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

AMBASSADOR PRUDENCE BUSHNELL

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: This interview with Prudence Bushnell is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Today is the 21st of July, 2005. You go by Pru?

BUSHNELL: Yes.

Q: All right. Let's start at the beginning. Could you tell when and where you were born?

BUSHNELL: I was born in Washington, DC in 1946.

Q: All right. Let's talk a bit first on your father's side, then your mother's side. What do you know about the family? What was the family name? Was it Bushnell?

BUSHNELL: Bushnell, yes.

Q: What do you know about the Bushnell's as back a ways, where they come from?

BUSHNELL: They were upright people of Scotch, Irish, Dutch and British decent. My grandmother was smart, though not particularly well educated, and very active in the temperance movement, WCTU, not to be confused with the women's movement.

Q: The WCTU, the Women's Christian Temperance Unit.

BUSHNELL: That's right. She had three children. Her husband died young.

Q: What was he doing?

BUSHNELL: This and that. He was a small-time entrepreneur with mainly failing businesses, including a bakery in the Catskills. He also ran a hack for awhile and worked on the railroad. He died at the age of 40.

Q: Do you know if either of your grandparents went to college or not?

BUSHNELL: Neither of them did. Gram got an eighth-grade education. I'm not sure what kind of education my grandfather got.

Q: How about your father?

BUSHNELL: He got a college education. My grandmother made sure of that. My father was the youngest of three, and there was a twelve-year difference between him and the next sibling. So, he was the apple of her eye, a darling.

Q: She sounds like a pretty determined lady.

BUSHNELL: Oh yes, she was. My father, Gerry Bushnell, graduated from high school in his home town, Oneonta, New York, and then went to Hartwick College where his mother worked as the housemother of a sorority. Few jobs were available during the Depression, so he continued his education at Syracuse University and got a Masters in Education and then a Masters in Public Administration. It was there that he met my mother, Bernice Duflo – who went by the name of Dufie all her adult life.

My mother's father was a first-generation American. His father, a peasant farmer came from Alsace Lorraine, was enticed to northern New York State with tales of fertile land. What he found was mainly sand. Nonetheless, he married and, with his hard working wife, supported eight healthy children on subsistence land where the cash crop was maple syrup. That was it. One of those children was my grandfather whose first ambition was to get the heck away from the farm. He only had about four years of education but worked hard, like his father, and did well for himself in the village of Lowville, New York.

I used to tell the story of his wife, my maternal grandmother, to high school girls and women I would meet in rural Kenya and Guatemala as I did the circuit promoting girls' education. I would relate that "my grandmother had to leave school to work when she was 11 years old, because her father died and her mother had absolutely no means of putting bread on the table any other way. She met my grandfather and worked with him to fulfill a dream of owning their own shoe store. From the money they made in the shoe store, they sent their only child, my mother, to Syracuse University. There she met my father. He eventually joined the Foreign Service, and she raised four children in various parts of world. Today, my grandmother's granddaughter is a United States Ambassador." At this point I would get great applause from my female audience. "Stay in school," I'd admonish, "or help your girl child finish school – and someday you (or she) may be the ambassador of your country." That would draw more applause. Then when I would introduce my husband, who usually traveled in country with me, as the person who helps me, there'd be a standing ovation. For him, not for me. That's OK. It was a wonderfully American story that women and girls in faraway places could directly relate to.

Q: What was your grandmother doing?

BUSHNELL: One job was separating laundry that came from farmers who neither bathed

nor changed their clothes very often. They could go through most of a season before sending their clothes to be laundered. She hated that job.

Q: There's an old story about farmers would be sewn into their union suits during the winter.

BUSHNELL: Right. Years later she talked about how that was the worst job she'd ever had. She also worked at a Five and Dime store -- loved doing that. My grandfather served as Deputy Sheriff, and worked on cars before they had enough money to buy the shoe store.

Q: For people who read this, you mentioned a Five and Dime store. That was equivalent to a Woolworth's or a Kreskies?

BUSHNELL: Exactly. Or the Dollar Store today.

Q: Yeah. I use to go to a Five and Dime store with nickels and dimes and get things.

BUSHNELL: Right, because literally it was five and dime.

Q: Your mother and father met. Your father had gotten these degrees and all, so what happened?

BUSHNELL: With a degree in public administration from Maxwell School, he found work in the Albany, the New York State capitol and then was persuaded by members of the group he hung out with, other young men, to come to Washington, D.C -- this was 1941. Now, imagine Washington in 1941. It was a boon town. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had been in for a number of years, and the federal government was "the" place to be. Degrees in public administration were brand new.

Q: Well, the New Deal in essence was winding down, but we were gearing up for the war.

BUSHNELL: This was a time when public service was enormously respected.

Q: Oh, absolutely.

BUSHNELL: And, Washington is where people went. That's where the jobs were; and that's where the future was.

Q: This also was a time when the government girl was quite an icon, because Washington had so many young women for the first time and there were jobs opening up. Mainly, you might say the clerical level, but often quite a bit of responsibility. The bureaucracy was growing tremendously.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. Mother also got a job in the federal government. She was a secretary and then was the supervisor of a secretarial pool at OSS (Office of Strategic

Services), the fore-runner of the CIA, during World War II.

Q: Yeah. Well, what did your father do?

BUSHNELL: First, he worked in price administration before being drafted into the Army as so many men his age were. I'm not sure what he did he did in the military. I know he went to Officers' Candidate School and never got overseas, but I don't know much about that period of his life. He was not very keen on the army.

Q: Do you have brothers, sisters?

BUSHNELL: I have one older sister and two younger brothers.

Q: So, your family, would you consider yourself sort of a Washingtonian? Was this where you grew up?

BUSHNELL: No. The story continues. The same group who persuaded my father to come to Washington, convinced him to take a job as a civilian with the occupation forces in Germany, in1948. So, off he went to work monetary policy.

Q: This is '48, was really the turnaround year. This is when they had the currency reform, and we established a Western Deutschmark to replace the old, inflationary Deutschmark. It was the blow that led to the partition of Berlin..

BUSHNELL: Right. Dad went over first and left Mom to sell the house and bring his mother (he always felt he owed his mother and could care less that Mom and she never got along) and the two girls – one, three years old, the other (me), eighteen months old. Because Gram refused to fly, we went over on a troop carrier. Mom would tell the story of the storms they encountered and of clutching one child tightly as she used her leg to keep the crib with the other from careening across the stateroom. In the overhead bunk, Gram remained sea sick for most of the trip. It was a real adventure.

Q: Oh yes. Where did they settle in Germany?

BUSHNELL: Wherever the High Commission and, later, the embassy was located: Frankfurt, Berlin, and then back to Frankfurt and ultimately, Bonn.

Q: Do you recall Germany?

BUSHNELL: Those were my first childhood memories. I was seven years old we left (1954). I remember orphans, particularly girls with big bows in their hair; men with missing limbs; street cars; bombed-out buildings; and the smell of cement. A few years ago, I had a conversation with a German man about my age. His memories of that time were just the same. Lots of orphans; lots of people doing menial work; lots of rubble and lots of rebuilding.

Q: Do you recall school there? What was school like?

BUSHNELL: Yes. I recall first and second grade especially. We lived in a newly constructed housing project in Bad Godesberg and attended a brand new school situated on the Rhine River. It was wonderful to look out the window at the river. We could walk home and lived in a very sheltered environment. I was in my groove, I was in control. It was one of the most pleasant times of my childhood; I was just a happy kid.

Q: A little about the family. Did your mother and father have politics? Was this something that you absorbed or not?

BUSHNELL: Very strong politics. They were very strong Democrats, although their parents had been equally strong Republicans. Later, Mom would talk about the time Senator Joseph McCarthy's henchmen came to Germany and put my father in their sights.

Q: Schine and Cohn came around. This is something anybody in that era will never forget the impact of these two 20 year old kids running around, basically pulling out books to burn.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. Digging up dirt. And Dad had in his youth, in the '30s, belonged to a college organization that had, in the eyes of the McCarthy people, questionable ties. Mom and Dad kept the file of the questions he was asked and the written statements he made. It was a very scary period that affected my parents' friends and almost got my father kicked out of a job.

I also remember conversations my parents had about the Holocaust, specifically comments like, "I can't believe nobody knew this was going on." There was a very clear sense of outrage..

O: Yeah. It was a period in Germany during which, any male you talked to said he had fought on the Eastern front.

BUSHNELL: My mother instilled in her children a strong sense of values about other people. Europe during the fifties was filled with refugees, some working as domestic staff. She would say to us, "Don't think that because these people are working for us that they are not respectable and intelligent people." I became innately aware of the impact of war and how people had to struggle to survive.

Q: Was religion part of your up-bringing?

BUSHNELL: Very much so. One grandmother, the Daughter of the American Revolution and WCTU member was a staunch Methodist and my mother was raised a Catholic.

Q: Oh my God!

BUSHNELL: Her parents wept at the news that Mom had decided to marry my father who, with the arrogance of youth declared: "Religion will never enter my house." In point of fact, it did but in a very eclectic way. We went to non-denominational Protestant churches, while my mother maintained a lot of Catholic rituals, like foregoing meat on Fridays.

Q: Were you a reader as a small kid?

BUSHNELL: Avid.

Q: Do you recall some of the things you read early on?

BUSHNELL: I am of the Bobbsey Twins and Nancy Drew generation.

Q: I have to say to be a woman ambassador, I think you would have read the entire Nancy Drew series. At least that's what I've gathered from my oral histories.

BUSHNELL: You're right. Nancy Drew was definitely a hero. I also read a lot of biographies of women in history. In retrospect, I think they made a strong impression. As a very small child, my sister and I were read a lot of German fairy tales, like Grimm's, which were pretty violent.

Q: Did you get any feel - I mean, obviously you're just a kid, but about the Soviet menace? Was that something that was talked around about or not?

BUSHNELL: No, I had a much greater sense of the ambivalence that the Germans felt toward Americans. Little German boys could be pretty mean to us kids.

Q: It's interesting for your picking that up, because I think people went over there as adults as I did. You didn't get this from the people you met. It probably, you know, learned to keep a straight face or something, but little boys particularly, and probably little girls too. I mean, they were picking up what they got from their parents, but they didn't put that false face on.

BUSHNELL: Right. I remember being called names and having stones thrown at us for being American.

Q: Yeah. That was a time of signs on the wall, "Yankee go home" and all. So, you left Germany about 1953?

BUSHNELL: '54.

Q: Where did you go?

BUSHNELL: We came back to the United States where Dad worked in Washington for

two years. It was one of the worst two years of my life. Don't think kids don't go through culture shock, because they do. My sister and I had actually gone to the same school for two years in a row in Germany and I felt in total control as a second grader. When we came back to the States, with a baby brother, Susan (my sister) and I attended four different schools in two years. Other kids used to make fun of my name – and the fact that I wore glasses made me fair game.

Q: *Did you come home every evening and cry?*

BUSHNELL: No. But I was spent a lot of time figuring out what I needed to do to be accepted.

Q: I have three Foreign Service kids myself and coming back to Washington was traumatic: They would each go into their room and slam the door. My wife would run around, trying to bake cookies for them and they just didn't want to talk.

BUSHNELL: Yep. I can understand that. Then, after three moves in two years, Dad joined the Foreign Service and announced we were going to France. I was not very happy about it, because I had made friends, settled down and now we were leaving.

Q: Where did your father get sent?

BUSHNELL: Paris.

Q: So you went to Paris from when to when?

BUSHNELL: 1956 to 1960. My parents, Dad, in particular, thought this would be a great opportunity for the kids to learn French so they plunked us in a small, French private school. Susan and I hardly spoke a word of French. We survived because the educational system at the time put such an emphasis on recitation. At the end of each lesson there was a summary, a "resume." You were to learn the resume by heart and spout it back. That we could do and we did. We had no idea what we were saying at first. It took me four years to recognize that one of the prayers the teachers had us recite at breakneck speed every of school was the same prayer I was saying every Sunday in English at the American Church.

Q: What kind of a French School was this? Was it a public school and was it in a particular area?

BUSHNELL: It was a private school in a small town outside of Paris, a town called Vaucresson**.** The school was started by a widow by the name of Madame Canet, who was a huge influence on me, although I didn't recognize it until later. She wore the same elegant, black suit with a rhinestone or diamond pin every morning. Standing erectly on the stoop of the house she had converted into a school, she would glare at the children lining up according to class. Then she would yell at one class or another: "first grade over there, straighten out your line!" When everybody was perfectly in line and, of course,

silent, she would give announcements. We would all file past her as we entered to go to class. Girls were supposed to curtsy, boys, remove their berets (part of the school uniform) and kiss her hand. I never did – thought it was beneath me as an American!

Q: How did you find the classes?

BUSHNELL: They were small rooms with long benches and tables with ink wells for dip pens. It was out of another age! My favorite book of the time was Jane Eyre, because I so identified with that bleak orphanage she was raised in. I never got the hang of a dip pen and made a mess with blots, so I used a fountain pen. Ballpoints were not allowed. Even math calculations were done in ink

Once a week in elementary school – once a month in the upper school -- Madame Canet would stride into class holding report cards stacked according to the grade. Every student was ranked. Madame would call your name, you would stand up and she would give you feedback on how you did that week, or month. Collectively, we would hold our breath as she went down the ranks from first (best in class) to last. Tears would start to well if she got to twenty without calling my name. Actually, for the first year, it was pretty inevitable. Susan and I would come home ranked last or next to last and Mom would say "think of what a favor you're doing classmates by coming in last -- you have an excuse, they don't."

Q: How wonderful. It sounds like your mother had the right attitude.

BUSHNELL: She did. Once the language clicked in, Susan and I were moved up a grade, though they kept us in the same class for some reason. By that time we were competing fairly well and Madame Canet comment to the other girls: "Look at these girls. When they came here they didn't speak a word of French. NOT A WORD of French. NOW LOOK AT THEM. You, you lazy girls, you!" Oh, it was awful. Humiliation and corporal punishment were standard practice. Teachers never touched us Americans, but the French girls would be slapped around; their ears, hair, yanked. Terrible. One year I got the prize for First in Conduct and Politeness. That's because I was too intimidated to say anything but "oui, Madame, or non, Madame." Sure did learn discipline.

Q: How did you feel about it? Obviously you were probably getting very good French and French pronunciation, but do you feel you were learning much? I mean more about the world?

BUSHNELL: Oh yes. It was not a particularly happy period because it was such a struggle, but we did all right. We went to school Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Friday and Saturday morning. Had Thursday off. I'd focus on getting through Wednesday, use Thursday to study with only a day and a half remaining. I learned stress and discipline and, of course, to do my homework, always. There were times in the future these lessons served me well.

Q: How did you get along with the French girls and boys too?

BUSHNELL: Most of the kids in school were girls and they were very distant. Things like slumber parties or hanging out were not part of the French culture. So, Susan and a British girl, Virginia, who was in our class, and I would pal around together. Going to the American church in downtown Paris on Sundays was the highlight of the week. After another brother was born, Mom had Susan and me take the train into Paris. We were pretty faithful church-goers because it was the extent of our social life with Americans kids.

So, on one hand, school was very hard and the other girls, pretty cold. On the other hand, at the age of 9, 10, 11 and 12, my sister and I had an enormous amount of freedom in a wonderful city. Over Christmas, the family would go skiing. Summers we would travel. When I was about 12, my parents sent my sister and me and two other kids with a young chaperone on a bicycle tour through Holland, staying in youth hostels. We received such an education about life during this period.

Every Saturday morning at school we would have Religious and Moral Instruction. And, every Saturday, the teacher would ask, "Who in this room is not Catholic?" And, every Saturday my sister, Virginia and I would raise our hands, and every Saturday she would make a disparaging remark about non-Catholics.

Q: Oh God.

BUSHNELL: This woman also taught other classes, so we saw a lot of her. She didn't particularly like Americans, and when the schools in Little Rock, Arkansas were integrated, I remember being yelled at for being racist. I remember thinking, "right and you treat Algerians so well." But I never dared to say anything.

Q: It was around, I want to say '62 or - wait a minute no, it had to be earlier. It was '58 or so when- everything was falling apart and De Gaulle came in.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. I remember that quite vividly. Dad had to leave the house unexpectedly one night and spend a lot of time down at the embassy.

Q: What was your father doing?

BUSHNELL: He was an Administrative Officer.

Q: Did you have a chance to; again I come back to reading, because I think it's always an important thing. As you got somewhat older what sort of things were you reading, do you recall? French books or were you reading --?

BUSHNELL: Not for pleasure. What was I reading? I read avidly. A lot of the classics.

Q: <u>Jane Eyre</u>?

BUSHNELL: Jane Eyre was one of my favorites. Black Beauty, mystery books and a number of British books my friend, Virginia, would lend. Both of my parents loved to read and passed that on to their children. When we returned to the U.S. on home leave, Susan and I would head to the public library. To me, one of the most wonderful things to this day about the United States is the public library. I also read a lot of junk. I know I read movie magazines and true romance, true confessions. I used to hide those from my mother. I remember reading Peyton Place when I was, oh I don't know, 11 or so.

Q: Oh yes. That was the sex book for teenagers.

BUSHNELL: Exactly.

Q: What about at home, the French politics in whole Europe, I mean was a very interesting period particularly with De Gaulle and what was happening in France. France had gone through, God, I guess the Third republic and the Fourth Republic was falling apart. Anyway, when De Gaulle came in he was bringing a little discipline to the French political process. Was this a conversation at home or were you much aware of what was happening politically?

BUSHNELL: Not so much. We took French History every year at school, of course, but it always ended with Napoleon.

Q: Did it go up the Waterloo and it cut off about 1814?

BUSHNELL: Right. There was never any discussion about politics in school and I don't remember my parents talking about it. What I noted of social movements was through the domestic staff that would come and go. I was very aware of the Hungarian Revolution, for example, because a Hungarian woman used to come to iron. Other refugee women from Eastern Europe would also pass through our lives.

Q: About the same time, you had the Suez crisis? The French were working with the British and the Israelis against Egypt and the United States put the kybosh on that. Did that get reflected?

BUSHNELL: We were aware of the anti-Americanism, politically, not just socially, but not so much of what was happening. Far more vivid, again from the eyes of a child, was the impact from the war. I was really struck by the difference when I'd go back to the U.S. and find hula hoops in vogue, bobby socks and stuff like that. Then we'd return to Paris where people lived so differently. To get to school, for example, we would have to walk by the bombed remains of what they called a "pill box," that is, a concrete gun bunker. The Nazis had taken over the house we lived in, and a German colonel was killed by the underground there. The effects of the war were still real and present. We moved between very different universes. And even as a young pubescent, I got the sense of how foreign the Americans were to the French or to other Europeans.

Q: What - I think I know the answer, but did you ever make friends enough with the

French girls to go to their home?

BUSHNELL: Oh yeah.

Q: You did? Oh you did.

BUSHNELL: Yeah.

Q: What a surprise. I mean -

BUSHNELL: We eventually got accepted enough to be invited to some parties and vice versa. In fact, we were actually pretty good friends with a French girl who lived on the other side of Paris.

Q: Turning back to the political. While you were going to their houses, were you getting many questions about America and all that or was it just girls having a good time together?

BUSHNELL: It was just girls. There were sharp differences between us, of course. Susan and I had so much more in the way of things… records, clothes, everything. But we were pretty normal girls.

Q: On the political side, I mean were there all sorts of street demonstrations? I mean, I watch French news here in Fairfax County we get it and it seems like - not now, during the summer you don't have demonstrations, people are on vacation, but during the Spring and Fall they demonstrate. Were there a lot of those?

BUSHNELL: Oh yeah. My mother would say it was having gone to French schools that brought young people out in the streets in total rebellion as soon as they turned 18. They were finally able to demonstrate what they were thinking or to have a thought other than what was reflected by the teacher.

Q: Were the Beatles a big thing at all?

BUSHNELL: Not yet. There was a radio station, Radio Luxembourg, that broadcast in English for three or four hours a night, and that's where I got my teeny bopper music.

Q: They were very popular in Europe because they played American music.

BUSHNELL: American music was really important. So, these were Frankie Avalon and Connie Francis days.

Q: Teen angel and all that.

BUSHNELL: That's right. Bobby Darrin.

Q: Oh yeah. Well.

BUSHNELL: Troy Donahue.

Q: We're speaking of icons.

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: Well, in 1960 you're off again, whither?

BUSHNELL: Pakistan.

Q: Whoa! Now that was quite a jump wasn't it?

BUSHNELL: It certainly was. Mom got out the Encyclopedia Britannica so we could see where it was! She had already warned us that, "If we're in Paris, you can be sure that the next place we go to isn't going to be very nice." I'm not sure how she did it, but she kept her eye on who would be leaving hardship posts. The standard line at that time was "at least we're not going to Ouagadougou!"

Q: Y*ou went in 1960. I assume you went on home leave before?*

BUSHNELL: No, we went directly from Paris to Karachi. We bought a new car and Dad drove Susan and me through France and Italy, meeting Mom and my younger brothers, Peter and Jonathan, in Rome. We then took a ship from Naples. In those days as often as possible we would go from post to post by ship.

Q: So, you all were in Karachi from when to when?

BUSHNELL: '60 to '63.

Q: By any chance you - many people of, particularly young people were sort of infected by the campaign of 1960, this was Nixon versus Kennedy. Did that penetrate to your family at all? Were you aware of it or not?

BUSHNELL: No, not so much then. We were aware of the Cuban missile crisis later. There was a lot of discussion at school. We also had lots of discussion about the Berlin Wall going up and Red China -- whether or not we should recognize China.

Q: I think this was pretty common in the Foreign Service. I mean, being pragmatic. I mean you just don't - this whole idea of non recognition doesn't make much sense something the size of China.

BUSHNELL: Right. We read and talked at length about <u>The Ugly American</u>, which came out about '60. In Karachi, we all went to an international school, so we were out of the French system and into a more American environment. Since it was an international

school, we had Pakistanis, as well as people from different embassies. One of my classmates was the son on the Yugoslavia Ambassador. We discussed communism and he would proclaim, "I'm not red, I'm pink."

Q: What do you recall of Pakistan, Karachi when you were there? At that point, Karachi was the capitol of Pakistan.

