they had put the soft earmark in. I was very much in favor of trying to spend more money in Colombia. I was prepared to move money around in order to increase the amount of money that would be spent in Colombia. But that particular earmark would have amounted to at least 24 million dollars in a drug budget that overall was about 225, 250 million dollars. It would have meant that there was a tenth of the budget spent just on three helicopters when there were other less expensive helicopters that might not have been as capable but you could get more of them and accomplish the same result.

Q: Were we at all concerned about the man that was in charge of the --

BEERS: Serrano?

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: No. There were some occasional allegations about him, but by and large to the best of our knowledge he was a straight shooter. He was trying to do a tough job. He had done some difficult things like purging the Colombian National Police of a number of incompetent officials when he first took office. He may have been tagged with some petty corruption. I say may because the corruption allegation that ultimately surfaced was against his successor and not against him. The method of corruption was to skim money out of a general slush fund that was for supplies and things. Probably went on in Serrano's period of time. But we're not talking about huge amounts of money.

Q: But your concern was really allocation.

BEERS: The concern was entirely the best way to make sure that we got the Colombians as much money as we could and build a case for getting more money for it, which was what ultimately became Plan Colombia. So in the course of trying to settle this, a previous ambassador to Colombia, Morris Busby, suggested that I go meet with Congressman Dennis Hastert and his staff. Busby told them that I was a good guy. He said I was interested in dealing with the problems that they were trying to deal with, that I had helped write the shoot down decision within the executive branch that led to the successful program of interdicting drug trafficking aircraft and so on. So I worked with my staff to make a convincing case for why the Black Hawks were a misallocation of resources and why we could do an equal or better job with six used Bell 212 helicopters. The Bell 212 is a Huey except it's a two-engine Huey, which means that it's a safer aircraft because there's a second engine. It has more lift, which was an issue about the single-engine Huey and high altitude operations in Colombia. And that the six could carry as many people as the three bells and would cost only a little more than half than the amount of money than the Hueys would cost. They wouldn't have been as new and

shiny and they wouldn't have been viewed as being as prestigious as having the Black Hawks. And to some degree Serrano wanted the Black Hawks because they were a symbol of his and his organization's relationship with the United States, a relationship which the military did not have. There was no military assistance. If they wanted American weaponry they had to pay cash. And Serrano was looking for being provided that for free.

Q: Our connection to the military at the time had essentially been cut off because of the president or was there something else?

BEERS: We had not given them military assistance for I'm not sure how long. We didn't give them military assistance because we were concerned about human rights abuses in the military. We were concerned about their support for the paramilitaries. We were concerned about finding ourselves involved in the guerilla war between the government and the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolution Armed Forces of Colombia)) and the ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army)). So there was a longstanding reluctance. And even when we sold them helicopters for cash they had to make certain promises that they wouldn't be misused. We were able to have some sort of an inspection regime to make sure that that was the case. We did make the distinction, however, that any part of the government which was involved in any narcotics activities was acting favorably. So even if we gave assistance to the military or let them buy these helicopters, if they wanted to use them in counternarcotics that was perfectly fine with us. And if the FARC or the ELN or the paramilitaries were engaged in trafficking activities, which they were, then they could engage the FARC or the ELN in areas where they were in fact engaged in that activity. For example, the FARC in particular protected some of the coca cultivation, protected some of the transportation of drugs from the coca fields to the coca processing that the traffickers were doing. The paramilitaries became involved in the same set of activities. They sometimes fought the FARC for control of turf in the coca cultivations so that they could tax the coca farmers or get protection money from the traffickers. Anyway, so I appear before Hastert and his staff and they were favorably disposed to agree with me. And basically, Hastert told Gilman and Burton -- Hastert's at this point the Deputy Whip. He's Tom DeLay's deputy when DeLay is the whip before Dick Arme y retires. DeLay moves up to become the majority leader. And Hastert, over the course of about a month and a half of deliberation, basically told them that my offer of six Bell 212s was acceptable and a better solution. So while the antagonism that had existed between INL and Gilman and Burton persisted, I had acquired a protector in effect --

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: -- within the Republican leadership.

Q: Very powerful person.

BEERS: A very powerful person.

After DeLay was chucked, Boehner was elected the majority leader and then stayed as minority leader. Anyway, so that then meant that overall we were going to be favorably treated in the House. And then the question became trying to establish a similar relationship with the appropriators in the Senate.

Q: Before we leave the House, just to get a feel for -- here you are, a government bureaucrat and you're running something, a significant job, but there's this other power. It's not just the House, but often it's with the staff.

BEERS: Mm-hmm.

Q: In various forms, but just how you dealt with this, I mean did you find you had some resentful staff members who are trying to undercut you, do something, or did this sort of wash away or --

BEERS: No, no, no. The staff members that worked for Burton and Gilman were my enemies the entire time I was assistant secretary. They tried to put restrictions, they tried to expose me as an incompetent assistant secretary through a series of hearings. When I offered the six Bell 212s I said that these used helicopters would not be hanger queens, a term which means that they spend all the time under repair and not any time flying. So after these Bell 212s were delivered these staffers went down and took pictures of them in a disassembled state. In order to do some of the maintenance, you disconnect the tail of the helicopter from the front end.

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: Literally, take it off and do the repairs and things like that.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So they took pictures of this aircraft under repair, under maintenance, normal maintenance and blew it up and came to hearing and made the statement that Assistant Secretary Beers obviously lied to us because he said they wouldn't be hanger queens and here this picture demonstrates that they are hanger queens. And Hastert's people had warned me that this was going to happen. So I was prepared. And I said, "Look, that's a picture of normal maintenance, but let's not talk about what that picture is or is not, let's talk about what we call the operational readiness rate of these helicopters. How many hours did they fly against what you would call a normal," -- not normal -- "what you would call a full, fully operational helicopter. And they all flew at a higher rate of readiness than the U.S. Army helicopters flew."

Q: You had to really get into the nitty gritty.

BEERS: It was a subcommittee so it was the Western Hemisphere chairman, Representative Gallegly. But because Gilman was the chairman of the whole community he could obviously show up. And Burton, I don't remember whether he was allowed to

be there as a guest or not, but Burton and I got into a semi-shouting match. The chairman had to break it up and, and say, well, we'll take these as questions and so on.

Q: Well, I'd like to know, delving into this, but I think it's very important because this is how things operate. First place, could you tell me, who were the staff members? And name names, and what was their background and also --

BEERS: The Burton guy was Gil Macklin. He'd been a Marine Corps officer, got out as a major, I don't think he retired, and had done some counterinsurgency work in Salvador. So he was the military advisor. The Gilman guy -- and there was more than one --but the one that was most memorable was John, and I can't remember his last name. He was a former FBI agent and he was the one who had Gilman's ear more than Macklin had Burton's ear.