BUSHNELL: Islamabad was hardly a gleam in anybody's eye. In fact, the Chancery, which is now the Consulate was brand new. Karachi was still suffocating from the refugees who fled India during partition. Here, the issue with partition was very raw and still as vivid to the Pakistanis as World War II was to the Europeans. It was a very, very crowded city with only one restaurant one could go to, outside of the Metropole Hotel . The Karachi American School was in its first year of moving away from a correspondence system. The year we arrived was the first year under the new system and most of the teachers were spouses, the mothers of my friends. Rather than being greeted by Madame Canet every day, we'd interact with upright Foreign Service spouses who might not have any background in a particular subject matter, but by Heaven, they were smart and they taught us how to read; how to speak; and how to write. Our math teacher, for example, was a Polish woman, who was a pilot for the Polish underground during the war. I mean, how cool is that?

Q: Yeah. Boy.

Q: How did you find the adjustment from the discipline of the French system to the somewhat independence of the Americans?

BUSHNELL: I loved it. School was just so much easier, not nearly the same amount of work or homework. The teachers were so much nicer and we were actually allowed a social life. Since there was so little to do in Karachi, the school became the social center for most of us. There was the drama club and the debate club, the Spanish club and the this and the that. So, we were learning in a way that was very different from sitting on a bench using a dip pen and spouting back the things that the teacher had just told us.

Q: Did you feel any or did it come and hit you in the face at sometime, by not having gone through American schools and going to a French school, which was concentrated on French history, that you weren't picking up American history and all?

BUSHNELL: Not so much, because I read a lot. We took American history in high school. The only places where I felt a lack -- I didn't think about it at the time -- but in retrospect, were the sciences and math, but especially the sciences were just not a part of the curriculum.

Q: Was Karachi a type of place that I understand Bombay was and maybe still is with beggars and you know, I mean you almost have to learn to ignore it or you can be overwhelmed. How did you, as a kid, this must have had quite an effect on you.

BUSHNELL: Men chewing beetle nut would sometimes spit at our feet because we Americans were not veiled. So, walking downtown wasn't pleasant. Also, the sea of humanity was something. For some reason, though, I wasn't particularly scared. I didn't go out alone, however. We lived in something of a compound, a small neighborhood that held the residences of the Ambassador, as well as the DCM, admin, econ and political counselors and their families. There were other kids our age around so, if we went downtown without our parents, we were usually in a group.

Q: Was there much contact with Pakistani kids and all?

BUSHNELL: The school was probably 40 percent Pakistani so, yes, we were in daily contact. For a couple of years, Susan and I were active in the Karachi American Society, a cultural center run by the US Information Service They would hold square dances and it was only as an adult that I realized why square dancing was so popular with young Pakistani men – they could dance with young American women! It didn't occur to me at the time.

Q: By this time were you absorbing anything about Foreign Service work and all that?

BUSHNELL: Oh yes, I absorbed a lot. Much of it, not good. This was a time when the wives were a part of the employee's evaluation. My mother resented being considered "two for the price of one" and was insulted to be a part of Dad's performance evaluation.

Q: Oh yeah. I used to rate the wives. God, I hated that. In our efficiency reports we had to rate the wives.

BUSHNELL: Yep. Mother didn't appreciate that. Nor did she appreciate the inspectors coming out and checking out her lifestyle. She and other wives didn't resent the hardships that came with having to drag their kids around the world or living in difficult and isolated places, but they did resent how they were treated. And, I didn't appreciate being told all the time, "everything you do reflects on your father." Because he was a senior officer at the embassy, we lived away from other Americans. The caste system was very much alive and well, and kids were very sensitive to it.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you were there? Did the ambassador's wife play any role?

BUSHNELL: Absolutely. It had a profound effect on how the kind of ambassador I wanted to be. The two ambassadors Dad served with were Rountree and the other was McConaughy.

Q: Both ambassadors were put much of the old school I remember.

BUSHNELL: Both of them had daughters my age, so I hung out at the Residence. The style of each ambassador and spouse was felt pretty directly by kids.

Q: Were you getting from your parents, I mean really from your mother, a feeling about the ambassadors wives? I mean, some of the ambassadors wives, Mrs. Douglas MacArthur is a prime example of it, but there were others too, extremely demanding. Did you get any - was that a problem?

BUSHNELL: Not so much. Everything was much more formal and hierarchical, of course. Wives went calling, attended teas for which they put on white gloves and hats and were very conscious of protocol. These were the days of diplomacy of the old school. There were no community liaison people or paid employees to help with community or family issues. The wives were expected to welcome newcomers and support all school and community activities. A lot of that burden fell on the senior wives. But, I never heard them complain about that. Karachi, in fact, was my mother's favorite posting.

Q: This is kind of what we all did. It's sort of expected, including the officers. They weren't, I mean they have to arrive early at functions and stay late. But, again you're trying to do something which could be quite interesting. Well Pru, were you getting any feeling of what I want to do? In other words, were you looking at the role of women at the time and getting any feel. What signals were you getting?

BUSHNELL: I was clueless, totally clueless about what women could do. The women I saw were either wives and mothers or single women doing secretarial, consular or personnel work who would come to our house for Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners. So, these were my role models. There's no way I was going to be a wife of a Foreign Service officer. I was already rebelling against that. What else was I going to be? Mom had both Susan and me take typing and shorthand because "you can always be a secretary." Women were still very constrained in their career choices.

Q: Were you getting any feel for the civil rights movement in the United States? It was at its height during this time.

BUSHNELL: Very much so. Foreign Affairs kids are pretty sophisticated politically and aware of how important it is to be tolerant. As outsiders to other cultures we already knew first hand the effects of intolerance. With no TV, radio or social activities other than what we made up for ourselves, we hung out with one another, as teenagers still do and talked a lot – about civil rights and lots of other social issues. Most of us knew people who were participating in civil rights demonstrations in the States and admired them.

Q: OK. Today is the 22nd of July, 2005. Pru, you went off to Iran, what year was this?

BUSHNELL: 1963.

Q: 1963. How old were you then?

BUSHNELL: 16, 17.

Q: Up at this point, how did you feel? I mean, how did the Foreign Service experience take with you?

BUSHNELL: Well, it was the only life I had ever known, so it was fine. The move from Pakistan to Iran was the most difficult move I'd ever made, however because I was transferring between my junior year and senior year in high school. There was no consideration at the time of the upheaval on teenagers when you uproot them between the junior and senior year.

Q: Now that's the hard one.

BUSHNELL: Yeah. And it was very tough, even more so because my sister, Susan, went off to college. With only eighteen months difference in age, we had always faced things together. Suddenly, she wasn't there and I was facing a new school by myself, meeting kids who, for the most part, had been together for a long time, or at least for a year.

Q: Where did your sister go to college?

BUSHNELL: She went to Wells College in upstate New York, then after two years, transferred to the University of California at Berkeley.

Q: Anyway, back to Tehran. What were your impressions - again we're talking about a teenager, but your impression of the situation in '63 in Iran?

BUSHNELL: It was very different from Pakistan, much harder to understand politically and socially. Even though Pakistanis would often riot against the U.S. for our support for India, and stare at us in the streets, we got to know people through the school and other activities. The ones we knew were open and accessible. That wasn't the case in Iran. People seemed much more suspicious of us (with good reason if you know the history). There was a large U.S. military presence and I went to the military school because it was accredited in the U.S. This was the first time I had been in a school exclusively American, with the exception of when I lived in the United States. So, it was much easier to live in an American enclave.

Q: How did you find the military school? I know when we were in the Seoul Korea, our kids were going to military school. The embassy people would complain about the caliber of studies where the military, mainly from the enlisted side would complain about wasting too much time on cultural things. How did you find it there?

BUSHNELL: Compared to the three years I had spent in Karachi under the tutelage of Foreign Service spouses, this was so easy that I don't remember much of anything that I learned.

Q: Which is always, particularly at that age you really need a challenge.

BUSHNELL: Right. That said, when I got to college, I was amazed to find how

competitive I was in almost every subject except math and science. Mainly, because I knew how to read, I knew how to study; I knew how to write and I knew how to speak. I knew manners; I knew how to conduct myself. Living overseas, going to museums, historic places, cultural events, etc. provides a fantastic education in and of itself.

Q: How much were you absorbing would you say about the Persian Empire and all that?

BUSHNELL: I spent the year after graduating from high school in Tehran, working at the embassy and then at the commissary. I took a course in Persian history at the university with my father. I also got to travel around the country with my sister, visiting Persepolis and Isfahan. I worked with Iranians and so learned a lot more about Iran than I had ever learned as a senior in high school.

Q: Ah yes. Did you pick up any feel for the Iranian approach to things at least from the people you were in contact during these two years there?

BUSHNELL: They practiced a different form of Islam. The Pakistanis for the most part were Sunnis, and the Iranians, mostly Shiite. Iranians looked much more western than the Pakistanis. I was frequently mistaken for Iranian. But their thinking was different from ours.

Q: Did you get any feel for the almost over-whelming presence of Americans in Iran at that time? Was there any kind of feeling of almost discomfort or something as you were observing this?

BUSHNELL: We were there from '63 to '65, before the huge build-up. That said, we had a fairly big presence, and the tension was certainly there -- one could feel it. It was well known in the American community that we had an enormous CIA presence. It was probably well known outside of that community, as well.

Q: If you'd picked this up I guess everybody else did.

BUSHNELL: I don't want to leave the impression that Iran was a bad experience. The beauty of the language; the stark beauty of the country, as well as the culture were very striking, more so than Pakistan. Living there put me in front of art, literature and a way of thinking that I hadn't been exposed to before.

Q: Did you decide to take a year off before going off before going to college?

BUSHNELL: No, I went to Wells College, which was where my sister was, and I had what my mother euphemistically called an emotional breakdown. I was out of my depth. One year in Iran, and I'm back in the United States, never having lived there since the fourth grade. I was overwhelmed. The school called my father to come get me, which he did. Before he could take me back to Iran, we had to stop in Washington to see a State Department psychiatrist. Maybe he wasn't a psychiatrist. At any rate, from behind his desk he literally shook his finger at me and said "You do anything back in Iran, and your

father's career is ruined." That was the old Foreign Service for you.

Q: I had a somewhat similar experience. I mean, these were, people were making judgments, and really didn't have any idea of the impact they were having. Nobody was telling them to cut it out.

BUSHNELL: It was unpardonable. But it certainly impacted my behavior as a Foreign Service officer, and especially as an ambassador. My passion around issues of people and leadership can be traced to the personal experiences like that which were so unnecessarily.

Q: That must have been devastating for you though.

BUSHNELL: I really felt I had done something wrong. Well, sorry! It was devastating, because I didn't have enough self-worth to get angry. I really thought, "oh my God, what have I done to my father's career"? But let me continue, because this goes to show what a difference an ambassador can make. Dad and I returned to Tehran and I felt like an utter disgrace. The following Monday, Dad had me doing temporary secretarial work at the embassy. The first person we ran into at the embassy was the ambassador.

Q: Who was that?

BUSHNELL: Holmes. Not his son, Alan Holmes, but this was the father, Julius Holmes was his name. We met the ambassador in the hallway and I'm thinking, oh my God, what does he know, as though I had a scarlet letter on my forehead or something. Whatever he did or did not know, he welcomed me so warmly that it made all the difference.

Q: So, you were working at the embassy

BUSHNELL: Right. And, I actually had a great time in with what they now call the "gap year," because first I worked in the commercial section for a couple of months, and then I was made head of the PX and the liquor section of the commissary. Dad was Administrative Counselor and put me in charge of selling liquor because too much of it was ending up on the black market and he wanted some controls. So I ran that section as well as the sundries and make-up section for a year.

Q: Did people put pressure on you?

BUSHNELL: The Shah's family and entourage had commissary privileges -- they were the only ones who applied pressure. I understood exactly what the Iranians meant about the Shah and the government, because they would come in and cut the queue, and they would demand this and that. Oh, I felt like such a self-righteous American behind the counter and would say, "Go back to the end of the line, or you cannot get that." "Do you know who I am?" "Well, I don't care who you are. You're on American territory right now."

It was a great year for me. I had Iranian friends, and I was going out with Marine Security Guards. Knowing who I was, the Admin Counselor's daughter, the guys I dated were probably the most protective people a father could possibly put his daughter in company with. If we were going to be 15 minutes late, they would call to explain, "Now Mr. Bushnell, this is Corporal "so and so" -- just want you to know that the car is a little late in getting back." I did a lot of skiing and took a course at the university on Persian History. So, it really was a good year for me, and it gave me a chance to grow up a little bit and decide what I wanted to do.

Q: Did you sort of re-think what you wanted out of college?

BUSHNELL: A consular officer who told me about a college in Ohio called Western College for Women that focused on international affairs. One-third of its student body came from other places around the world. I figured that was right up my alley. Western was one of the places where the freedom marchers who were going down to Mississippi were trained. A number of parents decided to pull their daughters out and, so, even though I applied very late in the year, I was accepted.

Q: Did the freedom marchers and anything outside have any impact on you at all? Did you feel anything about following or what was happening when you were in Tehran?

BUSHNELL: Yes, but that paled by comparison to the assassination of John Kennedy, which happened my senior year of high school. I became far more aware of the whole civil rights movement once I was back in the U.S.

Q: Let's talk about Western College. Was it - sounds like it must have had religious roots or not. I mean so many schools in Ohio.

BUSHNELL: Yes, it did, Presbyterian.

Q: Presbyterian. What was it like when you got there?

BUSHNELL: It was a nice campus with a far more integrated student body, in terms of race, language and culture, than other colleges that size. I felt very comfortable. It was right across the street from Miami University of Ohio and I immediately learned about the double standard applied to women. If a boy was caught in your dorm you were kicked out; if you were caught in a boy's dorm you were kicked out, and the boy was sent a reprimand. At the time no one questioned it. Cars were not allowed and we had a 10:30 p.m. curfew on weekdays and 11 o'clock on the weekend.

It was a good school, though I chose to leave after two years, because I wanted something larger and more diverse. I read, years and years later, an article that said that most Foreign Service kids prefer and do better at large universities, because they're so much accustomed to a rather large, diverse, cosmopolitan atmosphere; whereas most Foreign Service parents want to send their kids to small schools, thinking that it's going to ease the transition and that they'll have special attention and so forth. And, it certainly held

true in my case.

Q: You were at Western from when to when?

BUSHNELL: '65 to '67.

Q: How about Vietnam, was that playing much of a role?

BUSHNELL: I went into culture shock for a lot of reasons and that this was one. The U.S. was simply not the country I thought I knew. A number of Marines had become my friends in Tehran and suddenly they became "baby killers" according to some of my peers. I got letters from some of my friends who were sent to Vietnam, and they would write about the horrible things people were saying about them. They were trying to make some sense of this. Meanwhile, at Western, some of my new friends were taking a very hard stance against the war. For a while, I honestly didn't know what I thought. The going expression was that if you weren't part of the solution, you were part of the problem. I didn't want to be part of the problem, but I didn't relate to parts of the solutions that were being talking about. So, it really threw me in to a cultural and self-identity tizzy.

Q: You'd been overseas practically your whole life. Foreign cultures are complicated and there are awful simplistic solutions coming from the anti war people and all that. Were you seeing this?

BUSHNELL: I wasn't judging it. I was trying to figure out what is going on and where I fit in. So, I was far more in an observer status than I was in active status.

Q: Good Foreign Service training. What about courses? What sort of things did you find yourself interested in college?

BUSHNELL: Languages. I stuck to what was safe.

Q: Where were the young ladies at Western pointed at? Were they basically for the MRS degree?

BUSHNELL: Some went to graduate school. This was a beginning of real questioning among young women, very different from the generation of women who came before. Their path was pretty well charted: You would go to college, you'd get married and you were in college in part to find a husband.

Q: You were just a few years removed from Gloria Steinem and Ms. Magazine and that?

BUSHNELL: The beginning of that, right. Gloria Steinem and the National Organization for Women came a little later. What we talked about were books by people like Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir. We didn't want to be like our mothers. Of course, we were children of the '60s -- peace and love and rebellion; don't trust anybody over 30 and

all that silliness.

Q: Oh yes. Ah, interesting times. Now known as the '60s. I'm not sure people involved in it were as enamored by what they were going to do.

BUSHNELL: I found it confusing and divisive. You were supposed to be pushing back on old attitudes, and a lot of the pushing back was really good. A lot of people could identify with pushing back on racism. They could identify with pushing back on violence and war as a solution. But as women, we were not supposed to push back on the way we were treated, which was abominably. The anti-war movement was very much a male movement. The only difference between the way these hormonally charged guys treated women was the self-righteousness with which they did it.

Q: Well, you were the designated hand maidens of the -

BUSHNELL: That's right. Then we said, now wait a minute, if Native Americans have rights and if black people have rights, and treating Vietnamese people as we do is wrong, why am I condemned to wash your socks?

Q: But after two years, you were beginning to outgrow Western?

BUSHNELL: I transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1967 and loved it. Loved being in Washington, which was a wonderful city for young people at that time, especially if you were demonstrating against the war.

Q: Oh yeah. You are on ground zero.

BUSHNELL: Well, we were still in the '60s, and the '60s for me was pretty confusing and pretty awful. 1968, with the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, was terrible.

Q: What moved you toward the University of Maryland?

BUSHNELL: My parents told my sister and me that they would pay for two years of college. We were on our own after that, because they had two boys coming behind. I had had two years at a private college, where I was a work-study student. So, to reduce tuition -- by this time my parents living in Maryland -- I went to a state school.

Q: Did you room at Maryland?

BUSHNELL: I had an apartment with somebody with whom I went to high school in Karachi and two other girls. We had a wonderful time.

Q: So, you were in there from '67 to '69? What were you studying?

BUSHNELL: French and History, and the mix of required courses for a liberal arts

degree.

Q: What about demonstrations and the history that was being made at the time? I mean there were two major ones. There was the Martin Luther King, well March on Washington had already happened, but there was certainly the anti Vietnam marches. Did you get involved in those?

BUSHNELL: Yes, I hated the war. I also went to the Poor People's marches.

Q: It was pretty hard not to be engaged and be in college.

BUSHNELL: Right. These large marches, for the most part, were very peaceful. You felt like one community in favor of a just cause, as compared to the divisiveness that you got on a college campus where you didn't feel part of one community.

Q: All of these was culminating and graduating? Did you have any idea of what you wanted to do?

BUSHNELL: No. I got married. Turned out to have been a big mistake for both of us. But, in the mean time, Tim was in law school, and I was a college graduate so I went to work. My first job after graduation was working as bi-lingual secretary for the Economic Counselor of the Embassy of Morocco, so I was essentially a Foreign Service National. Then, I got a job as Chief Secretary of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Maryland. I was still more comfortable with "foreign" people than I was with mainstream Americans. I was slowly getting out into society, but still hanging on to the familiar.

At home, I was also working -- laundry, housework, shopping, cooking. At that time I thought it was perfectly normal that Tim was studying and that my salary and labor were paying for everything.

Q: Well, as a guy, so what's the problem?

BUSHNELL: Exactly, Tim was happy. At least until I got another job in late '71 that got me traveling around the country. That was when I really came to know the United States.

Q: What kind of job was that?

BUSHNELL: It was working with the Legal Services programs. As a part of the War on Poverty, Congress established funded civil legal services for low income clients. A training program was established through Catholic University to help lawyers learn and enhance their trade on a range of issues from basic skills to specialized representation and litigation. I started out doing logistics, travel and admin work associated with bringing participants in to regional cities. I spent most of my time on the road, an incredible way to see the U.S. Because we involved the clients of local legal services programs in the training, I also spent a time with them – for the most part they were women of all races

who had to struggle to survive and taught me some incredible life lessons.

After a couple of years of doing this, I moved into another position that allowed me to study management and eventually begin to design and deliver management training to program directors.

Q: So then what happened?

BUSHNELL: I worked there from '71 until 1976. During this time, my husband and I parted ways, and I met Dick Buckley, with whom I have been happily married since 1979. Living in the Washington area continued to be exhilarating as we lived the Watergate scandal on a daily basis. That, too, was an education in what it means to be an American.

Q: Were you monitoring Foreign Affairs or the Foreign Service during this period?

BUSHNELL: No. I had put all that behind me. As you know, most Americans are not at all interested in people who have lived abroad -- their attention span is about 15 minutes.

Q: At most.

BUSHNELL: Part of feeling comfortable as a 100% American was learning reference points other could identify with. There was nothing about my years overseas most people could relate to so I stopped talking about it.

Q: Well then, '76 you're remarried now by this time?

BUSHNELL: No, not yet. In '76 I left legal services, having decided that I needed to put down roots somewhere in the U.S. I was in my early 30s and it was time. I tried Minneapolis in January 1977 and lasted about 30 days in the sub-zero weather. Then I decided to go to Albany, New York. Because my parents were from upstate New York, we had spent home leave summers in the general area so I had a degree of comfort. I was there two years working and getting my Masters.

Q: You went to the University of New York in Albany?

BUSHNELL: No, I went to Russell Sage College, which had evening and weekend programs for people who worked. I couldn't afford to go to school full time.

Q: And you're not married at this point? You're on your own?

BUSHNELL: Yes. This was a difficult period. The economy had tanked and employment in Albany was hard to find. The money I had saved from legal services began to run out and I was shocked to find that I was eligible for a program created for a hard-core unemployed -- CETA Program (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act). I found a job at a training program run out of the State University of New York, Albany, called

the Public Executive Program and did some training on my own to support myself as I went to night school. I received my Masters in Public Administration in 1978 moved to Dallas, Texas where I married Dick Buckley.

Q: Public Administration, like your father.

BUSHNELL: Right, who would have thought it? It was from Dallas that to everybody's amazement, I joined the Foreign Service.

Q: Yeah. We'll pick this up in '79. I haven't asked you about your husband. I also haven't asked where the women's movement was really getting going by the late '70s when you were doing this. We discussed it before, but by this time it was well embedded in this system. We'll talk about that.

Q: Were you unattached when you went to Dallas?

BUSHNELL: Yes, I was single. In'79, I move to Dallas and married Dick who had taken the job as Director of Dallas Legal Services.

Q: When did you get married?

BUSHNELL: We got married in 1979 at Dallas County Courthouse.

Q: Was your husband, did he have any interest or feel or experience in the Foreign Affairs at that time?

BUSHNELL: Other than having gone around the world on a ship when he got out of college, no. He was a civil rights and criminal lawyer in the 1960s, started the New Orleans Legal Assistance Program, served as director of Alaska legal services, then came to the training program where I was working. Ultimately he ended up directing the Dallas program.

Q: How did you find Texas? Texas is sort of a world unto itself.

BUSHNELL: I found Dallas in the 70s to be culturally alien to me, especially since by now I had been working in professional jobs. I had a very hard time finding professional employment and finally decided to go it alone as an independent contractor. I did some supervisory training and the like. The most interesting – and certainly my greatest challenge -- was a contract to help the senior engineers at NASA in Houston understand the male mid-life crisis and cope with the sense of burn-out they were feeling. Both were trendy issues.

So, there I was at the age of 33, spending my waking hours becoming an expert on the development cycles of American men. I can't believe my chutzpa standing in front of a bunch of 50-something-year-old men. But I was prepared. When the inevitable question – "what makes you think as a woman you can stand up and talk about who we are?" -- I

was ready with the retort, "How many gynecologists or obstetricians are women?" At that time, of course, there were very few.

Q: What were some of the manifestations for mid life crisis for men at that time would you say?

BUSHNELL: The theory is that we continue developing as adults, as we did as children, although in more subtle ways. Periods of stability are followed by transitions as we age and face different challenges. Daniel Levinson, a research, proposed that stages of transition and stability were age related. For example, during one's'20s, he said, it is normal to find men experimenting with adult roles both socially and professionally. By mid 30s, however, most men have "settled down," as husband and father, following one particular career path. At mid-life, things often change again.

To connect with participants in the program at NASA, I used Buzz Aldrin's autobiography. They knew him, of course, as one of the astronauts in the Apollo project. Thank goodness his descriptions of the various facets of his life fit the Levinson's hypothesis exactly. It was a reference point I really needed.

Q: How did you find the NASA silverbacks respond to your lectures or you talking to them?

BUSHNELL: Once they got used to me, most were just fine. They recognized I knew what I was talking about and, once they relaxed, enjoyed the experience. I had one encounter, though, that left a significant mark. I met up with the nasty misogynist who made it his business to try to humiliate me as much as possible. It was my first taste of such behavior. It was a difficult and valuable experience to keep my cool and I survived it. That was the lesson. I could stand up to sarcasm, rolling eyes, sexist remarks, maintain my dignity and survive to talk about it the next day. A good lesson in dealing with some of the jerks I later came across.

Q: What brought you back to the Foreign Service?

BUSHNELL: A coincidence of events. In 1979, Americans were taken hostage at our embassy in Tehran. All of a sudden a place and life I had put behind were in the headlines. Then I saw David Passage as Deputy Spokesman for the Department on T.V. David had graduated from the Karachi American School. A day or so later, I heard an ad on the radio - Secretary of State Muskie was encouraging women and minorities who fit a certain profile to apply to a mid-level entry program. All of this was taking place during one of the hottest and driest summers in Dallas history. Dick and I decided it was time to move on and I might as well check out the Foreign Service. So, I applied and became so focused on the entry process I didn't really think about the possible outcome.

Q: Had your mother and father played any role?

BUSHNELL: No, no, not at all. Dad had retired in 1968. He and my mother had created a

new life for themselves in Cooperstown, NY. They were shocked when I told them. After all my complaining about how the Foreign Service has ruined my life as a teenager when we moved from Karachi to Tehran, here I was voluntarily applying to join.

Q: I'd mentioned at the last tape and all, coming up to this particular time. How had the women's movement affected you by then?

BUSHNELL: I found a whole lot to be sympathetic with. When I separated from my first husband, even though I had been joint and sometimes sole wage earner, I was denied credit. Couldn't get a credit card. The bank did, however, let him cash our joint tax refund over his signature only. I was furious. They justified it saying he was "the man of the house."

When I looked for work early on, an employment counselor told me, "Don't let people know how smart you are, because men don't like to hire women who are smart." Years later, in Dallas, I interviewed with a guy who worked for the Office of Personnel Management – a federal agency, mind you. He advised me to wear skirts with longer slits in them so I could attract more attention. Don't get me started.

So, I was very grateful to the courageous women who decided to do something about the way we were being treated. Were it not for Alison Palmer and the women's class action law suit against the State Department, for example, I would never have joined the Service.

Q: Did you have any role model or any women/woman you looked up to?

BUSHNELL: There weren't that many role models for professional married women. You either chose family or you chose career. I had the huge advantage of a husband who truly believed in me and who assisted me in appreciating my value and potential. He is passionate about people and he would push me to take risks and to stand up for myself. After doing so a few times, I did not need his encouragement. That said, in the Foreign Service, I encountered some terrific women leaders, like Roz Ridgway, Melissa Wells, Jane Coon, and others of the generation before me who paved the way.

Q: Did you find your women acquaintances trying to drag you down?

BUSHNELL: No, on the contrary, most have been cooperative and supportive. However, as a mid-level entrant I found considerable resentment from men and women who felt that I hadn't paid my dues; that I wasn't quite the best or brightest because of entering through a different process, etc. This had happened to my father, too, when he entered State through the Wriston Program. Do you remember that Program?

Q: Oh, very definitely. See, I came in '55 and this was going on in parallel. It allowed for the lateral entry of civil servants from other parts of government.

BUSHNELL: Right. I had seen my parents treated as not-quite true Foreign Service

because Dad hadn't taken the entrance exam and was in the administrative cone. So, this attitude was not at all new to me.

Q: In my experiences as a consular officer, my first boss was a woman. I often worked with women as equals, or had women over me or under me. In fact, the first professional consular officers who became FSO-2's at time, which was equivalent to say, Brigadier General were two women, Margaret Thailand and another Margaret. Known as the two Margarets.

Q: Well, let's talk about when you applied. You took an oral exam, is that right?

BUSHNELL: Ultimately, yes. But the first thing was to submit a written application that included an autobiography and a salary history to show from work experience merited consideration for mid-level positions. This was in lieu of taking the written exam.

Q: Because of legal pressure they were trying to stuff the ranks so that they could say we're meeting requirements.

BUSHNELL: Well, the Department did not do it very willingly. State was going to be held in contempt of court because of the number of years of stone-walling and disingenuous behavior. So, they jolly well had to start stuffing the ranks pretty quickly. The oral exam I took was the same everybody took at that time. It was an individual assessment, you and.....

Q: Three people probably.

BUSHNELL: It was more than three, it was five people. And they were experimenting with something that year by not giving you any eye contact after they asked the questions. It was very disconcerting.

Q: Oh yeah.

BUSHNELL: One of them would ask a question and immediately start writing or doing something to avoid eye contact. There were no cues as to as to whether what you were saying was good, bad or indifferent or even when to stop. I would stop answering the question and somebody would look up and say, "That's all you have to say?

Q: I was an examiner for a year in 1975-76 and we were quite straight forward. I think this was some psychiatrist *probably got a hold. You know, every once in a while, they kept experimenting with that damn thing. I think they all came out, I think the people came in, came in exactly the same as any other time, but there were all sorts of playing around, but we didn't have any of that. But, that was earlier on. That's awful. It would be hard on the examiner.*

BUSHNELL: It was very stressful, particularly waiting outside while the group discussed your answers and decided whether to pass you or not. Coincidentally, the chief examiner

was the husband of my brother's fifth-grade teacher in Tehran. It was he who told me to come back in and announced that I had passed. Somebody else asked, "What took you so long to join the Service? Why didn't you join long before?" I had to remind them that it would have been either as spouse, secretary, or spinster. I was then taken to be fingerprinted. It was weird.

Q: Do you recall any of the questions that were asked?

BUSHNELL: One was, "do you know what an administrative officer does?", and of course I did, fortunately. Another was a public affairs question to which I had no answer so I made up some blather.

Q: When you took this how were your domestic arrangements going to work out?

BUSHNELL: With my husband?

Q: Yeah.

BUSHNELL: He was encouraging me. I wondered how he would enjoy the Service once we got in – I knew what I was getting into, he did not. But, he was more than happy to give up law by that time. It was just time to move on. Of course, the biggest issue was his five children and how he could maintain a relationship with them and provide financial support. Ironically, while I was in town taking the Foreign Service exam, I had interviewed for a job at the Foreign Service Institute. They were looking for somebody to create the mid-level program, what then became the six-month mid-level program. And, because I had both a training and a Foreign Service background they wanted to see me.

Leaving Dallas was a wonderful adventure both for Dick and for me. We were returning to Washington as we waited to hear if I would get off the Register you are put on after passing the exams and I had gotten a terrific consulting job in town. We put all of our possessions, including our plants, in the back of a U-haul truck and drove to Washington, camping along the way. We would go into a National Park, and I'd take the ferns and the palms out and spritz them, and we'd set up our tent. It was so clear that we had ended a difficult chapter in our lives and this was a wonderful way to launch into the next. Everything we owned was in the back of this little U-haul.

Q: Were you working in Washington until you got, came in?

BUSHNELL: Yes. Four months after we arrived, I received two job offers. One was from FSI, the other from State personnel. I took the one that offered me the Foreign Service.

Q" So you joined in '81. How would you describe your A-100 course? I mean the composition and all?

BUSHNELL: A range of ages and backgrounds. Twelve of us were mid- level entrants – people didn't quite know what to do with us. It was clear that the mid-level people were

distinct from the others because we weren't all going off to consular tours and we had to compete for the jobs available. In my case it was for 03 Admin jobs.

Q: That would be the equivalent of the major level in the military. How did you feel about the administrative side, because you'd picked up from the culture that you know, administrative and consular offices were, you know not quite first class. Economic and political officers were first class.

BUSHNELL: I had no problem, although my father did. His mantra was "change cones. Become a political officer. You'll never get anywhere as an admin officer." But, I enjoyed management -- that's what I had done in the 15 years since graduating from college, first as a secretary, then doing administrative work with the Legal Services Training Program and, finally, moving into management training. I had no interest in political or economic work; I had no interest in becoming an ambassador. I went in with the intention of working in the Foreign Service for five years. I think I already mentioned that my parents were absolutely astounded that I joined to begin with, and I don't think they anticipated that my career would last for very long.

Q: Did you have any feel for the service? I mean, we'd had the hostage crisis by this time I think Bob Dillon had had his embassy blown up. Did you have any feel for the danger of the Foreign Service or was this a factor at all?

BUSHNELL: I didn't think about it. Having spent time in Karachi and Tehran, where, especially in Karachi, political demonstrations against Americans were common and sometimes violent, I certainly was aware of the danger, but it didn't in any way make me think twice. It was sort of, well, that's part of the package.

Q: Yeah. So, how did things develop?

BUSHNELL: I bid and got the GSO job in Dakar, Senegal. I was thrilled. Having grown up in Europe and the near Asia, I was looking forward to new horizons. I didn't need French language training because I had tested at 3-3. . The assignment was not opening up until summer and I finished A-100 in December, so I was looking at a pretty long gap before I needed to take the GSO and B&F training, and then finally going out to post. I was not interested in sitting around FSI, so I walked into the AF/EX office and said, "I've got six months until my job opens in Dakar; here I am, use me." That was one of the best career moves I ever made, although I didn't do it as a career move. I received an EER before I had even left Washington for my first assignment. I was working at what was then AF/I, now called Regional Affairs.

Q: AF/I that meant, regional for what part of that?

BUSHNELL: All of Africa south of the Sahara – 48 countries.

It just so happened that I walked in at the time of year when offices were crashing on human rights reports. This was before computers and e-mail. I came up with a flow chart

of each country's human rights report and where the reports were in the clearance process. One literally had to deal with pieces of paper, and if there were changes, the secretaries had to retype whole pages. Word processing was still pretty primitive.

Q: Let's see, the Wang was just coming in about that time.

BUSHNELL: I don't think we had Wang yet. At any rate, I considered the secretaries my constituents, because they were the people who had to deal with all of the changes. I would negotiate the changes so that they were minimal. I think I got the "well organized" gene from my mother. So, I got a wonderful performance evaluation. Who would have thought it? And then I went back to FSI for GSO training and then out to Dakar in '82 as the GSO and B&F Officer. Now, I thought it was a conflict of interest; a bad idea that I'd be made BFO and GSO. But they had wanted me to be both.

Q: Well, one spends money and the other checks on how you do it and this is not a good idea.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. It is not a good idea. Plus, I think I mentioned the other day that my foundation in math was never particularly good. Beforehand, I had said, "You don't want to do this." And the person said, "You either take the assignment as GSO and BFO or you say no to the assignment, okay?" I clearly was not about to do that! So, there I was, on my first tour with two offices; one in the B&F Office on the first floor and one on the second with Shipping and Customs. Dakar was a big regional hub for a number of inland countries, so we had considerable trans-shipments to take care of, as well as our own stuff.

Q: It was a regional hub. I mean, it was one of the few livable cities in that part of the world.

BUSHNELL: Right. It was a great tour.

Q: Who was the ambassador at the time?

BUSHNELL: Charlie Bray, who happened to have known my father. Dad was Executive Director of the American Foreign Service Association when it was first started and when Charlie Bray was very active.

Q: What was the situation of the Senegal when you got there? Would you describe it?

BUSHNELL: Abdou Diouf, who had been Number 2 under Senegal's first president since independence, had inherited the presidency when Senghor, known as the poet president, had ceded his position. Just before we arrived, Diouf ran for the presidency on his own. The United States was very taken by the smooth and the peaceful transition. It was (and still is) rare in Africa to see an elder statesman with the brains and the sense of service to step down.

Q: I'm interviewing now Phillip Kaiser who was ambassador there in the '60s. He talked about dealing with Senghor who was, apparently a delight.

BUSHNELL: Yes, he was an extraordinary person. Senegal and the U.S. had a great relationship. The government has always been very friendly to us, and we to the government. Dakar was an easy city with lots of great restaurants. Goree Island, from which thousands of people had been shipped to the Americas as slaves, was an International History Landmark and just off the coast. For many reasons, it was a wonderful first posting.

Q: Who was your administrative officer?

BUSHNELL: I had two. Stan Robinson was the Admin Officer for my first year, Don Hayes was Admin Officer the second year.

Q: Both the B&F side and the GSO thing. They are a lot of responsibility and these are supposed to be people who are well - the person with those jobs are supposed to know what they're doing.

BUSHNELL: You're right. One of the first things I did was to hire a spouse to be the bookkeeper in B&F, because I could do management stuff, but there was no way I was going to be the actual bookkeeper, actually keeping and totaling the sums up and stuff like that. Chuck Greco was the B&F person back in Washington. Chuck was and is a wonderful human being, and his office was very supportive of me. These were the days when the Executive Offices were kingdoms in and of themselves. This was a period when there was a fair amount of decentralization, so the Bureaus had a good deal of say over their money. Chuck, as I said, was very kind and patient with me.

Q: How did you find the Senegalese staff, the Foreign Service Nationals?

BUSHNELL: Great. I was promoted out of Dakar – even before I received tenure -- and I think the reasons were that I was comfortable dealing with people of other cultures and I had practical management experience. I respected FSNs and they respected me. In addition, the Senegalese are lovely people.

Q: Was there a French cast to the way they did things and all that you knew or was it a mainly Senegalese?

BUSHNELL: It was Senegalese. They are very warm and charming.

Q: How did you find the Senegalese bureaucracy, because the GSO more than anyone else has to deal with getting clearances, getting things done?

BUSHNELL: Entrenched, slow and needing a lot of hand-holding. We would hire expeditors to get our things out of customs. I found that through GSO work you get an interesting insight. For example, I was at a Country Team meeting once, filling in for the

Admin Officer and, when it came my turn to say something I focused on the sudden problems we were having getting our pouches cleared through customs. I asked if anyone knew if the Senegalese government was upset about something. Evidently, it was. It didn't occur to anyone that there could be consequences in the administrative operation.

Q: Did you while you were there, pick up any of the resentment about who are you coming in as a mid career or was that a Washington phenomenon?

BUSHNELL: That was very much of a Washington phenomenon. What people at post cared about was whether their goods had cleared customs! I met people at their most stressful moments, arriving and leaving post. People were interested in how effective you were at your job, not how you had entered the Service.

More of an issue was the fact that my husband came as a so-called "dependent" (now termed "family member"). Remember, until the mid 70's women officers who married were expected to resign. This embassy had experience with only one other male spouse, and that was not a good experience. Within the first month of our arrival at post, Dick was offered a job. He had both accounting and legal skills to offer. About a week later, a group of women spouses came to the house very put-out that Dick had gotten the job so quickly when they had been unable to get one at all. They felt, probably correctly, that the administration of the mission had thought that a male spouse had better find decent work soon. I felt very ambivalent. On the one hand, I understood exactly what they were saying; and on the other hand, I thought, why are you mad at me? It's not my fault. Do you want me to tell Dick to quit the job? I certainly didn't want him to.

Q: Were you able to put your real beliefs into some action about doing something about this or were you too far down on the totem pole?

BUSHNELL: No. It was my first post. I was checking things out -- how things work, where I fit, and that Dick be accepted. He was. The second year, Dick applied for and got the job as Community Liaison Officer – I think he was one of the first men to have that position in the world – without any fuss.

I was given a wonderful challenge to prove myself by Ambassador Bray. Dakar was one of the posts chosen for as a "designated language post." This was an effort to see if it was possible to make every direct hire, including Marine guards, language speakers at least to the FSI 2 grade level. I was fluent in French and Bray clearly thought I could handle taking this over along with my other responsibilities. So, I became post language officer. The program was ultimately deemed unfeasible – in Dakar the ambassador's secretary had to leave because she could not (would not) achieve the minimum 2/2. I won't even talk about the Marines.

Q: How about on the social side? Was there much contact with the Senegalese at your level or not?

BUSHNELL: Well, we had the staff over a couple of times, but I didn't do much

representational entertaining. I wasn't expected to, and didn't.

Q: Today is the 27th of July, 2005. Alright, you were in Dakar for two years, then off to Bombay which is now called what?

BUSHNELL: Mumbai

Q: I suspect it will stay Bombay for most people for a long time. Anyway, you were in Bombay from when to when?

BUSHNELL: 1984 to 1986 as the Administrative Officer.

Q: First, let's go to India as a whole and then we'll go to Bombay. What was the state of India, particularly the vis a vis, U.S. and Indian relations at that time?

BUSHNELL: Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister and angry at the U.S. Relations were not good. She threw out American businesses, for example. There were significant strains between the Indian government and the United States government, which made us all the more grateful that we were in Bombay and not New Delhi. Bombay was a very cosmopolitan city, home of "Bollywood," and movie stars, as well as Parsees – Zoroastrians who had fled Persia many years before and who had a significant impact on the culture in Bombay. I found New Delhi to be far less friendly.

Q: From other interviews I learned there wasn't a lot of love lost I think there. How did you find it in Bombay?

BUSHNELL: The city was overwhelming. Twenty mission people (at that time) on a narrow peninsula. There was scarcely any room so there were very few houses left. Instead, you had high-rise buildings and lots and lots and lots of people in the streets, sleeping, raising families and doing everything. It was also a practice in Bombay to honk your horn when the traffic light turned from red to green. So, you had a cacophony of noise, odors, heat and overwhelming population. Dick and I had a conversation about six weeks after arrival about how we were going to survive this experience, and we decided that the way was to get out of Bombay as frequently as possible. We traveled a lot around western India, which was terrific.

Professionally, I found it challenging, because I was the first woman to hold the position of Admin Officer. A lot of Indians felt very uncomfortable dealing with a woman and made no bones about it. The first time I met the Chief of Police he stared and said, "I can't believe the United States of America would send a woman to do this job"! The status of women was abominable. In addition, there were tensions among the FSNs that I had not seen in Senegal. I found it difficult to form teams among the people with whom I worked at the Consulate. It's not that I didn't enjoy most of the people as individuals, I just couldn't get the supervisors to see themselves as part of a larger team. So I stopped even having staff meetings. I've always regretted that. I think I should have put more effort into it.

Q: Well, sometimes you're up against something bigger and a two year assignment is too short to change the culture.

BUSHNELL: Well, there was an awful lot going on at the time, as well. Bombay was the point in my career when I began facing disasters. Twice when I was "acting" in the absence of the Consul General, we had crises. First, when Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated and then when the Union Carbide plant in Bophol, which was in our consular district, experienced a chemical leak that killed I don't know how many people, and injured thousands and thousands more. The British Consul General was assassinated during our tour, and we had the fall-out from President Reagan's decision to bomb Libya. Lots of demonstrations in front of the consulate. I was the post security officer, so Harry Cahill, our CG would always send me out to face them. "You're such a nice lady, they won't know what to do, and they certainly won't harm you," he would say.

Q: The assassination of Indira Gandhi, what happens when the head of state, well the prime minister of the state is assassinated? Do we automatically bring the flag down -

BUSHNELL: Ah, interesting that you ask that, because that was "the" issue of the day, whether to bring the flag down. I was so happy when dusk finally came, and I could pull that flag off the flagpole. Rumors were rampant about whether or not the Prime Minister had actually been killed, and the Indian government was stonewalling, so we didn't know what to do with the flag during most of the day. Fortunately, the Public Affairs Officer, Alan Gilbert, had prior experience when President Sadat was assassinated in Egypt. Alan called me and recounted that when our embassy in Cairo lowered the flag before the Foreign Ministry, it got into a heap of trouble. His advice to me was, "Don't lower the flag no matter what until the Indian government lowers its flag." And, that was absolutely the correct instruction.

Q: Yeah. It's the sort of thing you wouldn't think about really.

BUSHNELL: Or you think, who cares and who's watching? But, lots of people were watching. We had crowds in front of the consulate demonstrating, because we had not lowered the flag. Later, the Chief of Protocol telephoned to complain that we had. I was just grateful that we'd abided by the rules of protocol.

Q: What was the reaction in Bombay? This was Sikhs who killed Mrs. Gandhi. This is obviously not a Sikh area, but what was the reaction there?

BUSHNELL: There was the natural horror that people experience when your head of state is assassinated. There wasn't any kind of hate; people were sad and left it at that.

Q: You mentioned that the area was what? Was it Parsee? What was the prominent religion?

BUSHNELL: Hinduism, then Islam. Parsees originally came from Iran and were

Zoroastrians, which I think, was the first monotheistic religion in the world.

Q: Were there religious-based riots?

BUSHNELL: Not as many as you hear about now. The fundamentalist Hindu Party had almost no political power. That said, I always had the feeling in Bombay that a spark could ignite at any time because of the density of the population.