Q: Well --

BEERS: Hastert had the subcommittee that did the drug issue. So he also had a committee chair that was responsible for investigating how the U.S. Government was dealing with the drug issue. So that was how he came to be involved in all of --

Q: What was --

BEERS: And his guy's name was Bobby Charles who subsequently succeeded me as assistant secretary.

Q: Well, you know, it seems like -- how much would say Burton and Gilman and -- was this ego, most of it? Or were these really substantive issues on this?

BEERS: I think this was a belief of these staffers that the State Department was incompetent and did not care about the drug issue. And that it was very important from a political perspective for Republicans to show that the Clinton Administration was not taking the drug issue seriously in its own right; and that it was not taking the drug issue seriously. This was to counter the successful efforts of the Clinton Administration to show itself as a law enforcement administration, typified most prominently by a program called Cops. This program funded police augmentation at the local level and went a long way in getting Clinton the endorsement of several of the major police unions during the '96 election.

Q: Well, let's go to the Senate though. What --

BEERS: On the Senate side, again, because the State Department had been so unable to get an authorization bill, most of the work ended up being done at appropriations. So you got your money as authorized within the appropriations bill. So while there were hearings in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the real action was in the Appropriations Committee. The Appropriations Subcommittee was run by Senator McConnell of Kentucky. The overall committee was run by Senator Stevens of Alaska. And Senator

Leahy was Senator McConnell's counterpart in what is the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, which means the foreign assistance budget.

Q: This is Senator Leahy, a Democrat from Vermont.

BEERS: From Vermont, McConnell from Kentucky. Their two staff at that time were on McConnell's side a woman named Robin Cleveland, the daughter of Ambassador Cleveland.

Q: Paul Cleveland?

BEERS: Yes, Paul Cleveland's daughter. And a really difficult person to deal with. Mercurial I think is the best word to describe her. On the one hand, she would seem positive. And on the other hand, she might well yell at you in disagreement. Tim Rieser is a decent, gentle sort of person who, like Senator Leahy, is very interested in human rights issues, very much interested in advancing democracy, believes in foreign assistance, is a friend of AID. Cleveland was not disposed against AID, but she was more selective. She and Tim didn't necessarily always support the same programs. Let me put it that way.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: And so I was trying to thread between the two of them because in the Senate it's not a question of just convincing the majority, you also have to deal with the minority side. And that was the challenge. So in terms of that budget go around, they could care less about whether or not the Black Hawks were bought or not bought. Oh, the name of the House Gilman person is John Mackey, former FBI agent. Anyway, so it wasn't their issue. And they regarded Mackey and Macklin as irritants. So it was more than just the normal, well, we in the Senate don't think much of them in the House and vice versa. It was these guys are just off the wall. So the people who were trying to make me do things in that fashion meant nothing to the people in the Senate. In fact, they'd just as soon see Mackey and Gilman get their comeuppance.

Q: So it wasn't really a Republican/Democrat thing as much as --

BEERS: No, certainly not on this particular issue. Now, Rieser had real problems with anything that was going forward in Colombia to make sure there was adequate protection for human rights and democracy promotion. And that becomes very important in subsequent years. That was opening gambit of me presenting the fiscal year '98 budget almost immediately in January. Because when the money may be appropriated in October or September, it's different always from the amount of money that you ask for. And because you may want to make some different proposals on how you're going to spend that money, you have to go back to the Congress in an unofficial fashion and show them your budget and go through the budget again on how you want to spend it. So they got to look at it again. And that's why the Black Hawk issue came up and that's how we resolved it. So I started off okay in the Senate, but as I said, this balancing act between

Cleveland and Rieser was always an issue. She, Robin Cleveland, if you will recall, was the woman who was Paul Wolfowitz's deputy at the World Bank.

Q: Oh yeah.

BEERS: And had been the OMB (Office of Management and Budget) program director for the State Department and the Defense Department when the Bush Administration came in. So she moved from McConnell's committee in 2001 to OMB and from OMB to the World Bank when Wolfowitz went to the World Bank. She's now left there along with Wolfowitz. She was regarded as a particularly irritating member of Wolfowitz's staff by the World Bank staff. She was one of two or three people who were figured as Wolfowitz's minions who created turmoil within the organization. And that was to some degree the way that she was to deal with when she was McConnell's staff director on the subcommittee.

Q: I'm just trying to get a feel for this. Did Cleveland or others, was there a lot of calling up and saying what are you doing here or there, this type of thing?

BEERS: I wouldn't say it was a lot of calling up, but we were called occasionally by Cleveland or one of her assistants and asked to explain stuff. We made appearances before them, I don't want to say on a regular basis, but certainly several times a year.

Q: Correct me if I'm wrong, but what I get from you is that on the House side you had these staff members who were trying to cash out.

BEERS: Yeah.

Q: On the Senate side --

BEERS: Senate side it's not the case.

Q: Senate side this was a personality problem and maybe it's some disagreement, but this wasn't -- the real -- this was a matter of --

BEERS: This was a not unreasonable oversight situation.

Q: Uh-huh.

BEERS: They were -- they were in effect doing their job and if something appeared unclear to them then we were questioned about it.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: But I'd like to think at the end of the process that we had correct professional relations.

Q: Mm-hmm. Did you feel that you were well staffed in your bureau of --

BEERS: Oh, absolutely. The --

Q: -- people in other words, were they on top of things or, you know, because when you have a situation like this you want to make sure that there are no gaps or --

Q: They were absolutely on top of this. When I would go up we would go through a process of questions and answers and presentations by them to me. I would have a pretty good sense after the first few rounds of what was going to be their line of questioning. The country team members in Colombia and the Narcotics Affairs section were both very competent managers of the program there. They kept me fully informed about things that I needed to know that were going on there. The guy who ran the air wing in Florida also kept me informed. We had a central air wing in Florida and then the aircraft were dispatched to the places that we flew them out of and maintained down there. But we had this central management system also. This was the first time that I had dealt that extensively with Hastert and members.

Q: Well, it does show -- I mean there is a sort of hidden power there. I know for example Senator Dole had somebody on his staff who was of Yugoslav origin who took Kosovo to heart, and very early on, even before Kosovo blew up, he was paying -- almost, you know, yearly visits to Kosovo.

BEERS: Mm-hmm.

Q: You know, you get these situations and Senator Helms had --

BEERS: Roger Noriega.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: And Dani Pletka.

Q: Yeah. That's a -- I was interviewing yesterday David Greenlee talking about Noriega and how he really gave a very rough time when he was on Senator Helms' staff, when Noriega was. But later when he was assistant secretary for WHA gave great support. I mean, where you are is where you sit, right?

BEERS: Yeah, no. Roger was very mercurial with me, as I said, since I didn't have to deal with SFRC (Senate Foreign Relations Committee) that much, I didn't have to deal with him.

Okay, so we're going to move forward on Plan Colombia.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So now we're in '98. In the fall, Hastert and his staff decide that they have been gathering enough information from people within the government about programs in the narcotics area that have not been funded that they are going to do an emergency supplemental for the drug issue. And this is still in the time of the omnibus continuing resolutions, or omnibus appropriations, whichever they are. I don't remember how much money the overall figure was. I think it was more than 500 million and less than a billion -- of which 232 million was to be appropriated to the State Department for particular programs that were related to drug traffic -- drug trafficking. So some money for Colombia, for Peru, for Bolivia, and money to buy some general aviation equipment. And again, it was because I had made that connection that they were willing to make this appropriation -- to give me additional resources. The State Department didn't suppress the anti-drug finances, but it wasn't the major program that the department was interested in by any stretch of the imagination. And I hadn't been through the budget process within the State Department yet. I was in the process of the beginning of the building of the fiscal year '99 budget. There was this large chunk of money that showed up and the State Department didn't fight it because it was over and above. It didn't get involved in the cap issue because it was labeled as an emergency supplemental. And so it was in essence free money as far as the State Department was concerned. It didn't require them to give up something in order to get it. So that then became another marker on the what are we going to do about Colombia issue. Then Pastrana was elected president. He decides that he wants to negotiate with the FARC. He creates a demilitarized zone called a despeje in South Central Colombia and starts down that path. The Republicans in Congress in the House were absolutely opposed to what Pastrana was doing with respect to the FARC. They regarded the FARC as a real enemy organization and used our Clinton support for Pastrana as a stick to beat us on about Colombia. They were looking to find ways to beat on the administration for Colombia policy, particularly because there had been some missionaries who the FARC had killed --

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: -- a number of years before.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Who were still unaccounted for. Anyway, that takes us into the spring of 1999. So Pete Romero was the assistant secretary. He got a lame duck appointment because he still couldn't get confirmed.

Q: What was his problem?

BEERS: He had been the office director who had signed the memorandum from State to Justice about paroling a former FMLN (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front)) person named Andrade into the United States. Andrade was implicated in the Zona Rosa massacre. One of the Marines that was killed in the Zona Rosa massacre --

Q: This is at a --

BEERS: At a bar -- at a bar in Downtown San Salvador -- was from Senator Shelby's state.

Q: Shelby's Alabama.

BEERS: Yeah. Shelby wanted somebody to be held responsible for this, had an IG (inspector general) investigation. There was a legal counselor in the embassy in Salvador who seemed to have signed the cable and he had retired. There was Chichester. He couldn't be implicated. He claimed that he was basically getting Andrade in because Andrade was a CIA agent and the CIA wanted the parole in the United States to protect him. Romero took Chichester's cable asking for parole and forwarded with recommendation to approve to the Justice Department. So he was the only person out of the chain of command before it went to the Justice Department. They said, hey, look, we just got this from the State Department and they said approve it, so we approved it. Romero was the only person who they could determine had taken an action that would allow them to in fact hold him responsible. So Shelby prevented him from being confirmed. The IG report must have been completed after he had been confirmed as ambassador to Ecuador. But he never got confirmed again. So Romero and I now are both trying to convince Secretary Albright that we need to pay a lot more attention to Colombia. And then I get curiously invited by Hastert to a meeting of the House Republican caucus on the 30th of June, 1999, along with Charlie Wilhelm, the commander of U.S. Southern Command, a four-star Marine general. And we are there to brief on what we're doing on drugs and what the future of the base in Panama is. At the same time, Charlie and I are also invited to a rump meeting by Sandy Berger that afternoon. So we go in, we do our briefing. Wilhelm and I are sitting at the end of a long table and to my immediate left is Porter Goss who I have come in contact with because he's a supporter of the counternarcotics effort. And he's the head of HPSCI, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. And Porter hands me a piece of paper which he says this is what we're considering doing for another emergency supplemental this time around. And there are programs and numbers on it, and it's another \$750 million emergency supplemental that they are thinking about doing. So I leave the meeting realizing that I had just been handing a document that is going to create some serious political problems as well as policy problems within the Clinton Administration. Then I'm going to a meeting that Berger has called, and a very unusual meeting. Berger is the National Security Advisor. He wants to talk ostensibly about the transition from U.S. ability to use the airbase in the Panama Canal Zone for all kinds of things, but drug aircraft -- drug intelligence aircraft is one of them. That's the ostensible purpose of the meeting. In fact, the meeting is actually to talk about drug policy in Latin America. But it's done in such a way that Berger wants to do it offline so that he doesn't have to invite the normal people who would come to such a meeting. But I know who's coming to the meeting because the guy who's working the meeting for him, Fred Rosa, is a friend of mine who I worked with when I was on the NSC, Coast Guard officer. And he's the person who's staffing it for Dick Clarke. So I know who's coming to the meeting. And I know that Barry McCaffrey's coming to the meeting and I know that Barry McCaffrey is

always looking for things to do, shall we say, programs to promote. So I go and see Barry immediately before the meeting and explain to him what is happening. And he immediately gets that this administration is going to have to one up this particular process in advance of this particular process happening for political reasons. So he and I go into the meeting and the meeting does a little bit on Panama and then we turn to the main subject of the meeting. And I raise this and Berger is sort of uh-oh, and Barry being himself -- I don't want to say he pounced on the table, but he makes very forceful presentations about why we need to take action about this. We leave the meeting basically with Berger saying, "OK, you all go and develop our budget for this."

Well, I'd been working on this budget now for over a year. I actually have this budget and I can do it in whatever bite size you want. It can be a 500 million dollar budget -- that would be double what we were getting -- it can be a billion dollar budget, or it can be a two billion dollar budget. And so we take the responsibility for developing the budget, but we have to also do something about agency programs for other agencies. And we start this planning process and OMB learns about it. And OMB says, "Wait a minute. There is no room in the budget for this."

"Well, we were thinking of an emergency supplement."

"Well, we're not prepared to engage in an emergency supplemental."

So OMB talks to Berger and Berger has to back out of pushing for this too strongly. And Secretary Albright is concerned that if this is an administration proposal, which the Congress will accept, then because we're putting it on the table they will say to us, well, we'll prepare to accept that proposal but therefore we won't accept some other proposal when that proposal may be something that Secretary Albright would prefer to have funded than the drug proposal. So she's a little reticent about putting something on the table in the run-up to the final appropriations that are going to occur again at the end of the fiscal year. However, we have also talked to the Colombians. We were authorized to talk to the Colombians by Berger before he was told to slow down. And so they know that we're thinking about this. They had a very good ambassador, Luis Alberto Moreno, who is now the Head of the Inter-American Development Bank. He had managed to do for Colombia almost what Prince Bandar has done for Saudi Arabia when he was the ambassador, in terms of knowing which congressmen and senators to get to in order to get things. So he is already working the Hill on this issue. And meanwhile, we knew we would have to do this in a way in which it was done in conjunction with the Government of Colombia. This can't just be the United States saying you got to do this. So that's why we talked to the Government of Colombia. So they start a planning process on how to do this. Anyway, so we're now in a stand down mode with every expectation that the Republicans are going to put a supplemental budget on the table. Anyway, they don't. And I still don't know why they didn't do that, but they didn't. We got through the process and there was a final appropriation for the State Department for fiscal year 2000. Then in December of 1999, before the 2001 budget is presented to the Congress, and it's in the final stages of negotiation, word comes from OMB: we are now to prepare an

emergency supplemental for counternarcotics for Colombia and Latin America. It will be 900 and whatever million dollars, but it will not round to a billion.