Q: I would think that you as the Administrative Officer and responsible for people and security officer, that Americans driving there must have given you great concern.

BUSHNELL: Few of us had cars and a shuttle took people to and from work. The consulate motor pool was large enough to accommodate those who wanted to rent a vehicle and hire a driver. Taxis were also plentiful – and dangerous.

Q: Just steam right through the crowd?

BUSHNELL: Yep. Or that you wouldn't run into a wall. We actually did not lose anybody from a traffic accident.

Q: With your local staff, you're saying you almost had to deal with them individually. This must have been very difficult, wasn't it? Could you communicate to, because there's times when you just want to tell everybody, we're going to be doing this, or we've got this problem coming up or something?

BUSHNELL: Well, I would have meetings, but people would sit in silence. After, people would phone me but they wouldn't say much of anything in front of anyone. It was rather frustrating. But, we got a lot accomplished, including finding properties, which was an excruciating task. Housing was going at something like $3,000 a square foot – this was 1982, mind you. A lot of landlords wanted offshore payment so they wouldn't have to pay taxes, which we, of course, were prohibited from doing. This diminished my negotiating leverage considerably. But it was OK to offer cash, so I did. One landlord picked up $96,000 in hundred rupee notes that we had put in two or three liquor boxes.

Q: How about on the local staff. What about women? At most posts women are the backbone of our foreign national staff, because we usually offer a better deal for women than most other businesses. How about in Bombay?

BUSHNELL: Let's see. My secretary was a woman, as well as the personnel, protocol and travel people. Also, the head consular FSN.

Q: Bhopal. This sent shock waves around the world. In a way, I got the feeling that the Indians really enjoyed this. I mean, it's the wrong term, but I mean this is a chance to really stick it to the United States and to capitalism and all that. When it happened, did the embassy realize that they had a horrible situation on their hands? Were they sending any help down or instructions or how did it work?

BUSHNELL: The embassy took over, although when the Union Carbide CEO, Warren Anderson, came rushing in, he stopped at the Consulate. I remember strongly advising him not to go to Bhopal but he did. He was arrested within minutes and, once he was plunked in jail, it became a bilateral issue that was dealt with in Delhi.

Q: You said a British Consul General was killed. Why?

BUSHNELL: You know, I don't know that we ever found out. I think it was thought originally that it was an act of terrorism, but then, ultimately, there were rumors that this was private.

Q: Although you were the Administrative Officer, you getting reflections from, I would imagine the consular section would. Isn't, this is the area of India where all the motel people came?

BUSHNELL: Yes, from Gujarat. We had huge, long visa lines. I remember I wanted to put in new bathrooms, because we had inadequate facilities. I thought I was being really clever when I sent a cable to Delhi talking about the number of toilets we had, the average number of visa applicants we had per day, the average time they were in the waiting room and, therefore, the average number of flushes the toilets had. And therefore, after oh six zillion flushes, we needed new toilets, and they sent back another cable saying, "Nice cable, nice try, no money." We had money for security after our embassy in Beirut was blown up in 1983, but not for toilets in Bombay!

As a result of the Inman Commission which looked into the vulnerabilities of overseas embassies, Congress gave funding for security upgrades. I spent my last year taking apart and rebuilding the consulate, especially the consular section. The consulate was a former Maharaja palace and looked like one, so we had to work carefully. And I had a really good time. We needed to put in watch towers, so I went out to a local architect to see if he could design something in keeping with the architecture. It looked like it was part of the original design. Yeah, it was a great deal of fun. I enjoyed being Admin Officer, actually.

Q: Well, you're doing things.

BUSHNELL: Right and fairly autonomously. You know, if you're taking care of people's needs, and providing good services, by and large people leave you alone to do your job, and I really enjoyed that.

Q: You mentioned you were a security officer and dealing with the police and all. Are you saying you had problems?

BUSHNELL: Some. But, ultimately, I had good relations. The police official I dealt with most was the head of the traffic police. And I thought, oh what a job you have! I got along with him very well. The Bombay International School was right across the street,

and the children would use the consulate grounds as their play ground. They literally had to dodge cars careening around the corner. I wanted to get a traffic policeman to stop the traffic as the children walked across the street, which I ultimately did.

We also had lots of bomb threats, so I got to know the people with the sniffer dogs pretty well. I found that after a couple of encounters I would get along well with whomever I needed to. But it took a huge amount of energy. When we got on a plane to leave Bombay, I felt a huge weight lift off of me. Part came from relief from the responsibilities but also from expending so much effort to get the kind of attention I needed from Indian officials – getting them to deal with me, whatever they thought, and with respect.

Q: What were the bomb threats about?

BUSHNELL: Our policies. U.S.-Indian relations were not very good. Plus, the sub-continent has never been the safest area of the world. Airplane hijackings were fairly frequent, and I think it was then that the Air India flight was hijacked. It was a high-threat environment, and the bomb threats just became a part of it.

Q: Did you get involved with Bollywood; this is the movie industry in Bombay.

BUSHNELL: No, not really. We did enjoy lots of other aspects of Indian art. So much of it is public art. The huge posters advertising movies were all done by hand and some were just incredible. The architecture in Bombay was also amazing. When I first went there, all I saw were buildings with green mold oozing down because of the effects of humidity on the limestone. But, once you began to look beyond, there was amazing architecture.

Q: That's a big arch there isn't there?

BUSHNELL: Yes, called the Gateway to India.

Q: What was your husband doing there?

BUSHNELL: He did some consulting work with the embassy, and he served as a consular associate at the consulate. In those days, associates could work the visa lines, so that's what he did. For one year he was the principal of the Bombay International School. He was good. He did the job that needed to be done, and I think people were very grateful.

Q: What was his impression of the visa lines?

BUSHNELL: Overwhelming. After we returned to the United States and we were in some store, I heard my husband's name being called, and it was an Indian woman who came up and said, "I want to thank you for the visa you gave me. I got another one." [laughter]

Q: What about the Soviets? Were they still doing their thing? I mean, they had very close relationships with the Indians, certainly up in New Delhi. How was that played out in Bombay?

BUSHNELL: I didn't get involved in political issues. The CG didn't talk about them in staff meetings. The Soviets were not players in my world. My only encounter was a Russian who came at the signing the condolence book for the assassinated Prime Minister. The CG had broken his arm and wanted me with him to sign the book. My instructions were to sign the book ahead of the Soviets. It was critically important. It seemed pretty silly, but okay. The only Indian woman present – the only other woman in that mass of people -- either deliberately or inadvertently helped me cut short the rigid protocol, which gave me a great spot in the long line waiting to sign the condolence book. The Soviet CG then arrived with a huge wreath and jumped the queue. I was not going to cede my place, so we literally stepped up to the table together, facing the television cameras. He had two choices: elbow me out of the way or behave like a gentleman, which is what he did. So, I got there first. Another triumph for our side!

Q: But it does show these little games that are played, that sometimes can be in some people's eyes important.

BUSHNELL: I suppose. I found it a little amusing. Had I been a man, it would never have played out that way.

Q: No. What was social life like there?

BUSHNELL: We had a nice community and would get together often. The consulate rented a beach hut –you can't do this anymore --a few miles out of town. Representational events also came frequently because Bombay was India's commercial capital.

Q: I was wondering whether you found that since Bombay was a big commercial center and there's some people with lots of money in India.

BUSHNELL: Oh, incredible.

Q: Did you get addicted to Indian movies or not?

BUSHNELL: No, I got addicted to Indian food. Bombay had wonderful restaurants. I learned what a difference freshly ground spices make. Also, Dick and I traveled at every opportunity.

Q: How was the head of the embassy there?

BUSHNELL: Pretty light. Harry Barnes was ambassador the first year, and I can't remember the name of the ambassador the second year. He was a political person, a non-

career person. Harry Barnes had a very light touch. His replacement did not. He would no longer allow Bombay to send cables out -- everything had to go through Delhi for clearance before going out, so you had a different atmosphere.

Q: How about the administrative side?

BUSHNELL: Very light. I was almost autonomous. The most interaction I had was with the budget people and the regional security officer was when we were doing the physical upgrades. The embassy and consulate admin sections orbited their own universes -- didn't even have annual conferences.

Q: Your tour was up in '86. You're off, wither?

BUSHNELL: Foreign Service Institute. Ambassador Jane Coon, who was the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, actually called Bombay to recruit me. I was thrilled at the personal attention. Evidently, the mid-level management training program, mandated by the Foreign Service Act of 1980, had been declared a failure. This was the program for which I had been offered the job in '82. Whoever designed the program decided to give people all of the training they would every need. Ever. So, FSOs were taken out of the system for 5 or 6 months. Wrong approach! There was total rebellion.

So, we came back to the States and bought a house in Reston, VA -- FSI was in Rosslyn at the time. I was given the title of Director of Executive Development, a staff of 3 people, a budget of about $100,000 and the instructions to "create a program for the O-1 level that will be equally applicable to all cones. It cannot be more than two weeks. Good luck."

Q: Well, I'd taken something. I think it was a week we went out to a place on the Chesapeake for a week and had a, this was back in the '70s I think. You know, I mean people who were about the O-1 level. It wasn't bad as a matter of fact. But, it was I think called mid career or something like that. But, you had nothing particularly to work on at that point. I mean, the other, the five months thing had been discarded by that time?

BUSHNELL: Right. It was one of the most wonderful experiences in my career. In addition to creating the new course, we had a number of other courses to oversee, including the DCM course. The same contractors had been running the DCM course for eons; some of the case studies still had people going to Vietnam, for heaven's sake! I decided that we needed to redo the DCM course, as well as design the new one. Some of my colleagues said, "No way can you do it. It can't be done Pru. You're not going to be able to do it. There's no way you can put consular, admin, econ and political officers together and give them the same training." This was a time when a lot of folks considered that "training is for dogs" and would have no problem saying that to our faces. Ambassadors and DCMs who would proudly declare, "Morale isn't my issue. If people don't like the post they can leave." Management was what admin officers did, not what DCMs or anybody else did. It was a word that was laden with negative connotations. So, I changed the focus of the new course from management to "leadership." We called it the

Foreign Affairs Leadership Seminar.

Judy Kaufmann was working with me and we called in consultants to help us design. We started by soliciting names of senior career people considered to be good leaders.

Q: Corridor reputation basically.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. We then went out and interviewed them face to face. We would send them the question ahead of time: "Think of a time when you were exercising leadership effectively. If there had been a video camera there, what would that camera have seen you do?" We got access to very senior-level people, including Roz Ridgeway, who was Assistant Secretary of EUR at the time, because shoot, who doesn't like reflecting on a really good job done as others take notes. We interviewed in pairs - one would take notes while the other asked questions. Then, we'd race back to write the notes up, scrubbing them for any classified information. We then handed them over to outside consultants, because we wanted fresh eyes to look at this. The consultants extracted themes from over 20 interviews. These were then given to an advisory group of senior people to consider. We knew we needed to get senior people interested in training or else they would never let their staffs out of their offices.

Q: It's the hardest thing in the world.

BUSHNELL: It is a hard thing. The themes that emerged were astounding to me because they included skills like team leadership, active listening and advocacy. Things we seldom saw in practice – at least I didn't – much less heard about as valuable. Once we had the priority themes, or skills, we started the design process.

Q: Where did the contractors come from? Did you find them coming up with good ideas?

BUSHNELL: Yes. I had been a contractor, a training contractor before I joined the Foreign Service, so I knew their world. I knew what role they could play that would be helpful to me, and I knew what my role was, which was to take that which made sense and discard that which wouldn't work in our culture. Judy Kaufman was particularly good at this -- she was very vigilant about what would work, what kind of vocabulary to use, etc. That was very important. We also decided to break the mold – to make this training completely different from the kind of training people were used to and complained about. I mean, you don't train people on how to build teams by just talking about it. The contractors came up with the suggestion that we look at outward-bound kinds of exercises for the team building. So, that's what I decided to try.

Q: Could you explain what outward bound types of exercises?

BUSHNELL: Outward-bound exercises are physical challenges, like going down zip wires. As a group you take on physical challenges that look very difficult but can be accomplished if you use team effort. It is a wonderful technique for teaching people some fundamental lessons about achieving success as a group. You can structure the challenges

in a variety of ways and turn them into metaphors that fit the real world. You ask people to set objectives, decide on the leader, figure out the problem and the solution.

The reason I liked the concept so well is that it would put everyone on an equal footing, no matter what their experience, career track, etc. FSI had never used this as a training mechanism. I was very lucky because Charlie Bray, who had been my ambassador in Senegal, was the head of FSI, and Bill Swing was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in Human Resources. We went out together to try some of these challenges ourselves and they became very enthusiastic.

I used strict criteria to decide the level of difficulty, beginning with whether or not I could accomplish the challenge. I figured if I could do it, anybody could do it. There was no way that I was going to stress people out; the Foreign Service was stressful enough. The last thing I wanted was macho behavior. I was very conscious of my role, both as a creator of a training design and as a female, to get exercises that would be challenging, but something everybody could do whether you were an athlete or not or whether you're uncomfortable with heights, which I am. So, as an example, I threw out the zip wire -- it was terrifying.

Q: Going down a wire on a?

BUSHNELL: Actually, we climbed a tree about eight feet up. It looked pretty high to me, and we walked out on a plank. It was a wide plank and you were in a harness, but still it was a plank eight feet off the ground with nothing to hold onto. At the edge of the canyon, someone straps the harness to a thick, steel wire and you go zooming over the canyon to the other side. I was terrified. I did it because I was too scared to walk the plank back to the tree, but I swore that I put anyone else through such fear.

We also made use of video cameras. I'd had this training background, right, and I had studied men at mid-life. I knew these people. I also knew what masks we wear in the Foreign Service. So, the aim was getting behind the mask in a very collaborative environment. In other words, not forcing it, but just enabling people to do it. Taping someone and showing her how she looks to others can be a powerful tool. We'd have people watch the tapes of themselves in private and I'd hear exclamations like: "Oh my God, my wife has been telling me for 25 years that I do that and I didn't believe her!"

Q: What was the feedback from the leadership course?

BUSHNELL: It was wonderful. The course lasted 15 years, largely unchanged. I was the one who decided to "kill" it when I returned to FSI in 2002 because we were the capstone course Colin Powell wanted and we couldn't do both. There is a whole community of people in the Department who still have warm feelings about the course.

Q: How did you find the various cones and others, but basically I assume you had USIA people in there too?

BUSHNELL: No. This was before we had them.

Q: Well, they had an admin, political, economic and consular. Was there a difference? I mean, did you find differences in ways of approach and that sort of thing or not?

BUSHNELL: No. The kinds of exercises we chose put everyone at the same level. When you think about it, leadership is not a function of any particular career track. It's a function of the individual and we focused on "leadership from the inside, out." That is, starting understanding yourself and what you have to contribute before you move into the skills of working with others.

We found the outdoor exercise in team-building so effective, we incorporated them into the DCM course when we redesigned it. As I watched people go through the exercises, I could see their leadership qualities – or lack. Now, I could think, "This person's going to be real good, or that person's not going to be very good."

Q: Okay, you can find out that some people are leaders and some aren't, but they've been slated to be in leadership positions so what do you do?

BUSHNELL: That's been an issue that you deal with a lot in training. What if the person you are helping to prepare for an important job is a total misfit? Do you report on it? Our training teams and I wrestled with that issue both times I was at FSI and we continued to come to the same conclusion. No, you do not report! The training function is not an evaluation function. If people are going to learn they've got to open themselves up, and that means they need to trust. Double-cross just once and no one will open up again. There's another important issue at stake, too. If I can detect that someone is a jerk within three days of knowing him/her, you better believe that a lot of people in the system who have seen this person perform for 20 years know that he or she is a jerk, too. Putting the onus for selection and performance judgments on trainers is both wrong and lousy management.

Q: Well, sometimes one wonders about the diplomatic process of how we recruit and the experience and yet they still come out.

BUSHNELL: Right. I'm not the Director General. I run a training outfit. My job is to provide cutting edge opportunities to learn, and that's it.

Q: Well, did the contractors and other people ever sit around with you and say, "You know the Foreign Service seems to have certain types of people."

BUSHNELL: Absolutely, oh yeah. One of the things they would say is, "You know, every organization says it's different but usually it isn't. Except State Department. It really is different. I don't know if you're familiar with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Q: Yeah, I've taken that thing on the internet.

BUSHNELL: Okay, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is one of the most popular non-therapeutic personality tests. It measures certain qualities of personality. It doesn't measure whether you're a nice person or not. It just measures how you take in information, how you make decisions, things like that. Over 60 percent of the Senior Foreign Service is made up of people who comprise 12 percent of the American population. Some would say we specifically recruit for these kinds of people. So, it's no wonder that we have a certain "type." I think this is changing. We have so much more diversity now than there was at that time and diversity not just in terms of gender and race and language, but diversity in terms of.....

Q: Outlook.

BUSHNELL: Outlook, exactly. It's no wonder that you could put labels on people in the Foreign Service.

Q: You did this for how long?

BUSHNELL: Three years. Can I give you an anecdote about the mind set of some back then?

Q: Yes, please.

BUSHNELL: This is an example of the times and how far we've come. As I mentioned, I did the DCM training, part of which was also offsite at a place West Virginia. Over dinner one night, an older fellow who was waxing eloquent about how things used to be. "The Foreign Service has never been the same since…..," he said. I expected him to finish with, "since we began accepting women and minorities." But, he didn't. He said, "The Foreign Service has never been the same since we began accepting people from land grant colleges."

Q: How wonderful!

BUSHNELL: Can you imagine anybody saying that today? Would never happen, thank goodness.

Q: Oh yeah. Diplomacy has been renowned for years for having people with attitudes, and protocol and you do this and you do that in a way that extends over to the background of people and wanting to know who you are. The stud book and the whole thing.

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: But, this must have been fun.

BUSHNELL: Oh, it was wonderful. I loved it! And, it was a major turning point in my career. When I decided to go to the FSI, a number of people said, "Why are you doing

this? This is not career-enhancing. You know, it's bad enough you're an Admin Officer, but if you spend three years at FSI you will go nowhere." Well, as a result of the Foreign Affairs Leadership and DCM seminars, I got to interact with senior people in the Department. Mary Ryan, who was Special Assistant for the Undersecretary for Management called me one day to say, "I think you should be a DCM and I will be happy to help you." Wow! I'd never thought of becoming a DCM, but it was because of this non-career-enhancing job and doing what I loved doing and doing what I was good at, taking the challenge and making a success of it that my career took a detour, and I have never been in an admin job since.

Q: During the time you were working at the FSI, George Shultz was the Secretary of State wasn't he?

BUSHNELL: Yes.

Q: Although I don't imagine he came down and chatted with you and all, but did you feel that we had a Secretary of State who was interested in the system? Most Secretaries of State are not interested in training and management and all. Did you get any feel for that?

BUSHNELL: Very much so. It was Shultz who insisted that money be put aside to purchase the property on which the FSI now stands. There was great pressure to spend money on other things, but he didn't give into it. We very much got the sense that Shultz was interested in the organization, not just the policy.

Q; Colin Powell being the other exception.

BUSHNELL: Correct. When Powell was around, people would say, "Not since George Shultz have we had somebody who is so interested in the organization." I would say that's true because both Shultz and Powell had management and leadership in their backgrounds. . Most people who become Secretaries of State don't.

Q: Yeah. Well then, what is it now 80 what?

BUSHNELL: '89.

Q: '89. You're up to be a DCM.

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: What sort of feeders did you get, because this is, the ambassador essentially selects the DCM.

BUSHNELL: Correct. I was on the list for Ghana but the ambassador wanted an econ officer. I was so, so disappointed. Meanwhile, my colleague, Judy Kaufmann's husband, George Moose, had been tapped for Senegal.

Q: I've interviewed Judy by the way.

BUSHNELL: Good, she's a really neat person. I didn't know George, though I had met him. After I had been turned down for Ghana I felt the need to rehearse my potential as DCM, notwithstanding my background as Admin. So, I asked George, "Have you ever interviewed a DCM?" "No." "Well, I need to be interviewing ambassadors. Do you mind getting together? You can give me feedback about how I present myself and I can give you feedback, given my experience in Senegal, about the kind of DCM you may want. We did the session in the cafeteria. Not long after, George offered the DCM position to me. So, five years after Dick and I had left Dakar as CLO and Supervisory GSO respectively, we returned as DCM and spouse. The FSNs were thrilled -- GSO makes good! They sent a big bouquet of flowers to welcome me on the first day and for the first few weeks, they would give me wonderful encouragement. I would see them in the elevators and they would say, "Oh, you're going to do a wonderful job. You're doing a great job. Continue, you'll be fine, don't worry about it."

Q: So you were there from 1989 until?

BUSHNELL: '92.

Q: Again, what was the situation in Senegal when you got there?

BUSHNELL: Well, by now, Abdou Diouf, to whom the first president of Senegal Senghor had handed off the presidency, had won elections on his own merits. The ecology and economy of the country remained fragile. University students rioted frequently because of proposed cuts to their subsidies. The political opposition was active. In the south of the country, a separatist movement, which had emerged now and then over the years, was once again causing problems to the government and in the north of the country, refugees from Mauritania remained a burden. There was a little bit of everything but, by comparison to other countries on the continent, none of the issues was overwhelming.

Q: How did George Moose use you?

BUSHNELL: He used me as the chief operating officer with significant management and coordination responsibilities. Inspectors who came the first year thought I was too focused on management and should be doing more reporting but I strongly resisted because I thought that should be the primary responsibility of the reporting officers, not mine. It was indicative of the Department's culture to place a higher priority on reporting than anything else.

Q: Well, because this has been the doom of so many DCMs because they did not manage and they just were enjoying themselves as political or economic officers just at a slightly high –

BUSHNELL: Right, and frankly, there wasn't all that much to report in Senegal. I mean, it's a pretty small country. In fact, George and the political officer would sometimes get in each other's way in terms of contacts, because there just wasn't that much going on. The portfolio I did take on, which I really loved, was the separatist movement and the rebellion going down in the south. George would send me down periodically to see what was going on and whether it was safe enough for Peace Corps volunteers.

Q: It sounds a little bit like the Biafra experience.

BUSHNELL: Yeah, although far less violent. There were people killed, but it did not have the consequences of Biafra.