Q: No.

BEERS: So it has to be 949.9 million dollars or less, and that it will include Black Hawk helicopters for the military and the number -- I don't remember the number -- but it was probably 12. Now, Senator Dodd had gone to Colombia. Senator Dodd, an alumnus of the Peace Corps.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Senator Dodd of the ranking minority member of the Latin American Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Senator Dodd of Connecticut, the home of Sikorsky.

Q: Who makes the Black Hawk.

BEERS: Yes. They make the Black Hawk.

Q: OK, Senator Dodd.

BEERS: Senator Dodd went to see the president. Shortly after Dodd's visit to the president, in which he advocated spending money on Colombia, this order came down. Now, the Colombian Army wanted Black Hawk helicopters. The Colombian Army already had Black Hawk helicopters. To give the Colombian Army Black Hawk helicopters was not going to be the same thing as giving the Colombian Police Black Hawk helicopters. The Army already had the infrastructure to actually absorb Black Hawk helicopters, whereas the police didn't. I say all these things because it has been alleged that this was a deal that Dodd cut with the president to get the Black Hawk helicopters. I'd never found any evidence of that. And I have asked people who've been involved in the process. So I am not in a position to say that that was what the deal was. I can't say that that wasn't the deal, but I've never found anybody who has said it was. And I was not somebody that they wouldn't trust with that information. I think that I might have found that information out if in fact that had been the deal because I would have been regarded as loyal and not prepared to divulge that piece of information. But I'd have to tell that part of the story because it's something that's part of the historical record as an allegation by folks. And that's my side of that particular story. So we can have basically 30 days to prepare a final budget that would fund Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Venezuela with modest amounts for Venezuela and Ecuador, but over 50% for Colombia. It ended up being about 60 to 70% for military and police and about 30% for alternative development. Some of the enforcement money, however, was money to make the judicial institution more able to deal with human rights cases or more willing to deal with human rights cases. So some of the institution building was actually support for democracy and Colombia, but it would have been labeled as law enforcement money. And we went forward with the emergency supplemental. It was a two-year program but

most of the appropriation was in the first year. The second year was basically sustainment money for the acquisitions in the first year, which were principally the Black Hawk helicopters. There were there other aircraft and other pieces of equipment being purchased. The presentation was in January. It was emergency which got us outside of the caps and the appropriation then didn't occur until July. And so the actual expenditure of money didn't begin until late 2000, early 2001 in terms of the actual ability to produce items or spend money in association with this program.

Q: Well, looking at this it sounds like in a way that at a certain point there was a little bit of mine is bigger than yours type thing between the Republicans and Democrats on -- or that's the thinking in budget. But you know, looking at it from your perspective, did a two-fold, three-fold increase need more bang for a buck? Or did you see -- in fact was this more money going to make much of a difference?

BEERS: We thought it would and there were some results after the program really got started that suggested that in fact it made some difference. But then the program ended got modified in ways that thwarted the overall concept of trying to squeeze the growers with enforcement and offer them some other form of livelihood, agricultural, so that they would do in Colombia what the Bolivian peasants had done in the Chapare region of Bolivia. Now, there are important differences between the two. In the Chapare the alternative development basically ran for 10 years before there was any serious enforcement. So that the economic culture of the Chapare region went from being 70% illegal to being 30% illegal. And the farmers saw that they could grow crops and saw that they could get them to market. What we were trying to do is much more difficult, which is make that transition all at once and get it to market in a security environment which was entirely different from the security environment in --

Q: Yeah, in Bolivia there really wasn't much of a --

BEERS: No. The ultimate problem in Bolivia became the caballeros who got organized by the current president of Bolivia, Evo Morales.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Anyway. So there was no question that this was going to be a hard thing to do. In the end the Colombian military never really undertook the security mission that they had accepted when they were offered this military hardware, which could only be used in those areas. They never actually ran the kinds of operations down there that would have produced a better security environment. Secondly, AID, because there wasn't a sufficient security environment, was reluctant to invest too much down there. They decided that they would totally reorient their program. Instead of trying to teach people to grow pineapples in the Putumayo province, we'll create magnets for them to move to out of Putumayo so that as the crop is being suppressed they will have some alternative livelihood that they could move to. This is in a Colombia in which the economy's depressed. You're asking people, instead of growing crops, you're asking them to move somewhere else on the hope that that will be a better place for them to live. There was

also an interdiction program to be associated with that. This is to try to (1) prevent the flow of the chemicals that were needed to refine the products from getting to the refining places, and (2) to prevent the movement of coca paste from the first refinement done by the campesinos to the laboratories that did the final refinement. We didn't get that one right. That was the least important of the three things, but the biggest disappointment was we didn't get the kind of support from the Colombian Military that we had hoped for.

Q: Did the Colombian President play a role in that do you think or was this --

BEERS: Yes. And the role that he played was one of inaction. Pastrana irritated the military from the beginning by declaring the despeje, the demilitarized zone in order to try and negotiate with the FARC. The military didn't ever want to do that. And so he had this tense or semi-tense relationship with Colombian Military. So he was not in much of a position to order them to do anything and he was not inclined to order them to do anything. Pastrana was not a particularly good manager. The current president, Uribe, is much better. His objective is to do the needful on the drug side but basically to force the FARC into surrender or to pound them into submission. And so he is doing the necessary security stuff. And government services are getting to the countryside far better than they ever did before. And ironically, he's doing more to put paramilitaries in jail, yet he's being blamed for being favorably disposed toward the paramilitaries because there's always been an allegation that he has that connection because his father was killed by the FARC. Anyway, it's a better situation now. However, because those other things weren't done at the beginning and the cultivation has moved or spread like cancer around the rest of the country. So while it's not growing anymore -- that is the amount of cultivation isn't growing significantly anymore as it was during the latter part of the '90s -- its early reductions have basically been lost. It's gotten back up to somewhere between a high point and the more recent low point. And equally troubling, the cultivation in Peru and Bolivia has gone up.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: So if the real objective is to strengthen governments to allow them to do a better job, I think that's happened. But that doesn't mean you're going to have instant results. And you're always going to face the issue of a crop that pays better than any legal crop.

Q: Well, there was recently an article in the paper about Colombia about -- well, you might explain what it was.

BEERS: Which one?

Q: About the Colombian militaries going underground and rooting out the crops in the spring.

BEERS: Right.

Q: That was -- at the time you were dealing with, was that a debate or --

BEERS: There was not a serious debate. It was an option. The view was that if we were to make a major crack on the cultivation we had to do it in some mass form and spraying was that. In the long run the manual eradication is probably a better way to go. But it's very labor intensive because if you're going into a contested area then you have to have security. And even in the areas where there was not an active guerilla movement, the people who grew it were still resentful of their crops being cut down. And if they were armed they might just as easily shoot at the people who were doing the cutting or the troops that were guarding them as an organized insurgent force or paramilitary force might do. So it was never regarded as, oh, we just send these day laborers out and let them cut stuff down. You always have to have security. But in Colombia the level of security needed is even greater. So it's less efficient. But in the end it's probably more politically palatable for a variety of reasons, most importantly of which is you're not cutting down the food crop. You're not spraying food crop as well. And the campesinos began trying to camouflage by intercropping where they would grow legitimate crop between the rows of coca. There was some spillage, but the people who flew the crop dusters by and large were so professional that they hit the fields they were flying over. And if there was any overlap it was minimal.

Q: Was there any problem, you know, all of us are thinking about Agent Orange. Was there any problem with -- assuming you were doing spraying at the time.

BEERS: We were doing spraying. We were using the chemical Roundup. We were diluting it to the level that is called for. Roundup has been tested by a lot of different organizations. And if you spray it with the appropriate dilution, the testing suggests that crops can come back. You can replant within 48 hours. And the seepage into ground water is not harmful. I had to do a "60 Minutes" piece in which I had to defend Roundup in the way we were using it in Colombia because of the allegations of kids being sprayed and made sick and things like that. And the government had a program to compensate anybody who could demonstrate that they had been harmed. No one ever got any compensation. I can't say that it was because the government investigated every case. But we were in areas in which the health for children was so bad that they were going to be showing all kinds of different ailments. So taking them in and saying they had been sprayed didn't necessarily mean that they had been sprayed. But if it led to some treatment why wouldn't campesino go in and say that that had happened. And there was no evidence of increased sickness in areas that were approximate to spraying, as opposed to areas that weren't. They were all sick.

Q: Yeah. This is all part of your organization.

BEERS: This is all part of the organization. I also stood in a field and got sprayed. Most of the people who worked in the embassy on the narcotics all did this as a demonstration. Now, we wore glasses. That was the protection that we took, so that it didn't get in our eyes.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: But it got in our skin.

Q: Mm-hmm. And they wheeled you in on a chair and you're able to talk just barely, but -

BEERS: Exactly. Exactly. I'm prepared to say that that spray, it's like a very light mist.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: Shouldn't be harmful. But I'm also very cognizant of the fact that if you're already in poor health and you got sprayed, I can't say that something might not have happened as a result of that.

Q: Yeah. Well, did you feel that you were damned if you do, damned if you don't in this particular job? Because on one side the critics are saying whatever you do is hurting -- I mean basically you got your very wealthy people, but then you've got the poor campesinos who are trying to make a modest living. And anything you do is going to screw up that modest living. But on the other hand, you've got people saying you're not doing enough to stop cocaine from coming in. And so in a way it's a no win situation for you.

BEERS: Yes. That's why I think there's no single answer to how you might successfully deal with this. I think that if you don't have some form of alternative development or alternative livelihood programs to give the people who are doing the cultivation an opportunity to do something that's legal and survive and perhaps prosper, then it makes it very hard to have any chance of getting them to stop growing whatever it is that they're growing in the drug area. The problem with coca, as opposed to poppy, is that coca takes a lot longer for the bush to be mature enough to be able to harvest it. Whereas poppy, being an annual crop, you can kill a poppy field and the farmer can plant the field the next day depending on the climate. And if you don't come back and kill the next field it's, you know. So if you don't have that it's not going to happen. The price paid for any of the drug crops so exceeds the price paid for any legitimate crop. If there's not some way to say that you will be sanctioned if you grow there's no incentive, other than you may want to have a plot of your own food in the growing area so that you don't have to wait until you get your product to market in order to be able to eat. There's no incentive to get out of the business. So you've got to figure out how to put those together and you have to do more than just go after the people who grow it. You also have to find the middleman or reduce the supplies that the middlemen get. So when I say all that, combined with the strong belief that I have in terms of supporting democracy and building institutions that make democracies work. I thought, you know, we had a good at least strategic rationale for what we were trying to do. Implementation often turns out to be the problem.

Q: How did you find the effort to go after the drug lords and the middlemen?

BEERS: We didn't do that. DEA was the principal agent of that or in some cases the military, in terms of interdicting boats and planes. We provided some money that was used to support the government institutions that DEA worked with because DEA didn't have assistance money. But they were the ones who tried to break up the drug trafficking rings in association with the police. And quite honestly, they had a lot of difficulty in that area as well because of corruption. Traffickers could bring a lot of money to bear on a particular point in the chain that would allow them in effect to get through the fence the DEA was trying to create to deal with them. In Colombia there was a lot of success in bringing down the Medellin and Cali cartels, but there were replacements because the money's so lucrative.

Q: Who was our ambassador when we were doing this in Colombia?

BEERS: Curt Kamman was the ambassador when we were doing Plan Colombia and then he was replaced by Anne Patterson. That was near the end of my tenure.

Q: Okay, today is October the 18th, 2007.

BEERS: One issue which episodically occurred during my career is U.S. relations with Cuba over the drug issue. At the end of the Clinton Administration the Coast Guard had responsibility for trying to intercept boats coming from South America to the United States mainland or to Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico was in effect being in the United States because you didn't have to go through customs once you got ashore in Puerto Rico. Blocking boats to the Bahamas was also a goal. The Coast Guard wanted to find a way to cooperate with the Government of Cuba, which we had some working relationship with. But it wasn't as effective as the Coast Guard thought it might be if they were able to put a liaison officer in the U.S. interest section in Cuba. So the Coast Guard came to me and asked whether or not we in State would be prepared to go to the Congress with the Coast Guard to indicate that we wanted to put a DEA officer there. Cuba was always a neuralgic issue. We had a Republican Congress at this time. Cuba is of particular interest to Republicans, particularly because of the Cuban vote in Florida as an essentially Republican bastion, as we saw in the 2000 election and in other cases. So the Commandant of the Coast Guard and I, after receiving interagency approval to move forward in this, went up and paid various visits to the powers that be. Among them were then Congressman Menendez from New Jersey, a Cuban American, who was none too pleased by this, but wasn't going to object to it. Then we were summoned, in effect, by Congressman Gilman and Congressman Burton who really raked us over the coals. Interestingly, they blamed it entirely upon the State Department even though the Coast Guard was there. It represented itself as the interested party for which the State Department and I were serving as their conduit. It is a not well known fact that a large portion of the campaign contributions for Congressman Burton come from the Cuban American community in South Florida.