Q: Did the group, the Christian group, did they have special attributes within the economy or something? I mean, you know, the Biafrans, I guess there Ebos were very much the office workers, entrepreneurs and all that in Nigeria.

BUSHNELL: No, I think the separatists felt marginalized and concerned that they were not getting the resources due them. The Casamance area is very different from the northern part of Senegal – different ethnic groups; different environment and climate; different religion. Some felt they were not getting their fair share of respect or attention. The political manifesto of the separatists, however, was pretty ill-defined.

Q: Well now, you had regional responsibilities. How did that work with your responsibilities?

BUSHNELL: The regional responsibilities were primarily in the management area. There was the regional personnel office. We did budget work and certainly shipping and customs was a primary focus. I was very familiar with that.

When you look at the neighborhood, Senegal was the dominant country. Guinea Bissau was a very small country. Mali was going through a transition from a military dictatorship to eventually a civilian democracy, but things were sort of tenuous. Mauritania was not much to talk of and still had slavery. So, when you looked around the neighborhood at who was the principal actor or partner with the United States, who had the greatest interface, it was Senegal.

Q: Was Qadhafi messing around there at that point?

BUSHNELL: In the region, yes, but not in Senegal, which was pretty conservative. Lockerbie was the primary political issue associated with Libya. The first Gulf War and the war in Liberia were of greater import to us.

Q: You were the safe haven for Liberia weren't you?

BUSHNELL: We were a transit point for a number of embassies. Dakar was a peaceful regional hub with good international air links.

Q: What was the role of the French there by this time?

BUSHNELL: Very strong. Dakar had been the capital of French West Africa and the French retained jealous feelings about the country. They were fully entrenched commercially; they had troops in the country and important political and financial relationships. It was a known secret that a lot of money was going back and forth. There were definitely relationships there between people in high places in the French government and people in Senegal.

The French were very suspicious of our interests and growing influence in the region and before George Moose arrived, relations between the Americans and the French embassies had deteriorated completely. George was determined that we would get along better so he had me interact with the new French DCM – a very nice man. We frankly had a wonderful time going out to one of Dakar's many lovely restaurants once a month to size up one another's activities. I let him order the wine.

Q: Was it a happy embassy would you say?

BUSHNELL: I think it was a very happy embassy. That's not to say that everybody in the embassy was happy. We had delightful lovely weather, because Dakar is at the end of a peninsula. Senegalese are very nice people. There were plenty of restaurants, two Club Meds in the country, a fair number of things to do and a good sized community. Once a year, over George Washington's birthday, we would be the hosts of the West African Invitational Softball – WAIST Tournament. Teams from missions in the region would gather to play three days of constant softball. It was fun.

Also, George Moose cared about the mission and people know when the ambassador cares. We took the Mission Program Plan and the process of setting objectives seriously but as an embassy, I think we were fairly relaxed.

Q: Did you get any high level visits there?

BUSHNELL: Yeah, we got lots of high-level visits. If you're going to Africa, chances are you will come through Dakar to refuel. We had the VIP visit routine down pat. It included the requisite trip to Goree Island from which millions of people were shipped to the new world.

Q: This is a slave citadel?

BUSHNELL: Yes. An international historic landmark. So, yes we got lots and lots of visitors. Kathy Shirley replaced George as ambassador when he and Judy Kaufmann left in 1992. She continued the tradition. And, like George, she was a terrific person to work for and a very popular ambassador.

Q: Well, I'm just looking at the time. It's probably a good time to stop. We'll pick this up

in 1989 or?

BUSHNELL: ’92.

Q: ’92. What happens then?

BUSHNELL: The Senior Seminar.

Q: Alright, we’ll pick it up then.

BUSHNELL: Good.

Q: Today is the 28th of July, 2005. Pru, I’d like to ask one question going back to India. Can you talk a little about being an Administrative Officer and the bureaucracy? I saw some of this when I served in the Gulf. Can you talk a little about your experiences with Indian bureaucracies as an Administrative Officer?

BUSHNELL: A lot of Indians maintained vestiges of the Brits as they ruled in the 30’s and 40’s. Everything stopped for tea, for example. Airline reservations had to be confirmed in person and noted by hand in a huge logbook. This part has changed, of course, but when computers first came in, you had to show up to confirm the reservation in the log book and in the computer.

Q: I’m trying to capture periods. How about custom clearances?

BUSHNELL: I had to personally sign every single coupon that went on our pouch bags. You were not allowed to use a signature stamp; you had to personally sign each of the four tickets that went on each pouch. I kept a stack at the side of my desk to sign a bunch at a time. Couldn’t use initials, had to be your full name and mine is long. Thank goodness I didn’t have a middle name..

Literally millions of commuters would come to Bombay every day. Their lunches would be sent to them from their homes through an extraordinary system of pickup and delivery. Imagine millions of lunch boxes that have to be personally delivered to the office and then returned to the home before the end of the day. The “tiffen” boxes, as they were called, would be picked up at the homes by bicyclists, organized at the local train station to go to specific spots where they would be redistributed and delivered by bicycle. After lunch, the reverse. It was extraordinary.

Another example of incredible efficiency is the fact that traffic actually flowed in a city that size crammed into that small an area. There were huge numbers of people in rickshaws, bullock carts, donkey carts, trucks, bicycles, buses and feet, yet traffic moved.

Q: Well now, go back. You went to the Senior Seminar. This is from when to when?

BUSHNELL: I was in Senior Seminar from 1992 to ’93.

Q: Could you talk a little about the composition of your class? What class was this by the way?

BUSHNELL: 35th, 36th, something like that. Half of us came from State – about 15 of us. The other half came from other agencies, including all branches of the military, AID, USIS, FBI, CIA and Customs. Twenty five men and five women.

Q: The program became quite controversial and you beheaded it during your tenure at the Leadership and Management School. What did it do? What was the program and how did you find it?

BUSHNELL: It was a great program. It was started in the '50s as a way to get people who had done good work overseas for a number of years to become reacquainted with the United States. Every class designed its own program – whom we would invite to speak, what trips we would take and what we would do. A lot, of course, had become routine over the years. The first trip was to Alaska, for example, and the military bases we visited were pretty well spelled out. But, what was there not to like? The greatest stresses I had were what to pack and how to stay awake during endless military briefings.

Our exposure to different kinds of people and different issues around the U.S. was wonderful. We were also allowed to play with a lot of military toys which was great.

Q: You're talking about?

BUSHNELL: Shooting weapons; driving a humvee; riding in Bradley vehicles and tanks. Oh, I also jumped off a 35-foot tower.

Q: This is with your fear of heights?

BUSHNELL: Yeah. I considered the atmosphere of my class to be macho and frankly, anti-women. We were constantly being told that we had taken all of the senior jobs around town. Anyway, when we were told that we were going to jump off a 35-foot tower, I subjected all these guys to a lecture about what true courage was -- defying group pressure to choose not to jump. I was priming them for my likely response when I got there.

When I got up to the top, a wonderful sergeant who clearly had done this with terrified paratroopers many times before, got me to the edge, heels on the ledge and toes in thin air, hands poised on either side of the opening to push myself off. Then, he said, "Ma'am, don't look down, keep your eyes on the horizon." And, whoom, down I went! Wow, what a rush! I was actually tempted to do it again. As we did more of these kind of things I discovered testosterone I never knew I had. No wonder guys love it.

We would have interesting conversations among ourselves, and some very heated. One started because a military colleague accused me of batting my eyelashes to get ahead.

Boy that pushed my button. I told him to knock it off because he'd been getting ahead by virtue of being a white male. These exchanges were done partly in fun and partly in earnest. When I left the Seminar early to take my next job, though, it was the military people who roasted me.

Q: Why did you later do away with the program?

BUSHNELL: With ease of travel, e-mail, internet, etc., it had outlived its function. People didn't need to go around the country to learn what it was all about. It was very expensive, and, frankly, too long. It was a nine-month program. By the end of it, you took for granted the quality of speakers and everything else. We turned into real brats – so did other classes. Secretary Powell hated it. Really wanted it gone. So, when we were designing the capstone leadership seminar that was to be mandatory for everyone promoted into senior ranks, Kathy Peterson, who was Director of FSI at the time, and I decided to let it go. I had mixed feeling about it but, ultimately, it was the right thing to do.

Q: Well, after the Seminar, then, what happened?

BUSHNELL: Wow! This was when I first got a taste of destiny.

Q: What was it?

BUSHNELL: Destiny. I've never before believed in it. You see, my name was forwarded to the Deputies' Committee by the AF Bureau as one of their nominees for ambassador to Conakry. I was so excited. This is the committee that decides on the names State Department is going to send to White House personnel as its candidate. For some unknown reason, the Committee decided instead to put my name up for Rwanda. I began filling out forms the likes of which I've never seen before –for the White House, for the Senate, and, of course, umpteen ones for State, including medical stuff. I hadn't gotten any word from MED, so I called just before Christmas. I was told that Dick had been denied clearance for Rwanda, for reasons she couldn't tell because that was confidential information. I was devastated. Dick and I had to make a serious decision from pretty awful choices: me to go to Rwanda without Dick; have Dick come without a clearance on our own dime – and risk the reason for which he didn't get a clearance; or say "no" to the opportunity. By this time in the bidding cycle – we're in January by now –there weren't that many slots open.

So, as an ambitious Foreign Service officer and happily married woman, I had to confront what was most important to me -- meet my values close-up. I decided to turn the job down. Two weeks later I read in the newspaper that President Clinton, who had just taken office, was nominating George Moose as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. I had been George's DCM only a couple of years before.

Q: Replacing Hank Cohen?

BUSHNELL: Replacing Hank Cohen. George offered me the job as Deputy Assistant Secretary, responsible for transnational issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, i.e. policies relating to democracy, human rights, humanitarian assistance, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace keeping, HIV Aids, environment, drugs, bugs, everything that crossed borders for 48 countries. George turned to Ed Brynn as his Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. I had known Ed and his wife, Jane, for a number of years and had great affection for both, so I was really pleased. Ed had responsibility for all of the daily oversight and paperwork of the Bureau. For more than a year, there were only the three of us.

George had made the decision to bring in experienced ambassadors as Office Directors. He delegated to them the bulk of the responsibilities and decision-making authorities. The Front Office would exercise a light hand. It was a great idea that did not work because the structure and culture of the Department emphasizes centralized control. George's successor, Susan Rice, who came from the NSC changed the structure back. I am sorry no one gave this experiment greater time to work because we are wasting an enormous amount of effectiveness and talent by continuing a 19th century, hierarchical model of organization.

Q: Tell me a little about, you got there in the African Bureau just at the time Clinton came in or close to?

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: What was the spirit then? I think each change of administration is interesting; we look forward to it, not look forward to it, with trepidation. .

BUSHNELL: Clinton's energy and focus were domestic. He made Tony Lake his National Security Advisor--Tony had served in the State Department and was particularly interested in Africa, so there was a great deal of hope. Warren Christopher, who also had a strong foreign policy background as Deputy Secretary under the Carter administration became Secretary of State. People were pretty optimistic about working with serious and respected people, even if the President didn't have a great background or interest.

In the Congress, the Black Caucus was fairly active and concerned about African issues. Randall Robinson, who was well respected, headed up the Africa Institute, a powerful NGO in New York. So, the so-called Africanists, held hope that there would be a greater focus on Africa than there had been in the George H.W. Bush Administration.

That hope was quickly dashed. I found it extraordinary frustrating. There was a lot of rhetoric about the importance of Africa, but not much else. I would get calls from the Executive Secretary to let us know that Africa Bureau wasn't forward leading enough, whatever the hell that meant. Jennifer Ward, the Africa person at the NSC, would also call us on Tony Lake's behalf to say we weren't doing enough. At the same time, however, the resources were being taken away from us as part of the peace dividend the Administration wanted to provide the public. Brian Atwood, AID Administrator, was

removing AID missions from Africa, without advance notice. I would ask my AID counterparts whom I really liked as human beings, about rumors of closings and they would say, "I'm sorry Pru, we can't tell you that." And I'd say, "Who in the hell are you, the CIA!" I mean, for heaven's sake.

How we could possibly be forward leaning in this environment was and is beyond me.

Q: What was behind the "don't tell" what we're going to do thing? Was this something of Brian Atwood? I mean, it makes no sense at all.

BUSHNELL: Brian was very concerned that AID would be made subservient to the Department – as, in fact it has. But it went further than that. When the Soviet Union broke up, then-Secretary Jim Baker made what I consider a disastrous decision to open 18 new embassies without additional resources. It may have been good politics or gratifying self indulgence but it was lousy governance. We had to find the resources somewhere and since we no longer needed support of African countries in international arenas, it made sense to look to the sub-Sahara. The '93 tragedy in Somalia when American servicemen were killed and dragged through the streets….

Q: Yeah, the black hawk down..

BUSHNELL: Right. Africa did not look as though it was going to deliver development or private investment results any time soon -- so why continue? Brian Atwood needed the resources for the Newly Independent States.

Q: Yeah. Well, I can also understand another reason why, he didn't want to tell State. It would produce a tremendous bureaucratic battle.

BUSHNELL: Well, it was a strategy I understood and disagreed with.

Q: How did George deal with this?

BUSHNELL: George was trying to maintain good relations with his AID counterparts and make the best of a bad situation. George is a genuinely nice person and a natural diplomat. He and I had sort of a Mutt and Jeff routine.

Q: Good cop, bad cop.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. It was a natural fit from the relationship we had established as ambassador and DCM. The ambassador never gives bad news, that's the deputy's job. I wasn't long in the job before I became aware that I had to learn new behaviors or be invisible. The interagency environment is rough, tough and nasty. Interrupting; putting people down, sometimes under the guise of poking fun; using information for self aggrandizement or power; invoking the names of senior officials as if they are your best friends; all sorts of ugly ways of interacting were the norm. I knew I could learn to do

this things but I hesitated for fear I'd turn into a rotten human being. I made the decision explicitly and consciously to adapt those behaviors. I did what I thought I had to do.

Q: Well, you were a real player.

BUSHNELL: That's right. That's the way the game is played – like the Russian in Bombay who tried to shove me out of the way to be first in line. It's not personal. I think it's very much of a guy thing.

Q: Were you finding other women who were playing the male game?

BUSHNELL: Sure, when necessary. But among many of my women colleagues there was a greater emphasis on the problem, rather than the person. It was a real pleasure to see the number of women around the table. The White House had a rule – I think it was started under Bush senior and I know it was the case with Clinton -- that the short list of people being suggested for ambassadorial, DCM, assistant secretary and deputy assistant secretary appointments had to include the name of at least one woman and one minority. For the most part, we women had a different style. We could argue our position and treat one another as decent human beings.

Q: Where did Warren Christopher fit into this essentially demoting of Africa, but also of other parts of the State Department?

BUSHNELL: Warren Christopher made it his personal agenda to deal with the Middle East. His number two, Strobe Talbot came with a great interest in Russia, so he was focusing there and on the newly independent states. China, Japan and North Korea were always key issues. Latin America and Africa were not.

Q: Had Somalia happened before you?

BUSHNELL: Yes. We were making an effort to get out of Somalia in a dignified way.

Q: Yeah, it left the White House, the military, and the chattering class with a feeling Africa is not a place to deal with.

BUSHNELL: That's right.

Q: Well, we'll talk about these various things next time.

Q: Today is the 29th of July, 2005. Pru, this is your last day in the Foreign Service isn't it?

BUSHNELL: Yes it is.

Q: Well, you've had a good run. Let's get back to Somalia. When we pulled out of there was there a palpable, boy we're not going to intervene in anything again or something like that? Was that a mantra in the African Bureau?

BUSHNELL: It was an unspoken mantra by the White House. Africa issues, unless they turned into disasters, seldom made it to the seventh floor, where the top of the hierarchy worked. I think I mentioned that there were three of us in the AF front office for a time. George Moose, Ed Brynn and me. We all had portfolios that cut across the 48 countries of Sub-Sahara Africa. But, because some countries needed particular attention from the "sixth floor," the assistant secretary's office, we divided the hot spots among us. George got the most critical -- South Africa, which was then in transition, Sudan and Somalia. Ed got Nigeria and, I don't remember which other two. I took Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia. This was early summer of '93.

A good deal of my time was spent trying to get the interagency to agree to sending UN peacekeepers to Rwanda to implement peace accords that had put an end to a civil war between the government of Rwanda and the Rwandan Patriotic Front, or RPF. The RPF had fought the government to a standstill and the peace agreement, called the Arusha Accords, spelled out a political transition. UN peacekeepers were needed to ensure that it would be implemented peacefully. The members of the RPF and the Rwandan government came hand-in-hand to Washington and New York to ask for peace keeping troops. My colleagues and I had to make the case that it was in the interest of the United States to back the Rwanda request.

The Congress, meanwhile, wanted to reduce the percent the U.S. government was paying for UN peace keeping missions. The NSC was developing criteria to determine U.S. response to future requests. I learned that summer that when the bureaucracy doesn't want to say yes and lacks the guts to say no, it asks for more and more paperwork. To meet the newly developing policy, we essentially had to show that Rwanda peacekeeping would be swift, cheap, blood-free and successful. It was a terribly frustrating summer. Eventually, the U.S. government was strong-armed by the UN and the French to support the Rwandan peace. We wanted to get out of Somalia and further internationalize the peacekeepers there, the UN needed a peacekeeping success and the French wanted peacekeepers in Rwanda. As I observed from the sidelines, a deal was struck.

A small peacekeeping contingent made up of Belgians and African nations, under the command of Canadian General Romeo Dallaire would oversee the installation of an interim government that would hold democratic elections at some stated point in the future. They entered Rwanda under Chapter Six authority – i.e. to maintain rather than make peace. Weapons could be used only for self defense.

The transition got stuck and I went to Rwanda in March of '94 to tell all parties to the peace accords that they had to get on with it or risk the possible pull-out of peacekeepers. Little did I know at the time that this was precisely what the radical group of Hutus wanted.

Let me step back a minute for a thumbnail history lesson so that events to come make sense. Rwanda was a Belgium colony until the late 1950s. Belgians ruled indirectly through the government structures that were dominated by Tutsis, a minority ethnic group. At independence, the majority Hutus took over the government and threw out thousands of Tutsis in a bloody war. Most ended up as refugees in neighboring Burundi and Uganda. It was the sons and daughters of these refugees who created the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and invaded to regain their rightful place.

The transition government and the military created by the Peace Accords would include both members of the RPF and the government. Extremist Hutus felt they had been sold out and started making demands the RPF would not accept. Meanwhile, the country was becoming increasingly polarized as politicians exploited Hutu fears and targeted Tutsis as the cause of all evil. During my visit, I met with all of the parties counseling compromise. At the time we were aware of selected killings of Tutsis but we held to the belief that if we could get the Peace Accords implemented, the killings would stop.

Q: This was not the major killing?

BUSHNELL: No, these were individual deaths, not the mass slaughter we saw later. There were lists on both sides, but we were particularly aware of Tutsi deaths. When I met with the heads of the RPF, I was told that Hutus wanted to exterminate all Tutsis but there was absolutely no evidence, or even hint of that – at least that we saw. We were proven tragically wrong.

In point of fact, we were distracted by concerns for violence in Burundi, where there was also a Tutsi-Hutu split. Here, the Tutsis had retained power over the majority Hutu population through terrible killings. There were rumors of a coup d'etat when I was in Rwanda, so my travel companion and I rushed to Bujumbura. We sat on the veranda of the Ambassador's residence over-looking a beautiful, green city and hearing gun shots. People were terribly concerned about possible return of wide scale violence so we decided that I would speak publicly on radio and television to call for an end to the bloodshed. Our embassy had seen cease fires work when outsiders came to town.

Q: Your French of course came into?

BUSHNELL: Right. After five years in Senegal, my French came back, so this was easy for me to do. I went on TV and radio and called for a halt to the killing. The next day when I went downtown, a couple of people came up and said, "Are you the woman who was on television, thank you, the killing stopped last night." I was very moved.

A couple of weeks after that March trip, back in Washington, I was Acting Assistant Secretary -- both George and Ed were out of town – when the plane carrying both the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot out of the sky as it was landing in Kigali, Rwanda. Within hours, barricades went up in the streets, moderate Hutu and Tutsi politicians were sought out and killed, and the slaughter of Tutsis began.

Had my husband, Dick, been given a medical clearance, I would have been in Kigali dealing with disaster. Instead, I was in Washington dealing with disaster. As I said earlier, it was the first time I began to believe in destiny.

The first order of business was the welfare of American citizens. Kigali was in chaos. The parts of the military were going door to door with lists to kill the people inside. The RPF troops came out of their barricades; fire fights began in the streets. We advised all Americans to stay home and stay down so our information was limited.

Q: This obviously had been planned.

BUSHNELL: Yes, although we had no idea at the time to what extent the killing would continue.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BUSHNELL: David Rawson, who was unable to get to the embassy for a couple of days. Remember, the President of Burundi had also been killed, so we were very nervous about what would happen there, as well. We set up an emergency 24 hour task force, which I was to head, and I called Ed, who was on vacation, to ask him to come home!

The French were concerned about their nationals; there were many more of them than Americans. While they began to make plans to evacuate French citizens from the Kigali airport, we made the daring decision to send Americans out overland to neighboring countries. This was David Rawson's idea and a good one. Kigali was a killing zone. It made no sense to ask Americans around the country – many of them, missionaries -- to come into the city and wait to be rescued by the French when they could more easily go over the nearest border to Tanzania, Burundi or Zaire (now Congo), whichever was closest.

Q: Were other embassies, for example, calling us, saying, "What are you doing"?

BUSHNELL: Oh, yes. We were coordinating with a number of governments, particularly the French and the Belgians.

Q: Was there a problem with the missionaries, because often I've talked to people who have said that missionaries tend to hang on to the last..

BUSHNELL: No, they were pretty solid folks; they understood the danger.

Q: Been around for a long time.

BUSHNELL: One group caused a great deal of anxiety because they had taken refuge in a compound that was overrun by Hutu militia. They bribed the men into leaving but were concerned they would come back. This was not an easy evacuation.

Q: What about local employees, Rwandans, particularly Tutsi? Were they coming going out with us or not?

BUSHNELL: No. This will forever scar our reputation among Foreign Service Nationals. The agreement brokered with Rwandan government and military was that the overland convoys would contain ex-patriots only. We left everyone else behind. To be fair, we had no idea what was to come. Still….