Q: And Burton's from California.

BEERS: Burton's from Indiana.

Q: Indiana, I mean, yeah.

BEERS: That's the other Burton. The brothers. Phil Burton from San Francisco. John is from Indiana, and yet he has a lot of friends in South Florida. Gilman's connection, I think, is just the basic Republican connection. Burton had been interested in the drug issue for some time as one of the areas of investigation as he was the chair of the government reform in the House then. Anyway, so they just really accused me of undermining our whole Cuba policy and being instrumental in trying to keep Castro in power. I then went over to the Senate side and paid a call on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff and there Roger Noriega was a principal opponent of this for Senator Helms. And he, again, raked me over the coals for even thinking about any change in our relationship with Cuba. This was with him a longer running battle because we never found a cause to label Cuba as an uncooperative country with respect to the drug issue. That's something that they thought we should do, but there was no clear intelligence evidence other than the report of a grand jury witness out of a grand jury that never indicted the Castros for drug trafficking. That is, in South Florida the U.S. attorney there had brought a grand jury together to consider whether or not to charge members of the Cuban Government with drug trafficking. They heard a number of witnesses and decided not to bring charges. Noriega and others said, well, that was the Clinton Administration basically quashing the indictment from Washington, something would have been very hard to do without a leak out of the U.S. attorney's office. In fact, that would have been the case. But grand jury witnesses after the grand jury closed are not enjoined to talk about what they said. So they're not under any legal restrictions about saying their side of the story. So one of the guys who went in and said, you know, I've got all this information about what they've done, went public about it. And that became the stick with which Republicans beat the Clinton Administration for being a) soft on drugs and b) soft on Castro. So with respect to Noriega, I was walking into the lion's den and I knew it long before I actually went up there.

Q: Again, was there this thing -- drugs were not really the issue because if drugs were the issue then you'd try to cooperate.

BEERS: Right. No. The issue was clearly Cuba. Any toe in the water that suggested something more than before with respect to improving relations with Cuba was regarded as an anathema. During the Clinton Administration there was that point before the shoot down of the Brothers to the Rescue where the Clinton Administration was considering some form of improvement in relations with Cuba. Brothers to the Rescue shoot down obviously undermined that completely and led to the Helms-Burton Act. President Clinton decided to sign because he felt the outrage of shooting down these Cuban Americans by the Cuban Air Force was just so unacceptable an action that he had no choice.

There's certainly a lot of pressure on U.S. policy by the Cuban American community. A degree of pressure that has caused some actions on the part of Republicans in particular to look contradictory. There was a Cuban, Orlando Bosch, who had been suspected (I

don't know if he was actually indicted) for the blowing up of the Cuban airliner that the Cuban fencing team was on that flew out of Venezuela at some time in the '80s. In any case, he had also fired a rocket at a Polish freighter in Miami Harbor and had been indicted and had served jail for that. And had then violated his parole and left the United States. He was picked up either in Venezuela or Mexico, I think it was Venezuela, pre-Chavez. He was held by the Venezuelan Government and then released and then snuck back into the United States. So he had voluntarily entered the United States in an illegal fashion, but he had also left the United States while he was in a parole status. And he was put in jail. And the question then became what do we do with him. He served his time for the parole violation, and he was due for release. And because he was a felon, the normal notion, because he had not required U.S. citizenship, was that he would be deported. But we couldn't find anybody who would take him and we were unprepared to give him back to the Cubans. How hard we tried to find somebody to take him was another question. I didn't have anything to do with that, but I was doing terrorism at the time. So our government released him into the general population because we couldn't find any place to send him and we couldn't send him back to Cuba. This was during the first Bush Administration. A clear contradiction of the way that the government otherwise dealt with terrorists and because his association with the bombing of the Cuban airliner and his not significant, but still terrorist, act of shooting a rocket at a Polish freighter put him in the category of being a terrorist. And it was a terrorist conviction that he was convicted for. The Republican agricultural community has wanted for some time to have the opportunity to sell food in Cuba. But this administration has quashed any effort by what would have been a majority in the Congress, combining Democrats and agricultural based Republicans, to in fact carry that by otherwise loyal conservative Republicans in the center of the conservative movement. But that is all to insure that the Cuban American community remains decidedly Republican.

Q: OK. Let's see. Is there anything else we should talk about? You were dealing with terrorism from when to when now?

BEERS: From '88 to '92, some episodic involvement from the beginning of the Clinton Administration until I became Senior Director for Intelligence Programs in '95. Then in that office I also had responsibility for some of the terrorist activities associated with the intelligence community until I left there in January of '98 and went to the State Department. Then when I came back to the NSC in August -- September of 2002, I was the Senior Director for Combating Terrorism until I left government in March of 2003.

Q: OK.

BEERS: I was going to finish up where we left off which was to do the transition bit on Plan Colombia to the next administration. When we came in after the 2000 election Colin Powell had been designated as the Secretary of State. He and Rich Armitage held a series of briefings on various subjects that they were going to be responsible for. And one of them was terrorism. And while some of the meetings were just within State, not all of them were. The one on terrorism and the one on narcotics both involved the interagency community of interest. Some political appointees from the Clinton Administration were

still there, it being transition period and some of them stayed on until the 20th of January. So with respect to the drug issue, there was not an obvious acceptance of what the Clinton Administration had done in organizing Plan Colombia. I think that some of it may have been what's been characterized as the ABC, Anything But Clinton, approach of the incoming Bush Administration. Some of it may have had to do with whether or not any counternarcotics program should be automatically acceptable because of a difficulty in dealing with the drug issue under almost any circumstances. And some of it may simply have been unfamiliarity. We had a meeting at the State Department. We went over the entire program with a vigorous question and answer session with Powell and Armitage. We were looking to persuade them about a budget request for the fiscal year 2002 budget that was prepared under the Clinton Administration. This would have been in effect the second year of the money for Plan Colombia. And we were trying to persuade them to simply take that budget request and roll it over. The meeting, I think, ended up -- although it wasn't apparent at the time -- being what persuaded them, or at least what in part persuaded them, to continue to support the program. There was a second meeting organized at the White House to brief Condi Rice on the program. My sense from her was a great deal more skepticism on proceeding with this program, but she didn't block it. Let me put it that way. And I may be over characterizing what was more the sensing in which she was asking questions rather than what her actual feelings were.

Q: What would have been sort of the opposition to this? Is it just money or was it --

BEERS: It was a 750 million dollar program. That was the base line assistance for Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia for tidbits for Ecuador and even then still Venezuela.