Q: Well, there had been a record of several of these Hutu - Tutsi conflicts which had not reached the proportions that this one did. So that, you know, based on past experience, you could say, this is terrible, but we'll get out, we'll come back and it will settle down.

BUSHNELL: That was the rationale.

Q: Were you able to get any help in making decisions by getting background from the CIA or INR?

BUSHNELL: Remember I told you about the AID pulling out of Africa? Well, AID wasn't the only one pulling out of Africa. The CIA was pulling out of Africa. We had no intelligence capability except for a roving Defense Intelligence officer stationed elsewhere.

INR and CIA in Washington were giving us as much as they had, but it was pretty difficult. Once we pulled out officially we had no eyes or ears, with the exception of one American ex-pat who stayed.

Q: What were you getting from the French, the Belgium and the Canadian embassies as this thing started to develop?

BUSHNELL: I think the Canadians may have gone with us. Anyway, the discussions about the evacuations were taking place among the militaries. So, I was talking to the U.S. military who were talking to the Belgium and the French militaries. I didn't engage directly.

Q: The French usually had a fairly substantial force in Africa but their response time wouldn't be that great, right?

BUSHNELL: The extremists had taken over the airport. The Belgium peacekeepers who were guarding the woman who was to become interim Prime Minister were taken, killed and mutilated. The Prime Minister was killed in front of her children and mutilated. Before the French or anyone could come in, they needed to secure the airport.

Q: You were in charge because you were acting secretary for African affairs. How much of a part did the seventh floor or the National Security Council play?

BUSHNELL: Other than concern for a prominent human rights advocate who had met President Clinton, the NSC didn't play much of a role. The seventh floor did. I came to the operation center very early one morning, about day two after the crisis started, and three senior people stopped me to say "Pru, the President called Secretary Christopher and the Secretary of Defense to say that he wants every American out alive. Good luck." As if I needed an order from the President to bring people out safely. Anyway, I felt that the waters had parted and there I was. Fortunately, not alone. I had a great team.

It soon became clear, however, that decisions had to be made swiftly, much faster than our bureaucracy would allow. For example, the order to evacuate took more than a day to get through the clearance process. So, Beth Jones, the Secretary's Executive Assistant, and I worked an arrangement. Any time I needed a decision from Secretary Christopher, I would contact her. She would get immediate access and a verbal response to whatever it was. On the basis of that response, I was authorized to take action. The clearance papers would follow a parallel track. It worked well. While the overland evacuations were pretty nerve-wracking because we had no radio contact once the last convoy left the embassy, we got all Americans out alive.

Q: The Americans are out, but all hell was breaking loose. I mean it was one of the great catastrophes of our time. What did you do?

BUSHNELL: It was awful, one of the worse periods of my life. As awful as the bombing of the embassy in Nairobi was.

Q: The bombing was finite period, but this, I mean to have a rolling genocide going on.

BUSHNELL: And not being able to do anything. I will never forget the look in the eyes of Kevin Aiston, the Rwanda/Burundi desk officer when I told him that the NSC and Secretary Christopher had made the decision to call for the withdrawal of the UN peacekeepers. I mean, everybody knew, or at least suspected what was going to happen.

There were already two dynamics occurring in Rwanda--a civil war between the Rwandan government military and the RPF, and the wholesale slaughter of civilians – mainly Tutsis – by militias and other civilians. Tens of thousands used machetes and farm instruments to kill their neighbors. This was a government controlled, systematic and well planned effort to use as many Hutus as possible to kill all Tutsis. The authors of the genocide deliberately induced an entire society to murder so that everybody would have life on his or her hands. The government structure was highly centralized, the infrastructure was excellent – thanks to the U.S. and other donors – and people were used to doing what they were told. Instructions would come from Kigali. The parts of the military that were not fighting the civil war took part. They used the radio, which was the primary means of mass communication as in many African countries, to exhort people to slaughter. Tutsis were taking refuge in stadiums, in schools, and in churches. In the past when Tutsis had taken refuge to the churches, they had been saved. This time, the Hutus used priests and ministers to call people into so-called safe havens. They'd pack them in, hurl a couple of grenades, then go in to hack survivors to death.

Q: Well, it sounds like almost a dramatic going back to the Holocaust planning of this thing.

BUSHNELL: It was.

Q: Lists, implicate people. In other words, this was not in a way of or in any way a spontaneous thing. This was a carefully thought out sort of almost physiological way of how we're going to handle this thing.

BUSHNELL: Yes it was. It was planned by Hutu extremists as they participated in peace talks. And I will go to my grave wondering why we didn't see it coming. Nor did we ever do an after-action review or anything like that to figure out what blinded us and what needs to change so it doesn't happen again. Sometimes I think we don't want to learn from mistakes so we will have the flexibility to employ them again.

Q: Had this sort of thing occurred or seeing glimmers of this in past? I mean, there had been this Hutu Tutsi thing both there and in Burundi. Had you seen this almost methodical way of dealing with this?

BUSHNELL: Yeah, but not like this. There had been paroxysms of killings in both countries, but never to this extent.

Q: Because one doesn't think of Africa as being caught up in sort of the philosophy that the German anti Semitism was. But, this is great parallel.

BUSHNELL: On the surface.

Q: While this was going on, did you have the feeling that we were looking over our shoulder at the government at developments in the Balkans and the whole idea was, boy this isn't our business, we don't want to get involved. Was this a factor or was this not a factor in what we would do or not do?

BUSHNELL: Oh, there was every reason in the book why we weren't doing what we could have or should have. Tony Lake, Clinton National Security Advisor, later said that the phones weren't ringing. He was right but I wonder why we should adopt that as a criteria for intervening in the mass slaughter of civilians. The Washington Post editorials were saying this sort of ethnic violence in an African country in which we had no interests was none of our business. Now mind you, the slaughter was taking place at an un-precedented rate. I mean hundreds of thousands of people a day. In a hundred days, I think eight to nine hundred thousand people were killed. And in the mean time we were listing reasons why we couldn't do anything. That's incredible!

Q: And most of it by machetes.

BUSHNELL: Up close and personal, right. I remember meeting with my team one day and asking how people could physically sustain the energy to keep hacking up human beings.

The policy garlic and crucifixes were up all around the Department -- and Washington, for that matter. I'd sometimes report what was happening at Strobe Talbott's morning staff meetings and get looks of horror around the table but nothing else. My team and I were free to do whatever we wanted as long as we didn't use any American resources, ask anyone to use theirs, or augment the tiny peacekeeping unit left behind when the UN pulled the bulk of them out.

Q: Well, even after the slaughter of the Belgium's at the airport, was the UN saying hey, we can't do this?

BUSHNELL: Well, General Dallaire was furiously sending messages and was, I think, dumbstruck at the decision to withdraw the peacekeepers. The only reason a few were left behind is that thousands of Tutsis had taken refuge in a stadiums in Kigali – as they had all over the country – and to withdraw the limited protection they had would really be over the top. It was amazing the effectiveness of a very few. There were too few of them to save the hundreds of thousands of lives lost, but those who stayed were unharmed.

It was just so bizarre and horrible a period. A massive slaughter going on; a civil war going on; an international community sitting on its hands and watching in horror; and a tiny group of mid level people at State frantically trying to think of ways to stop the killing.

Q: I take it the Pentagon was adamant.

BUSHNELL: I called the men in the Joint Chief Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense the "no way, no how, and not with our toys boys," because they stoned-walled every effort. I chaired these God awful interagency video conferences. We'd sit in this tiny airless room looking at four TV monitors – NSC, CIA, and two for DOD –and talk with clenched jaws about what could be done. I at least wanted the hate radio that was encouraging people to continue the genocide to be jammed.

Q: There was a movie called Hotel Rwanda with excerpts of talking about killing the cockroaches. There was a fairly good representation, was it or not, did you feel?

BUSHNELL: I have chosen not to see the movie, but, yes, the part about the radio was accurate.

Q: I can understand why you wouldn't want to.

BUSHNELL: The discussion about jamming the radios was pretty reflective of the other conversations we'd have. The first thing I was told is that jamming is against international law. Then I was told it would be too expensive, then that DOD didn't have

the planes, and finally, that all of the jamming equipment was being used in Haiti. One excuse after another. At one point, a JCS colleagues leaned forward to admonish me: "Pru, radios don't kill people, people kill people." I told him that I would quote him on that and actually did. When Debra Winger played me in the movie *Sometimes in April* I had them put it in the script.

Out of total desperation, I got on every international radio network broadcasting to Africa that I could. I remembered what had happened in Burundi and thought I'd give it a try. What a pathetic thing to do. I kept wondering where were the voices of the international community – and especially the Pope. Rwanda was predominantly Catholic. Why we heard nothing from the Vatican is another question I think deserves an answer.

Q: Did you have problems with young officers or mid career officers presiding over something like this? Any resignations?

BUSHNELL: No resignations or even any thoughts – we were in the thick of it and didn't have time to think about much else. We were trying to keep abreast of information – remember, we had lost our eyes and ears with the closing of the embassy – and come up with plans of what we could do.

One of the things I did was to contact the Chief of Staff of the Rwanda military to let him know that we knew what was going on and wanted an end of it immediately. My talking points were to call for a cease fire and return to the Peace Accords. Under the circumstances that was pretty ridiculous, but there you go. I would set the alarm for 2 am because it would be 8:00 a.m. in Kigali. I'd go downstairs so I wouldn't wake Dick and use the wall phone in the kitchen. We'd have these bizarre conversations. I'd tell him to stop killing people and he'd respond "Oh, but Madame, there's a civil war going on. I don't have the troops to stop this spontaneous uprising." When I advised him to at least stop the hate radio, he said "But, madame, we are a democracy. We have freedom of the press." I mean he was really ridiculous.

I'd also telephone Paul Kagame, the commander of the Rwanda Patriotic Front. These were equally strange but very different conversations. I had the same talking points -- urging cease fire and return to Peace Accords. His reaction was astonishment: "Excuse me Madam, there's a genocide going on. At least we're keeping the military occupied. You want me to stop fighting?? A cease fire would only make it easier for them." We will never know if that would have been the case, but I understood his position.

Q: Was there any thought of supporting the RPF because of the enormity of what was happening to the Tutsis?

BUSHNELL: No.

Q: Did anybody raise this and say, "You know, these are in a way the good guys" or was the feeling that it could have been Tutsis killing Hutus? Was it always Hutus killing Tutsis?

BUSHNELL: In Rwanda, since independence, the Tutsis were the persecuted ones. In Burundi, although Hutus are a majority there as well, the Tutsis have retained power often through large scale violence. We did not favor one or the other.

Q: What was happening in Burundi during this?

BUSHNELL: We were keeping a very close eye on Burundi and were thankful "IT" did not happen there. I remember all of a sudden one day, I had a flash of insight: "IT" was already happening but in a different way. In Burundi, killings had been going on for years there, but not at the ferocious level you saw in Rwanda during the genocide. As unacceptable as killings were, they were not dire enough to attract international attention.

Q: How was news of all of this getting out? I mean, if all the foreigners had left and you had no embassy.-

BUSHNELL: Journalists were there. Initially we thought that if we could get cameras to film what was going on, people would stop killing. They didn't.

Q: Yeah. Was Congress doing anything on this?

BUSHNELL: No.

Q: This was just something nobody wanted to touch?

BUSHNELL: Nobody wanted to touch this thing. I remember going to a congressional hearing and being scolded by Donald Payne, a member of the Black Caucus. "You're not doing enough in Rwanda." I was so indignant. I wasn't doing enough? I'm the one who is supposed to do more?! He finally had to say, "Not you! Not you personally, I mean you the Clinton administration!" I can't recall any other gesture made by the Congress.

The genocide finally came to an end when the RPF under Kagame's command soundly walloped the Rwandan military. At that point, the Rwandan government ordered a massive evacuation of the country. I mean the entire country! In Washington we went from watching in horror, a genocide, to witnessing in shock the exit of literally tens of thousands of people, streaming across borders – especially to Zaire – with everything they could take. Communities stayed together as they installed themselves on the other side of the border. Everything remained highly organized.

It was as this was going on that the French decided to intervene with Operation Turquoise. They claimed they were sick of watching the genocide and decided to take unilateral action. However, they waited until the government they had supported was fleeing across the border before implementing their "noble" aspiration. Essentially, they put themselves between the fleeing government and military, which they had supported for years, and the RPF, whom they despised and mistrusted. I remember phone conversations between George Moose and Paul Kagame, who was absolutely incensed at

the French. “You do not want to kill the French,” George would argue, ultimately successfully. Meanwhile, people with their household effects on their heads or in carts continued streaming across the border toward another humanitarian catastrophe..

Q: These were mainly Hutu?

BUSHNELL: These were Hutus. They emptied the countryside. Our interagency meeting took an abrupt turn to focus on what in the world we were going to do with thousands and thousands of people camped along volcanoes in Zaire – hardly a country known for its stability or government effectiveness.

Once the RPF took over Rwanda, I was sent to check things out. It was yet another surreal experience. The country side of one of the most populous countries in the world was literally deadly quiet. Berries ready to harvest were rotting on the coffee trees; houses stood vacant. The man who served as the ambassador’s driver drove us. When we were stopped by child soldiers at checkpoints, I learned never to look them in the eye. As we drove we heard the story of how the driver had hidden and what happened to some of the other embassy employees. Many were dead.

I participated in a memorial service for the FSNs who were killed. I will never forget looking into the stony faces of employees who had been abandoned by the US government. American officers who came up to speak would weep, to a person. The Rwandans just looked at us. I can only imagine what they were thinking and the trauma that was still with them.

Kigali was a mess. The government had taken everything, including the cash. What role does the international community play now? Here is a devastated country in which the victims of genocide became the victors of a civil war. That had never happened before. No one wanted to be associated with a government that may want to take revenge, but not helping meant punishing the victims even more. I sat on the sidelines of some of these Friends of Rwanda meetings watching one government representative after another asking:” What are you going to do?” “ Don’t know what are you going to do? “ For a while it just went in circles.

One of the greatest ironies to this was that during most of the genocide, the government that was perpetrating the killings held the presidency of the Security Council. They were not asked to leave until the very end.

Q: Oh boy.

BUSHNELL: It was a much easier and more straightforward to help the refugees who had fled to Zaire. That was something the international community was accustomed to. When cholera broke out, we rushed in. The Vice President ’s wife even went over, to our horror. I’m not at all sure that she recognized that many of the people showing up for photo ops could have been among those who had hacked their neighbors to death.

Q: Well, it's easier to do something about humanitarian things than to stop people from killing people.

BUSHNELL: By this point I was pretty miserable and getting burned out. The former government's military and militias began to control the refugee camps and claim the food that was to go to the people. The intimidation of humanitarian workers and refugees was whole scale. Then raids into Rwanda from these camps began. Paul Kagame, who was now the Vice President of Rwanda, said repeatedly, "If you, international community don't do something to stop these guys, I'm going to." We didn't; he did. And therein lay the beginning of the conflict in the Great Lakes area of Africa which continues to this day.

Q: In other words, his troops went in?

BUSHNELL: Yes. But first he had to get as many refugees as possible back in Rwanda. You can't have a country with that proportion of population sitting across the border. Initially, the militias tried to stop people from returning but Rwandans clearly understood there was no future for them on the volcanoes of Zaire. So many took the chance and returned. I think for the most part Kagame made good on his promise to create efforts of reconciliation, as well as to bring the perpetrators of the genocide to justice.

What an undertaking that was – bringing people to justice. Tens of thousands of people had participated; tens of thousands were in jail under deplorable conditions. I visited one of the prisons. All of the inmates, male and females – they were kept separately – were clothed in bright pink polyester. Some of the prisons were so crowded people had to sleep in shifts. How do you keep decent conditions in the jails when the country has no money? Should the international community help? I mean, we "don't do" jails as a rule.

The U.S. government did become very involved in establishing a tribunal in Arusha to hold accountable the authors of the genocide. Another irony here: under international law, the death penalty was off the table. In Rwanda, it was not. The people taking orders to kill could possible be put to death, while those who gave the orders would not. Recently, I think Rwanda has done away with the death penalty.

Can we stop pretty soon? I'm sorry, I'm run down.

Q: Yeah. I've got these two questions. This is not a fun interview, but it's vital. I'm told that during this crisis , not only the State Department, but the U.S. military wanted to bring the non governmental organizations into the planning earlier. Did you find that the case?

BUSHNELL: Well, actually no, because the U.S. military successfully kept out Rwanda. I guess they were involved in some respect in bringing humanitarian assistance supplies in to Zaire. But, on the whole, the US military did not become very involved.

Q: This could be the topic of another interview, because I think the portfolio of African peace keepers is part of your thing. We could talk about that on another interview. What about in this thing, what was the role of Madeline Albright who is our ambassador to the United Nations?

BUSHNELL: I think she understood more clearly than other policy makers what would happen if the peacekeepers were withdrawn. I know she regrets what happened. President Clinton apologized, too. Fine, but as I said earlier, the U.S. government to my knowledge has still made no effort to find out what really happened and what we have to learn from the Rwanda debacle. General Romeo Dallaire was sending cables back to the UN warning them of the preparations for genocide three months before it started and I did not know about them. Why? Why didn't a small diplomatic community in country to facilitate peace know about the preparations as late as March, when I visited? If I had the guts or the stomach for it, I would think about doing the research myself, but I don't want to. I feel badly enough now.

Q: Well, you're probably not the person to do it.

BUSHNELL: No, actually I'm not.

Q: Something like this needs somebody outside really. What about the NSC? This is the last question on this session. What about the role of the NSC during this whole thing?

BUSHNELL: Richard Clark was the head of Global Affairs and Peace Keeping of the NSC. Susan Rice, his deputy was to take over in the second term of Clinton Administration as assistant secretary for African Affairs. Dick Clark is the one person to this day who will look you in the eye and say, "We did exactly the right thing in Rwanda." On the other hand, Tony Lake the National Security Advisor at the time talks at length about his regrets.

Q: Do you have any of the rationale for that? Not to get involved was that it?

BUSHNELL: "We had no interest in that country". "Look at what they did to Belgian peacekeepers." "It takes too long to put a peacekeeping operation together." "What would our exit strategy be?" "These things happen in Africa." "We couldn't have stopped it." I could go on.

Q: Okay. Well, we'll stop at this point and we'll pick this up the next time. We've talk a lot about Rwanda. I don't know if there's anything else we should cover there, but we did want to talk about African troops as peace keepers. This was part of your portfolio, right. Liberia will come up.

Today is the 5th of August, 2005. Pru, welcome to the world of the retirees.

BUSHNELL: Thank you.

Q: Alright. Well, let's talk about Liberia. What years are we talking about again?

BUSHNELL: I was Deputy Assistant Secretary from '93 to '95 and Principal DAS, '95 to '96.

There is one final issue about Rwanda and then we can move on. That's the issue of when and whether we should have called the slaughter a genocide. Like the decision to remove peacekeepers when the killings started, the discussion of genocide was not one in which my team and I were included. As far as I knew, those conversations were taking place at the White House, not within the Bureau of African Affairs. Reference to those discussions would come up in George Moose's staff meetings, but what I was focused on was figuring out ways to stop the killing. I know that using the term genocide would put us in a position of having to do something, hence the reluctance. Of course, we've learned from Darfur that we can call in genocide and still continue to wring our hands. In '94, however, we hadn't yet had that precedent. In my narrow and hellish world, whether we called the killing genocide or not was moot. We weren't going to do anything to stop it. I don't know what this contributes to history but from my perspective, the conversation about genocide was political, not actionable.

Q: Yeah. I mean, so often Washington buzzes around, and this time we're talking about people getting killed.

BUSHNELL: Right. It boils down to the following. Domestic policy considerations now dominate foreign affairs, no matter which administration we are under, and those policies are usually not advantageous to African people.

Q: Well now, to look at it in perspective and to be fair, government, don't move quickly. This thing burst forth in such a hurry that there wasn't time to really crank up. I mean, eventually the Bosnian one played out over a long time. It got worse and worse, but there's plenty of time to try this, try that and all that. But, Rwanda was sort of like a wild fire.

BUSHNELL: In addition, you have the tension between national interest and moral imperative. I could and did make the argument that it was not in our national interest to intervene. Should we to send young Americans into a domestic fire fight, possibly to be killed on behalf of people we don't know in a country in which we have no particular interest? From the perspective of national interest, people like Richard Clarke will argue we did things right. In terms of moral imperative there is no doubt in my mind that we did not do the right thing. I could have a clear bureaucratic conscience from Washington's stand point and still have a soul filled with shame.

Q: Well now, turning to Africa as a whole. What was the peacekeeping apparatus in Africa through the UN or through the organizations, African states or what have you, at the time you were there? How did you view it; how effective was it and how was it used?

BUSHNELL: During my tenure we were working with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to create a crisis monitoring operation at their headquarters. It was fairly modest. After Rwanda, we became more serious about the need for African regional forces and started the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, which has since grown into a regional force under the auspices of the African Union – the successor to the OAU. Meanwhile, UN peacekeeping remained the most popular because contributing governments got paid, received equipment, etc. The numbers of countries that had militaries sufficiently well trained and disciplined to go in to UN peace keeping was fairly small, however. African regional organizations like ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States – also had a peacekeeping function. They were instrumental – with questionable effectiveness – in Liberia. It was after the Rwanda disaster that the U.S. government became keen about Africa regional peacekeeping, which eventually turned into an arm of the African Union.

Q: Let's talk about ECOWAS. It seems like Nigeria is first and The Gambia was second of sending troops out.

BUSHNELL: Senegal, as well. They were very good.

Q: Senegal, well yeah. Senegal's troops were first rate in World War II. How did we view Nigeria? I mean, you had a very corrupt government.

BUSHNELL: Had a very corrupt military, too.

Q: Was the military corrupt?

BUSHNELL: Oh, yes. Liberia was also in my portfolio so I would go there now and then. On one of these occasions I was standing on the tarmac with our ambassador, Bill Twaddell, watching a plane being loaded up to head back toward Lagos. We were pretty sure the cargo was illicit stuff – diamonds, gold or drugs. The corruption among the Nigerians in Liberia was well known. On the other hand, Liberia had a multi-faceted civil war going on and the Nigerians were controlling at least part of the country, maintaining a peace of some sorts. So, as corrupt as these peacekeepers may have been, we were even more concerned about what would happen if they left Liberia.