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: The second reason was it was a Clinton Administration program. Third reason was that I had experienced an extraordinary level of criticism from Congressman Gilman and Congressman Burton and several other Republicans in the House on the Clinton Administration's drug policy toward Latin America. And their complaint, I think, was that they didn't like the distribution of money. They had been very strong supporters of the Colombian National Police and they basically wanted to give the Colombian National Police everything that they asked for. So at various steps along the way they had tried to impose their priorities on what the State Department was doing in terms of assistance. And they were thwarted by their inability to actually get orders issued by the Congress that overrode what we were trying to do, mainly because I and others were able to convince Hastert, who had become the speaker, not to side with them.

Q: The Colombia National Police, just again, we had pretty good fix on where they were.

BEERS: Yeah.

Q: They were --

BEERS: They were as an organization the most committed institution within Colombia in terms of trying to deal with drug trafficking. And the head of the police, whose name was Serrano, was regarded as somewhat of a hero in Colombia, very popular in terms of approval ratings, but not popular enough when he chose to run for the presidency to get out of single-digit support. But he had basically cleaned up the Colombia National Police from being a corrupt organization to being one that the public felt was an institution actually doing what it was supposed to do in terms of law and order, instead of corruption and graft.

Q: Well, where was our conflict with the congressman about supporting the --

BEERS: We had put the Government of Colombia on the list of decertified countries because the President of Colombia had accepted drug money, we believe knowingly, when he had run for president. This is a guy named Samper. That didn't prevent us from giving money to the police because the limitations of certification didn't prevent counternarcotics assistance. And they in Congress were trying to get the administration to put more and more money into that. My predecessor, Bob Gelbard, while he certainly funded them, was basically in a spat with those members of Congress over their efforts to try to dictate policy to the administration. And while I didn't disagree with Bob on not wanting them to dictate policy, I think I was a little less abrasive in terms of my dealing with them, but it didn't reduce their ire toward the Clinton Administration. I think they felt that counternarcotics policy was a good way to score political points in terms of showing that there are clear differences between Republicans and Democrats.

Q: Sounds like there weren't clear differences.

BEERS: Well, the differences were really at the margin, you're absolutely right. Do we give 30 million dollars or 50 million dollars to the Colombia National Police? Thirty million dollars is certainly nothing to scoff at. The question is when you're running a global budget, how much do you skew your effort toward Colombia? Because there is no question that the INL budget had always been skewed, from the rise of the cocaine issue, toward dealing with cocaine in Colombia. The Mexican Government wouldn't take assistance so there was only jawboning primarily, with respect to the Mexican Government, although we did give them some surplus helicopters. This was all at the margins. And when we ran Plan Colombia it was skewed even more significantly. We basically put 750 million dollars on top of 250 or 300 million dollars for a global program.

Q: Well, how did this -- the Bush II Administration has come in and how did the Plan Colombia come out of --

BEERS: It was renamed the Andean Regional Initiative and 750 million of dollars is what we're still talking about on the annual basis. And it's most significantly dispersed to Colombia. Part of it is to help Colombia law enforcement and their military, and part of it goes for institution building in the justice system. Part of it goes for economic assistance to get the people who grow coca to grow something else. And it's probably two thirds for

enforcement and one third for economic development, and that has pretty much remained the same.

Q: You had the drug and you had the terrorism side. Was there any terrorist elements to the drug business in Latin America?

BEERS: Well, the use of the term terrorism in Latin America has always been a way of delegitimizing insurgent movements in Latin America who use tactics that involve civilian casualties.

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: And so when you talk to people in Salvador during the time in which the FMLN was opposed to the government, they were called terrorists by the Government of El Salvador. There is no question that some of their actions involved civilian casualties and some of them were specifically designed to terrorize civilians. So it's a term with somewhat different meanings. But the simple answer to your question is one, the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru, which was clearly involved in the drug trade in the Upper Huallaga Valley. And two, the FARC and the ELN in Colombia were also involved in the drug trade. I know the FARC was certainly put on the terrorism list by the United States. The requirement being that their attacks are against U.S. citizens in order to be on our terrorist list, as opposed to technically if we're not attacked we're not supposed to label organizations as terrorist, although that's not always true. I don't think the Uyghurs in China have ever attacked the United States, but we put them on the terrorist list here during the Bush Administration as part of the give and take with the People's Republic of China to make common cause against Islamic terrorism. Anyway, so the short answer is yes. That led the Bush Administration after 9/11 to decide that in fact the FARC was also engaged in global terrorism and therefore a legitimate target of the global war on terrorism. And thereby the United States chose to change the way in which we talked about support from Colombia from saying that, "Our policy in Colombia is counternarcotics. We are prepared to support the government in any counternarcotics activities. Should the insurgents be involved in drug trafficking then they in those areas in which they are involved in drug trafficking will be subject to U.S. support for the Colombian Government in dealing with them." So the extent that the FARC was in Southern Colombia, where much of the drug cultivation was occurring, and providing protection for and taxing campesinos for that protection against the Government of Colombia and its counternarcotics efforts, we funded the Colombia Military to go after the farm.

Q: Mm-hmm.

BEERS: And argued that the assistance that we gave should only be used in those ways or it would be difficult for us to continue the assistance because we were not authorized to fund pure counterterrorism activities. As a result of this change, in the area in the north, a province called Arauca on the border with Venezuela in an area of petroleum production. The FARC had basically been blowing up the pipeline on a regular basis. To

the point that the petroleum producers, which were both international and Colombian, were considering whether or not it was worthwhile to continue to try to pump oil. What's remarkable about that is it's not an issue of episodic blowing up of the pipeline -- they're perfectly prepared to deal with that -- it's if the pipeline gets blown up every three days, because it takes a couple of days to fix the hole in the pipeline. Then it was going to become a problem. The Colombian Government came to us and said, "We would like your assistance in funding the security forces in that province in order to protect that pipeline against the terrorists, against the FARC." And the administration decided to use the global war on terrorism to overcome the limitation that we had put on our counternarcotics efforts to say we would be prepared to support them against the FARC in general, as opposed to just on the drug side. And so began a program to give them more general support to go after the FARC. And that was a direct result of the terrorism nexus in the post-9/11 war. Even though it's a stretch to say that the FARC significantly operate outside of Colombia, the two charges were there had been a FARC effort to work with some groups in Brazil in terms of weapons sales that suggested a broader network. And the FARC had also had allegedly some conversations with people in Central America about acts of violence against the United States. Nothing ever happened from the latter. The former seems more to be arms flows coming into Colombia in return for drugs rather than, than the other way. But that was all given as justification for why we ought to walk over this line.

Q: Well, speaking on that sort of change of focus, did you notice when the Bush II Administration came in, it seems like the Republicans, particularly right wing, was seeing -- this was before 9/11 -- but was seeing much nastier world out there than maybe the skeptics in the State Department. Did you a change of all of a sudden people saying well, you've been neglecting this or doing that. In other words -- you see what I mean. Seeing more evil out there than maybe we had seen before?