Q: What about the other ones that were active, like Senegal?

BUSHNELL: Senegal fulfilled its commitment and suffered some losses, then got out.

Q: How did these troops that went use Liberia? Did they act the role of occupiers?

BUSHNELL: It depended on the military. Nigerians who occupied Monrovia did. Poor Liberia. It was divided up into territories under the control of warlords who represented different ethnic groups.

Q: Liberia was the second big problem wasn't it for you at the time?

BUSHNELL: Yes. Rwanda and Burundi were lumped together because what happened in one had such repercussions in the other. Liberia was a different issue. First of all, it is a country in which we have an historic interest, unlike Rwanda or Burundi. Liberia was settled by former American slaves and Monrovia named after James Monroe. We used the country for our radio relay stations during the Cold War and had strong ties. The Liberians had equally strong expectations that we would intervene in some way, but we did not.

George Moose would send me to Liberia now and then to bawl out the warlords but we had no active involvement.

Q: In many ways, when I talk to people about Liberia, the main concern is when do we haul our embassy people out of there?

BUSHNELL: I think it's been evacuated eight times.

Q: Yeah. I mean, if it weren't so tragic it would be ludicrous.

BUSHNELL: On the other hand we did not want to signal the Liberian people that we were washing our hands of them. Even if we could do no more than be present, we were determined to at least be present. I don't argue with that as long as there are colleagues brave and willing enough to go there. So, we had a fairly minimal presence that we could pull out and put back in.

Q: When people went there, during the time you were there, did they go unaccompanied?

BUSHNELL: Initially I think spouses were there, but certainly not children. I'm not sure about its current status now that Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is president.

Q: Did we have any strategic interests there?

BUSHNELL: With the end of the Cold War, no. Liberia has lots of resources, but we were not particularly interested in those..

Q: Who were some of the characters that we were having to deal with?

BUSHNELL: Ha! Characters is right, none of them anyone you would want to meet. The most long lasting war lord was Charles Taylor. I went to his "capital" was in Gbarnga, which was in the middle of the jungle, via UN helicopter to deliver a demarche. He made us wait an absurd amount of time and by the time we finally got to see him in his throne room, as I called it, I was hungry and very irritated. Then he talk, and talked and talked. I have an agreement with myself that I will allow men to talk at me without taking a breath for only a certain amount of time – usually, 15 minutes for Americans, 25 for Africans. About 30 minutes into his monologue, Taylor began to call me "my dear." Twice I decided to ignore him. The third time I had had it. I interrupted him suggesting that he

never again call a Deputy Assistant Secretary of the United States of America "my dear." He accused me of being culturally insensitive and told me he called everyone my dear. I retorted that I would call him Mr. President and he could call me either Ms. Bushnell or Madame Secretary. By this time, he had lost his rhythm to say nothing of face, and he ordered us out. He told the UN peacekeeping commander never to let me back in. I found out recently that Taylor really did call everyone "my dear." Still, I have no regrets at my action.

Another war lord was Roosevelt Johnson. I met him on the same trip to Liberia with the same message: stop it. Johnson reveled in telling how Charles Taylor's soldiers would kill people, slit open their chests and eat their hearts. I think he was trying to impress me so, of course I refused to show it. The last one I saw on that trip was El Hadji Kromah in yet another part of Liberia. To get to him we had to go through checkpoints of child soldiers who were often high on drugs. It was frightening. We sat in a living room with walls decorated with bullet shells. I had to use his bathroom and he locked me in. My first thought was that he didn't like my message and was going to keep my hostage. Actually, he had done it because there was no way to keep the door closed.

Q: Why did we want to go to Liberia and why did they want to see us? We were not a player were we, or were we a player?

BUSHNELL: As I say, we had a long and strong relationship with Liberia. While European governments maintained close relations with their former colonies, Liberia was considered ours, even though it was never a colony. We have always recognized that we cannot completely turn our backs on Liberia and therefore, we will continue to do what we can do to bring peace to that very rich resource country.

Q: Well, the French since the '60s have maintained significant troops; I mean effective troops which have kept out a lot of the nonsense. There's nothing like a battalion of paratroopers arriving in the capitol to make people calm down. Were we thinking of something of that nature?

BUSHNELL: No, we would never do that. The French relationship with their former colonies is very different, because they have considerable commercial interests, as well as continuing political interest in these countries.

Q: What were the battles that were raging in the State Department and the National Security Council about Liberia?

BUSHNELL: We were providing some financial and equipment support to ECOWAS. Not very much but enough to have our concerns recognized. I did whatever I could in interagency peacekeeping meetings to keep us from totaling withdrawing interest. By this time I had learned a little about bureaucratically delaying any final decision.

Q: Was Rwanda, the effective Rwanda or Somali playing a role as we looked at Liberia?

BUSHNELL: More relevant was the scrub that the Clinton administration was doing of all peace keeping around the world. We contributed 31% of all UN peacekeeping operations and wanted to make some sense of where, why, when, etc.

Q: Was peacekeeping money part of the fight that was going on between the administration and Senator Helms and others?

BUSHNELL: Very much so. The debate still rages about paying our dues to the United Nations and getting reforms in return.

Q: Did you get called in from time; I mean did you have to deal with Congress in this?

BUSHNELL: No, I dealt with Congress on countries specific issues. The Political-Military Bureau and the International Organization Bureau had the larger piece.

Q: Well sometimes, particularly staff members on the Hill would get focused on a country. Did you find any particular parts of Africa of special interest to them?

BUSHNELL: There was a good deal of interest in the civil war in Sudan, particularly among the Christian Right. Angola and Mozambique, as leftovers of the proxy wars in Africa initiated during the Cold War also attracted attention. It's a whole lot easier to start wars than it is to stop them, and peace in these countries was slow in coming. Somalia, of course, was getting negative attention, and Nigeria, the largest country in Africa, has always been important. But the greatest focus was on South Africa. We had huge hopes for that country, which was in transition at the time.

Q: While you were on duty did you have to evacuate our embassy at all or get involved from Liberia?

BUSHNELL: Oh, yeah. I did a number of evacuation and disaster management gigs, Liberia included.

Q: Was there an effort on our part, maybe to the annoyance of the Pentagon to keep the battalions or marines on a landing ship cruising up and down the coast for the next crisis?

BUSHNELL: Yeah, they were. They certainly were hovering about Liberia.

Q: What were the politics like during the decision making process around evacuations? Ambassadors often don't want to leave but Washington doesn't want any dead bodies, either.

BUSHNELL: Washington has always erred on the side of caution – at least until this Iraq War. If an ambassador showed reluctance or wanted to disagree with Washington's concern, I'd make a phone call to tell him to start saluting. Disagreeing, especially in writing, was not going to help anyone.

Q: You mentioned telephone calls. Were you doing during the '90s as the new era of communications came in? We might have still be using the old cables, but there was a lot of consultation on the phone wasn't there? Was there a lot more communication?

BUSHNELL: I 'm trying to think how much work we did by e-mail. Not nearly the amount of work we do now because a lot of embassies weren't connected. The state of our communications technology at State was shameful. I used the phones a lot. Coming from the administrative side of the house, I continued the tradition of completing whatever negotiation or discussion we needed by phone, then sealing the deal in writing. Much more efficient than arguing through cables – unless you wanted it part of the official record.

Q: Well, I've heard people say that they were concerned about the initial impact of easy communications, but they found in a way that embassies had really more of a say in matters than before. .

BUSHNELL: Oh, exactly. I think that one of the unintended consequences of e-mail has been to turn a notion that Washington makes policy and the field implements policy on its head. It really needs to be that way, too. Before, those sitting in the splendors of Washington would issue orders and people on the field would either implement them or ignore them. With e-mail people can actually discuss, educate and craft the instructions together. That's an ambassador's ambition – to craft the official instructions Washington sends. A lot of good policy strategies can come from e-mail consultations and conversations.

Q: Well, now we've talked about Liberia. What about Sierra Leone? Did it cause a problem while you were there?

BUSHNELL: Foday Sankoh and his thugs were just getting started but not yet the disaster they became. There was a coup in The Gambia; Guinea Bissau was having its ups and downs; Central African Republic had problems…. But, I want to point out that I had more than a conflict portfolio, I also had good things.

Q: Okay.

BUSHNELL: I had the democracy portfolio and there were countries like Mali that were really making progress. In fact, Sierra Leone was desperately trying to have elections. This was before those horrible human beings, those wretched people who.....

Q: Chopped off hands.

BUSHNELL: Right. They were just getting started, as I said. So, I did a lot of work with civil society.

Q: What does that mean?

BUSHNELL: Citizen participation -- members of the non-governmental organizations, women's groups, associations and different kinds of civic organizations engaged in efforts to promote political and social welfare issues. I also spent a good deal of time on women's issues, which I strongly believed should have been part of our mainstream policy portfolio. African women play a major role in their societies, even though they are shunted aside. In many countries they're responsible for raising and educating their children, as well as tending the fields and the home. If you say you want to promote democracy you'd better promote the rights of over 50 percent of the citizenry at the same time or you're not walking the talk. I spent a huge amount of time traveling, going to countries people from the front office seldom visited -- Guinea Bissau, Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger, … At every stop I would meet with women. It was a real privilege and one of the best parts of my job.

Q: Well, how did that translate in what you or the United States is doing?

BUSHNELL: Unfortunately, women's issues were relegated to the development assistance portfolio. Policy makers too often see women only as victims in need of economic and humanitarian assistance but that's only part of it. They are also potential political actors. In Rwanda, for example, almost 50% of the parliament is now made up of women because so many men died in the genocide. So, one of the things that I wanted to accomplish in these countries was to bring the Ambassador face-to-face with women as political actors and not just as the subjects of need.

Q: But, when you start talking about giving women more power you're upsetting the male dominance and I can see where an ambassador saying, I don't want to tackle this sort of thing, or feel uncomfortable about doing it. Were you able to both move our own apparatus, our own ambassadors and do anything else about it?

BUSHNELL: You know, the first human rights reports I worked on in '82 did not include domestic violence because it was considered a cultural issue. So I can't say that the Department or our ambassadors were particularly forward leaning. On the other hand, the Clinton White House was serious about women. Prep for the Beijing Women's Conference had started and people were recognizing a shift. Some ambassadors would quietly go with me or host an event. A couple of them, who just didn't get it, had their spouses host something.

I was beginning to understand how to use power. As a senior government official I had the power of position. By going out to meet and show respect to women I could bring not only the U.S. Ambassador but also the local press, which helped them. I feel strongly that it's in the interest of the United States Government and certainly is a moral imperative to deal with issues of women.

Q: Well, diplomacy is changing all the time, at least some of the instruments of diplomacy. Were you seeing a real change by the rise of American and European non governmental agencies, and the NGO organizations in country?.

BUSHNELL: Absolutely.

Q: This is a new, powerful phenomenon. I come from the old Foreign Service and you know, these non governmental organizations were kind of to be avoided. I mean, they did their thing and we stayed away from them.

BUSHNELL: I have mixed feelings. I think they are critical to the good health of a democracy and we were assisting them as alternate service providers in countries that had ineffective and/or corrupt governments. On the other hand, they are special interest groups whose focus is limited to the particular issue they represent. I also wondered about the unintended consequences of pouring money and attention into the non-government sector instead of a country's civil service. Were we were setting up parallel governments? What were we doing to the future of these countries?

The issue is even more acute with the attention we pay to militaries, to the detriment of public civilian service. We ignore civilian public administrators, teach the armed forces leadership and effectiveness, then gasp in astonishment when inept civilian governments fall in military coups. How can we expect democratic governments to emerge if we're not going to pay attention to its civil servants? There is a need for some strategic thinking about what we are doing and what we are creating as we focus on non-government organizations and militaries.

Q: Well, in the part of Africa you were dealing with, is there any other area for which you were paying quite a bit of attention?

BUSHNELL: Yes, HIV/AIDS. This was before the U.S. government recognized it for the catastrophe it is. Some of the dedicated scientists and health professionals made me a true believer and we become the first activists in the foreign policy community. George Moose was one of the first to understand the repercussions. With his backing we commissioned a National Intelligence Estimate, to include an unclassified conclusion about the impact of HIV/AIDS on African militaries and societies. It took me something like eight months to get them to publish their conclusions, even though it was unclassified.

Q: Was there a reason?

BUSHNELL: I'm not certain. Straight forwardness is not a hallmark of the interagency. I may have been that the conclusions were too dire to be made public without a plan to address the consequences. Let's not talk about this dirty secret. It was, in retrospect, one of my greatest accomplishments – to force the issue and make it public. It was the first time that anything had ever been done about the impact of HIV/AIDS.

Q: What did we see to make things better?

BUSHNELL: Countries that had leaders who understood the impact of HIV/AIDS and

made an effort to educate the public had far greater success in arresting it. Senegal is a case in point. They have kept the numbers down through committed efforts. In contrast, Kenyan political, religious and social leaders refused to acknowledge what was happening until the epidemic had spread to unacceptable levels.

Q: How was this being treated by other governments? I'm thinking of the major donor countries and the UN. Were we on our own or were they?

BUSHNELL: I know that we were in the forefront. The United States was targeting resources to it. There was a certain amount of rhetoric given by other countries, but we were the ones who were most actively and strategically engaged. The international community, including the UN institutions, had not yet gotten their act together and there was a lot of talk about who had organizational responsibility. World Health Organization? UN Development Program? A new and specialized office? We have a much more concerted international effort now – and, far greater U.S. government resources being committed.

Q: Well, again all of us have changed an awful lot in the years. I think there is much more frankness about sex and all. Was this concern, that we're talking about a sexually transmitted disease, or was that no longer a problem?

BUSHNELL: Oh, it was a huge problem. Africans, like a lot of Americans, are very conservative and do not talk about these things. People willing to discuss how the disease is spread or prevented are getting into parts of people's lives that are intimate. Also, you cannot talk about HIV and AIDS without getting into the issue of women's empowerment – or lack thereof.

Q: Well also, the perception in the United States, and I guess the initial impact was in the gay community, the homosexual community. This sort of tagged the problem. Did you find yourself at this stage that was a problem?

BUSHNELL: No, because in Africa it has always been a heterosexual issue. Also, in Africa even to this day you do not talk about homosexuality. The disease was affecting sex workers, truckers and the middle class.

Q: By the time you left the African Bureau, was it apparent that people were dying or was it just a problem in potential?

BUSHNELL: No, people were dying, in some countries at higher rates than others. Uganda had a huge rate of AIDS. So did Rwanda and later, South Africa. But we were not seeing the number of infected people, orphans and social impact that you do today.

Q: But the professionals knew what was happening. What were the tools that we could use at that time?

BUSHNELL: Oh my! At that time we were pushing condoms. We were into

commodities big time, promoting safe sex. We were also into education. In Central Africa, the most popular condom was called "Prudence." You can imagine what a wonderful time people had with my name. When I left the African Bureau I had a drawer full of Prudence condoms, Prudence aprons, Prudence t-shirts. These were francophone countries and the tag line in the advertisements was "j'aime avec prudence."

Q: During this time was the National Security Council, were your people there looking at this?

BUSHNELL: No, because this pandemic that was taking place in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Angola and South Africa was not the headline story.

Q: Were there any other countries or problems or relationships within the government we should talk about do you think there? It was a fascinating time.

BUSHNELL: It was a fascinating time and there was a real sense of camaraderie within the Africa Bureau. It was a pleasure to work with people willing to go to very difficult places in order to make a difference. And, oddly enough given some of the problems we were facing, there was a sense of optimism. The mantra was "things are desperate but not hopeless." Lots of gallows humor. There was a healthy esprit de corps and a management unit that really, really took care of people.

Q: Who was your manager, your executive secretary?

BUSHNELL: The Executive Director was Bill Hudson, who is now our Ambassador to Tunisia.

Q: How did you see all of this working career wise? Were you going to be an African hand or what?

BUSHNELL: I fell into it by accident. I didn't know anything about Africa when I joined the Foreign Service but ended up spending 11 years on African issues.

Q: So, we'll now talk about your time in Kenya which was from when to when?

BUSHNELL: 1996 to 1999.

Q: How did this appointment come about?

BUSHNELL: I had completed three years as Deputy Assistant Secretary in African Affairs and was known to have handled some tough portfolios. I had a good chance at either Kenya or Zambia and at the very last minute I decided to go for Kenya.

Q: Well, I'm surprised that Kenya wasn't more of a political plum. .

BUSHNELL: You never know what makes a country a political favorite. Tanzania, for

example, has fairly consistently gone to political, non-career people. Why high contributing friends of the President would vie for Tanzania is beyond me. For all of its beauty, Kenya was politically tough and held in poor esteem in the USG.

Q: Talk about President Moi and his rule and how we viewed it. What was the problem?

BUSHNELL: Daniel Arap Moi was Vice President under Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta. When Kenyatta died in office, Moi stepped in and never stepped down. He continued to rule through a coalition of small tribes.

Q: Was he Kikuyu or Masai?

BUSHNELL: Neither. Kenyatta was Kikuyu. Moi came from the Kalenjin tribe and, with a coalition of other small ethnic groups held power through corruption, force and divisiveness. He also played the U.S. pretty shrewdly during the Cold War. In return for his support, we turned a blind eye to how he ruled domestically. When the Cold War ended, we began to insist on democratic elections.

In order to "stay at the table," which is how Kenyans referred to presidential politics, Moi and company held fraudulent elections in '92. We showed our disapproval by withdrawing aid and giving Moi the cold shoulder. By the time I arrived in '96, we were down to about19 million dollars in bilateral assistance directed through non-governmental organizations. Nothing went to the Moi government. Among donor groups, we were pretty small potatoes. The Japanese, the Brits and the Germans were giving much more money than we were.

Q: Was there a reason why they were giving more or were they getting something for the money they were putting in?

BUSHNELL: I didn't think so. I asked about corruption during my rounds of courtesy calls on other ambassadors and initial meetings with Kenyans. What bothered Kenyans most was the effect of corruption on schooling, which they valued highly and the abominable condition of roads. Stolen road taxes meant greater difficulty getting goods to market. Among diplomatic colleagues, I found huge frustration both with the level of corruption and Moi's reaction should anything be said about. It usually entailed public blasts about interfering in domestic affairs.

The game was pretty simple: the Moi government would steal assistance money, then insult us if we said anything. People would suffer, the government would go to more donors to get more money which they could steal, etc. I decided to try to change the dynamics by taking on the game. I was lucky that our embassy had a large and experienced Country Team, so there was plenty of experience, support and enthusiasm for confronting corruption.

When I told my German counterpart of our intentions, he peered down at me and said, "Oh Pru, don't be naïve!" This was hardly the first time I had been patronized for

addressing an issue others – men especially – had put in the category of "too hard."

I began talking about corruption in my speeches, something Kenyan people could not do with impunity. Pretty soon things were showing up in media and more and more people, including my diplomatic colleagues, began to chime in.

Q: What was that ambassador referring to about being naive? In other words, why were they continuing to put money in to it?

BUSHNELL: It was an attitude I had seen before – "this is Africa; what can you do?"

Q: Were the other countries, or were we getting anything out of it?

BUSHNELL: Most of the donors were involved in Kenya for humanitarian and developmental purposes. The U.S. government also wanted continuing military access to Kenyan airports and ports. I suspect Moi had similar quid pro quo agreements with other countries.

Q: Pru, this is the 24th of August, 2005. Let's talk a bit about Moi. Did you go in to see him? Was he a person you could see or not?

BUSHNELL: Initially, he wouldn't see me. I was the second consecutive woman ambassador, and Moi was not at all pleased to have another female.

Q: Elinor Counselor had been there before that too.

BUSHNELL: Elinor Constable and then Smith Hempstone, who caused an enormous great controversy by going head-to-head with Moi, then Aurelia Brazil and then me. Moi was convinced that the U.S. Government was intentionally sending him women as a message that he was just not good enough to merit a white male. Nor, evidently did he like what he heard about my promotion of human rights. After presenting credentials, I had a hard time getting him to see me. Once I did, we crafted an interesting and rather strange relationship.

It started when I invited him to the Residence for breakfast one day. That one-on-one started a precedent which led to some very heated discussions. Respectful but blunt. He would fly into tantrums sometimes, or just get mad and cranky. I'd bring him up straight by asking point blank, "Why are you yelling at me?" Once I stopped an argument in mid stream and asked if he enjoyed fighting with me. "Yes," he responded, "I am a democrat." I think he rather enjoyed our interchanges. For a time, some members of his cabinet would intercept me before entering a meeting requesting that I bring up a subject to get a decision of their behalf.

For his part, he delivered on items he knew were important to us. I was on a short fuse for a renewed access agreement to Kenya's ports and airports and he handed it over.

Q: Did you feel, that power had gone to his head? Did he see himself aging gracefully in the job to keep things calm. How did you see him at that point?

BUSHNELL: By the time I got there he had been in power for 20-some years, far too long for anybody. He was in his '70s, in good health physically and mentally, still very shrewd and fairly competent. Sometimes he'd ramble, but then don't we all? I think he is corrupt to his soul and had found a way to bring his actions into harmony with his evangelical religion. I think he really believed that he was beloved by his people, clueless that the opposite was true because he surrounded himself with sycophants. Domestically, he was shrewd and ruthless; around the region, Moi behaved as statesman. He used this to his advantage to keep us in his debt. We would ask him to pull together the Somalia warlords, and he would do it. He was sympathetic to our efforts to bring peace to Sudan and, at our request, would talk to his crony, Mobutu, president of Zaire. Like a lot of presidents, Moi wanted to be known in history as the elder statesman and a regional peacemaker.

Q: Again I keep coming back, in my interviews there's a theme that if somebody is going to take an initiative it often seems to be the Americans.

BUSHNELL: Right, which means that as U.S. ambassadors we need to be fairly circumspect. When the Country Team and I decided to take on the issue of corruption, we had to be clever about it. The last thing other diplomats want is direction from the United States ambassador or the United States embassy, which was why in Nairobi we worked through the World Bank director to create an Economic Governance Group of donor countries.

The Bank was going to provide around one hundred million dollars in an energy sector loan. Given the government's proclivity to steal, to say nothing of their lousy completion rate – something like three percent – my colleagues in Washington and I decided to do something. I knew the U.S. delegate to the World Bank. With other colleagues, we decided she would vote "no" on the energy loan. That got a lot of attention. Both the World Bank and other governments took notice that we were serious about corruption.