BEERS: Well, I certainly think in the case of Colombia that that was a desire. And it was certainly a general notion in the post-9/11 world that we should think aggressively and press the edge of the envelope for ways to protect America or go after the Islamic terrorists centered around al Qaeda. So we were immediately involved from INL's perspective, for example, in Afghanistan. Because we were responsible for training police and judges, and that was part of the effort there. We also got involved in figuring out what we could do with respect to Pakistan to shore up the Musharraf Government after they committed themselves to do this. And we were expected to look around the world to other places where we might go even further in terms of beefing up institutional assistance to law enforcement agencies who might be engaged in counterterrorism activities. And the distinction between INL, for example, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security or the Counterterrorism Coordinator, was that they did the pure counterterrorism training and we did the broader law enforcement training. But they were clearly seen as related to each other, a stronger law enforcement capability, a specific counterterrorism capability for law enforcement agencies around the world. So yeah, I think we all saw that. But the pure neocon perspective clearly didn't catch hold in the State Department. Colin Powell was very conscious of his role as the chief diplomat in trying to find ways in which to use diplomacy rather than force of arms. Looking out at the world, he would

in staff meetings say things like, "If you're having trouble with the Pentagon and it's gone on for a bit and it's an important issue, I would please ask you to bring it to me. The Pentagon appears only to operate when Rumsfeld has actually made a decision. And people are reluctant to take too many issues to Rumsfeld in the Pentagon. And so it unfortunately requires me to take those issues to Rumsfeld in a number of cases if we are to have any chance of resolving them." This is not going to be viewed as a criticism of your inability to get things done with your interagency counterparts in the Defense Department, but a reflection of the dis-functionality of the bureaucracy within in the Pentagon because of the way Rumsfeld has chosen to run it.

Q: Well, were you feeling that sort of from the beginning on these -- because you were very much involved in interagency --

BEERS: Oh, absolutely. Rumsfeld was opposed to any serious counternarcotics effort, especially involving the military. I went over and briefed him at the beginning of the administration because the Clinton Pentagon had been a very cooperative agency in terms of dealing with Colombia and counternarcotics issues. Assistant Secretary Brian Sheridan was a constant compatriot in trying to deal with these issues and insure that the Pentagon was a full participant in the counternarcotics effort. Rumsfeld didn't want to have anything to do with that. The traditionalists in the Pentagon were never enamored of the issue. In this initial briefing I say to Rumsfeld, "Well, you know, when Cheney was secretary of defense he actually changed the policy in the Pentagon. And during the first Bush Administration the Pentagon began its era of cooperation with the State Department on the counternarcotics issue."

And Rumsfeld says, "Well (*clears throat*), that's because Cheney was running for president then and he knew he needed to be involved in that." It's true. He was. And I've never thought about that before. But if you will recall, there were indications after the Bush Administration was open that Cheney might run for president.

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: And then he had his series of heart attacks, or he had further heart attacks. And then it became something that he never undertook. And Rumsfeld obviously knew Cheney very well because he was Cheney's original mentor. But I found that an interesting and revealing conversation. I had presumed up until that point that Cheney would be an ally in this process. Cheney was never involved in this process, but it was an interesting eye opener for me in the early days of the second Bush Administration.

Q: Well, did you -- we are talking about, there seems to be almost a counter thing with, talking about Rumsfeld in that Rumsfeld in so many cases was trying to take over one might say State Department functions as time went on. But in this case he's shying away from something rather than aggrandizing with --

BEERS: Well, again, this is -- we're still in pre-9/11 --

Q: Yeah, yeah. I understand that.

BEERS: -- when these conversations take place. And his agenda then was transformation. Transformation to the electronic warfare scenario that he envisioned with high tech weaponry making our forces more capable and more agile didn't involve that kind of activity. And the larger military institutions weren't interested in those diversions either with the exception possibly of the Navy, which got a larger fuel dispensation to sail around in the Caribbean than they might otherwise have gotten. But the main Army, as opposed to Special Forces, was not so interested in that. Special Forces had their own brand of activities. And the secondary group of the foreign area specialists who did some of the military assistance training, that was not the main Army. The main Army drove tanks and armored personnel carriers and fired artillery. And that was not the kind of activity that was relevant to the counternarcotics mission. So if you're a senior officer, you see that counternarcotics mission as a diversion from what you think your main mission and activity set ought to be.

Q: Well, now was our involvement in Bosnia, did this concern you at all? Were there elements in that?

BEERS: In what way?

Q: Well, I'm just wondering. I don't know whether -- I mean the Government of Bosnia, you had a lot of very corrupt people involved in there and if your corrupt drugs is always a -- and criminal activities are --

BEERS: Yeah.

Q: I'm just wondering. But maybe that was so minor that it didn't really --

BEERS: Well, with respect to what we were doing in INL at the time, we were training police and we were trying to buck up judicial institutions. So we were trying to combat the corruption side of that. It was a challenge. There were no easy answers. What progress we may have made was always fragile. But we trained several thousand police in both Bosnia and Kosovo. And my guess is that there's still some residual training mission there in both of those countries, trying to create some stability and government ability to actually provide services to the population. So it was I think certainly seen by us as part of a legitimate effort to stabilize a failed or failing or fragile state from the ethnic violence that led to our intervention.

Q: All right. We're still talking about the transition between Clinton --

BEERS: Right. The last thing I want to say about that is I was told by Powell and Armitage that Gilman and Burton were after my head --

Q: Yeah.

BEERS: -- in the transition period. Powell and Armitage then said, "Don't worry about it." So that's in early spring, pre-9/11 of 2001 when I had basically been told we would like you to stay on with no time frame for the period in which you stay on, which was code for you don't have to start looking for another job. They did that with a number of the career officials. Obviously the political politicals were asked to go out. And there were a couple of career people who were asked to leave. Romero and Dobbins who were both recess appointments in Latin America and Europe were asked to leave. And the only other one really was Ned Walker who was the head of NEA. And that was because Powell wanted to bring Bill Burns back from the Soviet Union to take over that. Powell had known Burns on the NSC when Burns worked for him at the end of the Reagan Administration when Burns was a junior Foreign Service officer. So that's the only case where a career person whose status was full confirmation was asked to move on. Anyway, so I was asked to stay on. I was then subsequently told that they were out for my head, but that that was not an issue. And then about a year after that, in the spring of '02, Armitage said, "There's absolutely no hurry, but it would be easier if you looked for another job."

Q: OK. Well, we'll pick this up the next time. We're talking about the transition and you're told that although Burton Gilman, were after your head, you were told don't worry about it. But then -- so we want to come up to how 9/11 hit.

BEERS: OK, and that's an interesting story because I was actually with Secretary Powell in Peru having breakfast with the President of Peru. I mean I was not alone with him.

Q: Yeah. So we'll pick this up, because 9/11 everything changed.

BEERS: Right.

Q: Great. Shall we --

End of interview