Q: Didn't the Kenyans know that the fine hand of Pru Bushnell was involved in this?

BUSHNELL: Of course, but we were all very polite. The proposal put to the Kenyans was to direct the energy sector loan through a private sector bank that would ensure transparency.

A social friend of mine arranged a meeting with Moi on a Sunday afternoon at his private residence – very hush-hush – to discuss this. I was struck by how sterile and lonely the house appeared. He said to me, "If I agree to this it's going to set a precedent, and I'm worried. I said, "You're right, it will and I'd be worried about it too if I were you, because it means doing business differently." He said, "I don't want to do business differently." And I said, "Then you're not going to get the money. There you are Mr. President, you need to choose. I know life is unfair and this doesn't seem good and right,

but you need to understand our perspective and you have a choice to make. That's what leaders do, they make difficult decisions." He called me after I got home, about an hour later and said, "I've decided to do it." And I said, "Good for you Mr. President, you've made the right choice." I felt like a life coach.

Q: Were you around long enough to see how this worked?

BUSHNELL: It worked pretty well at least on that project. Not to say that corruption ended. We came up against other issues, including the International Monetary Fund's readiness to put Kenya on a "shadow program" which would have helped Kenya gain economic credibility they did not deserve. The Economic Governance Group of ambassadors representing donor countries was in agreement to halt assistance until the government improved its efforts to combat corruption, which had been done in the past. This would provoke the Kenyan government to say, "We promise we will not steal again. Now, where's the money?" Some changes would be made, the spigot would be turned back on and the stealing would start again. The experience left me with very strong opinions about reforms required of the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as bilateral assistance.

Q: Were you seeing anything going beyond the three percent completion of projects?

BUSHNELL: No. Politicians would open projects with great fan fare, then move on to the next. One of public arguments we made over our decision to suspend assistance was the amount of money – hundreds of millions of dollars – in the pipeline. We made the point that the government should effectively use what it had first.

You know, it's very easy to be holier than thou over the issue of corruption in African and other developing countries. But, when you think of it, a lot of these countries, certainly Kenya, were founded in corruption brought by colonial powers that came for the sole purpose of extracting wealth or exploiting the land and its people. They thought nothing of stealing land, enriching themselves, and degrading local communities. Some European powers were worse than others, but all of them showed to one extent or another their so-called civilizing mission meant "we win, you lose." No wonder emerging African leaders came in with the attitude "it's our turn." Outsiders need to be careful of the sanctimony.

Another aspect of what we saw as corruption was based on cultural differences and obligations.. Like many Africans, Kenyans have a very strong sense of community, as great as our sense of individualism. Under their custom of "harambe," an entire community would pool money to send one child to school or university. That's an investment and when one child makes good, that he or she is expected to give a return on the investment, right?

Q: Yeah.

BUSHNELL: So, when someone goes into government or gets another kind of job, the

community or extended family, has a sense of entitlement. That puts enormous pressure on the individual to share the good fortune.

Q: And the benefit is, public job, public funds being directed towards that particular community?

BUSHNELL: Right, or money or jobs. It goes on all the time in the States via earmarks and lobbyists.

Q: You're also breaking some American rice bowls when you cut off money and cut off projects. Did you run across people saying, you know, if you do this I don't have a job anymore, that sort of thing?

BUSHNELL: Not on the U.S. side.

Q: So this wasn't a problem?

BUSHNELL: No. What was a problem was the moral conundrum of punishing people for having rotten leadership. We talked about this very seriously in the Economic Governments Group -- what would the consequences of cutting assistance be on the people. We concluded that the corruption was so bad that it was worth doing.

Q: In other words, it wasn't delivering that much to the people who should benefit by it?

BUSHNELL: Exactly, right.

Q: We talked about corruption. What about human rights? What was happening to human rights? Think of women's rights, minority rights. What was happening in that area?

BUSHNELL: Moi played ethnic groups off against one another, particularly in the Rift Valley which saw periodic killings. On at least one occasion I went there with Jesse Jackson, who was very popular in Kenya. He publicly called for President Moi to visit and call a halt to ethnic clashes. "Where is President Moi? President Moi, where are you and why aren't you here with your people making peace," Rev. Jackson was quoted as saying. The next day, a disgruntled Moi came to the Residence for breakfast. Jesse had the three of us hold hands as he prayed to the Lord to give guidance and wisdom to his servant, Daniel Arap Moi, to go and make peace in the Rift Valley. What a scene. And it worked – Moi went to the Rift Valley a couple of days later.

Part of what I loved about being ambassador was fostering relationships. From what one reads, you think diplomatic conversations are rather dry. In fact, there is a huge amount of strategy and theatrics involved.

Q: What about, one of the human rights concerns or women's rights, particularly in Africa has got very much tied to aids and tribal practices. You know, young virgins who

are untainted by aids. I mean, all those things going, was that going through in Kenya?

BUSHNELL: At the time, the Kenyan government and religious leaders refused to acknowledge the problem of HIV/AIDS. I was active in trying to make it more public. Kenyan society, like many African societies, is very conservative. Talking about sex is taboo.

I have to say, though, I was even more active about women's rights. Too many young girls were taken out of school at 10 or 11, married off and treated like chattel.

Q: Was this at the tribal level? Was this where the problem was or was it in the city where people were?

BUSHNELL: Oh, it was throughout. There was an acknowledgement that African women did most of the work. The men said, "That's the way it should be." So, I spent a lot of time talking to women and visiting with women. USAID had a lot of projects that offered the opportunity to talk about women's political rights, girls' education, women's health, and so forth. We used the presidential elections of 1997 to do a lot of training for women.

The U.S. embassy was instrumental in creating a democracy group through which different embassies pooled their money. It was a kick to see ambassadors from newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union ask to be included. Along with the "usual suspects," we had Poland, Hungary, Romania…I can't even remember them all. Anyway, we ended up funding of the training of 28,000 Kenyan election observers, many of them women. The staffs from these embassies served as the international election observers. It was a huge endeavor and one in which I was very, very proud, and I'm very sad that it hasn't been done since. That really irks me.

Q: Yeah, because once you do it too, you will have a cadre.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. What we wanted was local civil participation so that the electorate gets a sense of ownership. It was a sign of maturity that you don't get through watching an outside observers.

At any rate, in the run-up to the elections, AID was involved in training women trainers to advise others of their rights and to get them to vote. What I found in Kenya, which I never found in Guatemala, was a feistiness and a readiness among many rural women to act once they found out they had certain rights. "You mean it's against the law for my husband to beat me? Where is the policeman??" or, "You mean I can inherit? Where's a lawyer? I found that these were very strong women, and it was wonderful to see them act. It was such a gift to be able to spend time with them.

Q: Were they able to make themselves felt while you were there?

BUSHNELL: Well, yes and no. There were some women political candidates who ran for

office. Most of them lost. But, after the elections, they got together, all the women candidates, win or lose, to talk about their experiences, share the best practices and to provide the kind of moral support that they needed to go back to do it again.

Q: I'm thinking and I may even have the wrong country, but recently there have been reports about women visited in Kenya who were not, when their husbands died was not going to get back and thrown back. I mean, they're forming their own little community.

BUSHNELL: Yes, you read that article about the woman who created a women's village.

Q: Could you explain what that was?

BUSHNELL: Evidently up in the northern part of Kenya a woman was rejected by her husband's family or her husband because she had been raped. She was a strong enough person to say, "To hell with you" and went off to live separately and create her own village. More and more women who were abused by their husbands or their families began to join her. Men started up a male village nearby and would come and jeer and give them a hard time, but these women went on with their lives. They created a campground for tourists and also a cultural center. It's been a pretty big success. At the end of the article it said that the men had tried to do the same thing, but it was not a success.

Q: The men couldn't do it.

BUSHNELL: Couldn't do it, because the women weren't there to do it. Kenyan women from a lot of these ethnic groups are responsible for raising the children, they're responsible for raising the crops, they're responsible for the education of their children and they're responsible for the household. So, what's left? A lot of the women are very self sufficient.

Q: What about on the educational side; were you seeing any progress? Were we trying to do anything to improve the educational system?

BUSHNELL: The Kenyans recognized at independence how badly they needed education and they took it seriously. They are very proud of their high literacy rate and infuriated when the government disbanded free primary education and when they saw corruption worm its way into the educational system. The teachers and principals in some places were demanding bribes to show up or to pass a student or to not beat students.

Q: Was Peace Corps in Kenya involved in education?

BUSHNELL: We had lots of Peace Corps Volunteers working on economic development: micro-enterprise work, environment and ecological projects, and small businesses. Gave me great opportunities to travel.

Q: Talking about the Peace Corps as one of the agencies at post, I use to laugh when I'd

look at the growth of federal agencies at any embassy. You must have had many.

BUSHNELL: We had 17, including the Library of Congress, a unit of Walter Reed Hospital, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Departments of Commerce and Agriculture, and all of the usual traditional agencies.

Q: These were all basically regional offices?

BUSHNELL: A lot of them were regional, right.

Q: This is where they were. Did you find the care and feeding of them a problem?

BUSHNELL: It was difficult in that Nairobi had a very high rate of crime, and staying in touch with the community was important. It was harder to do so when this employee is away for great periods. It can also be very lonely for spouses whose husbands or wives are away from post a lot. They need to make a much greater effort to get the sense of belonging to the community.

Q: How did this play out? When you take people who were coming with no exposure to the overseas experience before, it must have been difficult. How did you work with that?

BUSHNELL: Nairobi was known as a low morale post. Supposedly, Nairobi always had low morale. I don't buy it and I put a great deal of stress on community. One of the only requirements I levied on employees was mandatory orientation on arrival, spouses, strongly encouraged. The day would start in my office so that people could get a sense of what an ambassador's office looks like, and I emphasized at that time the importance of community. I reinforced my appreciation for community involvement during courtesy calls. My husband, Dick, and I made sure that we had a strong sponsorship program for new arrivals and we held a number of community activities at the Residence. We also opened the Residence tennis court and swimming pool to the community. The biggest problem was what to do with teens. So, somebody created an American Club to bring people together and give teenagers a place to go.

It helped that Nairobi had a very good international school, a game park close to the city, lots of good restaurants, shopping centers, things to do and an incredibly beautiful country complete with beaches and mountains. People's experience in Nairobi depended a great deal on where they had served before. AID and State people who had been all over Africa thought this was great. People who had never been to the third world thought it was awful. As ambassador, I considered it my job to do my best to create an environment in which people could be happy. The rest was up to them.

Q: What sort of volunteer things did you have going there for Americans to get involved in?

BUSHNELL: We had a very active International Women's Club, an active Community Liaison Office, and lots of interesting opportunities to help locally. There was an animal

orphanage, a National Museum and corresponding Friends of the Museum. There was a theater group, there was a Mason group, there were book clubs, there were garden clubs, a huge international diplomatic community and lots of ex-pats.

Q: What about the actual violence? How did one deal with this?

BUSHNELL: We put a huge emphasis on security and had weekly radio checks. Our regional security people went to great lengths to advise people how to stay safe without terrifying them. Nevertheless, we had terrible things happen: a mother and child hijacked at a school bus stop; a school teacher killed in a car-jacking; muggings around the embassy, the whole lot. Unfortunately, you can't keep bad things from happening to people, but you do your best.

Q: How about Mombasa? How did that work out for you? Was this an interesting reporting spot? Or was there not much point in political reporting?

BUSHNELL: We did a lot of political reporting. Mombasa was the port city with a U.S. Consulate until we closed it in the early 90s. There was an active business community and a huge Muslim population. Also, lots of American missionaries. I made a point of going there every three or four months. Thanks to our Muslim political counselor, we had a strong outreach to Kenyan Muslims, so I had many reasons to visit.

Q: What about the tourism business? That must have brought you an awful lot of high rollers from the American scene?

BUSHNELL: Not very many Americans go to Kenya. Many thousands of Europeans go to Kenya, but not very many Americans go. It's too far away. American tourists who did come were usually going on safaris, which were wonderful but very expensive. So, we tended to get the older American who had enough money. They spent a minimum amount of time in Nairobi.

Q: Did you get involved, speaking of safaris, in protection of animals or was Kenya doing a pretty good job of that?

BUSHNELL: Kenya forbade the hunting of wild animals and was a strong party to the treaty that banned the sale of ivory. The U.S. supported their conservation and wildlife efforts with AID funding and Dick and I became good friends with the Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service and his wife. We had many wonderful outings, both official and unofficial.

Q: How did you find, the social side, reaching out to the Kenyan society?

BUSHNELL: Kenyans are nice people and, as I said, Nairobi had a large diplomatic community. That said, it is hard for an ambassador to have social friends to whom you divulge what you are really thinking. We had acquaintances. One of the people I was closest to was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a woman who

had gotten her PhD. at Stanford. She was a Moi insider and as frank as I. Sally and I did a lot of good work together maintaining good relations between our country notwithstanding the attitudes and behaviors that sometimes leaked out from both our governments.

Q: This is where it is probably much more than with a man ambassador, I mean there is this sort of getting together of females and figuring out what to do about these peculiar creatures, politicians and all this.

BUSHNELL: First of all, there are so few women who are in senior-level positions, that we tend to either bond or not at all. I think there is a sense of cooperation, and there certainly was with Sally.

Q: What about the political life there? Was there much political life?

There was an enormous amount of political activity. Kenya was known as an island of tranquility in a turbulent region and Nairobi was very livable. So all kinds of people made their way there -- Rwandan Tutsis who had fled the genocide in '94 and Hutus who came after they lost the war. Somali war loads, Sudanese leaders like John Garang, members of The Lord's Resistance Army from Uganda. Large refugee populations lived on the borders of Sudan and Somalia and some of them made it into Nairobi.

Plus, I think I mentioned that Moi was involved in a number of regional issues, including Great Lakes, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda. Our embassy provided offices to our Ambassador to Sudan, since we had closed the embassy there. We also did the political analysis for southern Somalia, as well as the reporting about the UN agencies. So, we were very busy.

Q: Okay. Well, Prudence this is probably a good place to stop. Is there anything we should cover before we cover, come to the rather climatic events of getting yourself blown up?

Today is the 30th of August, 2005. Shall we talk now about the security situation as you came as ambassador? We're talking about in the mid 1990s. What sort of directions as ambassador did you get vis a via security and also when you went to Kenya. How did you see the situation?.

BUSHNELL: Well, remember that in the '90s, President Clinton felt compelled to give the American people their peace dividend, while Congress thought that now that the Cold War was over there was no need for any significant funding of intelligence, foreign affairs or diplomacy. There were discussions about whether we needed embassies not that we had 24-hour news casts, e-mail, etc.

Q: When it's done by faxes and e-mail, yeah.

BUSHNELL: Right. You may remember Newt Gingrich and the Congress closed the

federal government a couple of times. Agencies were starved of funding across the board. Needless to say, there was no money for security. Funding provided in the aftermath of the bombing of our embassy in Beirut in the '80s – that created new building standards for embassies and brought in greater numbers of diplomatic security officers – dried up.

As an answer to lack of funding, State Department stopped talking about need. For example, when we had inadequate staff to fill positions, State eliminated the positions, so we no longer can talk about the need. If there's no money for security, then let's not talk about security needs. The fact of increasing concern at the embassy about crime and violence was irrelevant in Washington. So was the condition of our building.

The first day I walked into the Chancery I knew something had to be done. Here was an ugly, brown, square box of the concrete located on one of the busiest street corners in Nairobi. We were situated across the street from the train station. Street preachers, homeless children, muggers, hacks and thousands of pedestrians came by our threshold every day. The security offset prescribed by the Inman Report in the aftermath of the truck bombing of our embassy in Beirut in the '80s, was non existent. Three steps from the sidewalk and you were in the embassy. In the back we shared a small parking lot with the Cooperative Bank building which was a 21-story building. We may have had about 20 feet of offset from the rear parking lot, but no more. We had an underground parking lot, which was inadequate, and we were squatting on some space in the front, but that was it.

I had learned before I got to Nairobi that the Foreign Buildings Operation, now Overseas Building Operations, was planning to a $4-7 million renovation of this building that was unsafe and much too small for us. Having spent three years in African Affairs dealing with an assortment of disasters, I thought it was dumb to invest more capital in a building that would never be considered safe. There just was no way to protect the building. I suggested that FBO sell the building and pool the proceeds with the money proposed for the renovations to buy a new site. Washington's response was somewhere between "are you nuts?! and get out of the way, the renovation train has already left the station."

Q: Did your security office or the apparatus in charge of that back in Washington pay any attention to the problem?

BUSHNELL: Our security officer, for whom I had a great deal of respect, understood the issue, as did the entire Country Team.

Q: Now, just to get a little feel for this, had any incidents happened, like the Khobar towers, or was that later?

BUSHNELL: The terrorist attack on Khobar Towers had already occurred but terrorism was virtually unknown in Kenya.

Q: Again, we're setting the stage. Did Osama Bin Laden or al Qaeda or the Taliban or anything like that cross your radar much?

BUSHNELL: I think I mentioned before that Nairobi was a favorite spot for a number of characters and groups. As ambassador I was told there was also an al Qaeda cell in Nairobi and that interested the intel community in Washington. Bin Laden at the time was considered a terrorist financier, not an activist, at least so far as I was told. I had been told in Washington that we wanted to disrupt his activities, which seemed pretty sensible and benign to me. I was not told that a special unit had been established to watch bin Laden's activities, nor that there was a secret indictment against him because of his hand in shooting down the black hawk helicopter. I was aware that a "walk in" had warned us in December 1997 that the embassy may be bombed but I was assured that the guy had done the same thing a number of times to other embassies in Africa and that he was considered "a flake."

Q: Well then, go ahead, you were having these bureaucratic battles.

BUSHNELL: Right, with the Overseas Building Operations. But my energies were focused on Kenya. As I said, we were an active embassy and as Kenya moved toward presidential elections in 1997, the political tension and violence increased. Around the corner from us stood a technical college, and the closer we got to elections in '97, the greater activity. I could stand at my office window and watch students running away from tear-gas hurling police who were being followed by the press. When the tear gas came wafting into our building I would go down to the Consular Section to do a sniff test. Once, I actually had somebody count the number of gas masks.

My concern was not just employees and visitors. Like most embassies, we had a morale store, cafeteria and medical unit that brought families to us. We became active at issuing warnings about student demonstrations and other reasons to stay out of the area of the chancery.

In 1997, I was told that we were under what was deemed to be a credible threat from a Somali quasi-humanitarian group called al-Haramain. I was also told that the intel side of the Washington interagency wanted to let things unfold to see where the leads would go. I reported this back to State, along with measures we were taking, but got no response. When I learned that the arms the group was waiting for were allegedly on their way, I asked the Kenyan government to break up the organization. Moi personally assured me they would comply. Some of the members of al-Haramain were deported and life went on.

Then I got word of a threat from the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group in northern Uganda. Again, we advised Washington and again we got nothing back. Meanwhile we continued to do everything we considered reasonable and cautious. I remember that in early 1998 a delegation of counter-terrorist types visited. I met with them in the secure conference room, and when they ended with the pro-forma , "Is there anything we can do for you"? I angrily declared they could answer the god-damn mail. The cursing was intentional because I wanted them to see how frustrated and annoyed I was.

I also continued to send cables about our vulnerability, which only became more apparent as we dealt with these threats. When I reviewed them before meeting with the Accountability Review Board after the bombing, I was astounded by their frequency.

General Tony Zinni, Head of Central Command, the military theater under which Kenya fell, understood force protection and agreed with me about the vulnerability of the embassy. With my enthusiastic concurrence he cabled Washington offering one of his own vulnerability assessment teams. That got a reply -- not just "no," but mind your own business.

Q: This team that eventually came out was, I take it, a basically a routine thing from Diplomatic Security?

BUSHNELL: No, it was not a routine thing. I think Tony's cable, along with continuing concerns we were voicing, finally provoked a response in the form of an assessment team. Meanwhile, when I returned to Washington on consultations in December of '97, I was told point blank by the AF Executive Office to stop sending cables because people were getting very irritated with me. That really pushed up my blood pressure. Later, in the spring of '98, for the first time in my career I was not asked for input into the "Needs Improvement" section of my performance evaluation. That's always a sign! When I read the criticism that "she tends to overload the bureaucratic circuits," I knew exactly what it referred to. Yes, the cables had been read, they just weren't appreciated.

Q: Was anything happening at this time from Tanzania from Dar es Salaam? Was there concern there or any of the other?

BUSHNELL: No, the greatest concern was to our embassy in Uganda, a far more vulnerable building than ours. Dar es Salaam chancery had been built as the Israeli embassy, so it was pretty hefty. Politically, the region was pretty tense. Hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea never diminished entirely. Somalia was chaos. Uganda had rebel forces at work. Eastern Congo – Zaire at the time – was embattled and the entire Great Lakes region, including Rwanda and Burundi was smoldering while the north-south war in Sudan continued. Kenya and Tanzania were looking pretty calm by comparison.

In May '98, the Director General visited Nairobi, and was exposed to the concerns of the community. While he thought we were on the verge of becoming obsessed over security, offered to take a letter back to Secretary Albright. So, I penned a letter suggesting that, when next defending the State Department budget before Congress, she use our vulnerability as an example of why we needed more security funding. I also wrote to the Undersecretary for Management. I received a highly bureaucratic response from the Undersecretary's office – sorry, greater needs elsewhere and no money – but none from the Secretary. That, frankly, didn't surprise me. To my knowledge, no one in the media has seen the letter to the Secretary so why it has been described as "highly emotional" or a "plea" is beyond me. Actually, it's not. Stereotyping is alive and well even if wrong.

In June, Dick and I took vacation. By this time, renovations, including some security upgrades, were getting started on the chancery.

When I returned from vacation, among other activities, I continued to participate in the outreach effort to the Kenyan Islamic community initiated by our Political Counselor, who was Muslim. A minority population in Kenya, they felt alienated and marginalized by Moi's government and held a profound distrust of the U.S. I had lots of conversations with these guys, which served us well after the bombing.

In the years since the bombing, I learned just out just how much I did not know about U.S. national security and law enforcement efforts against al Qaeda. The information was highly compartmentalized, on a "need to know" basis and clearly Washington did not think the US Ambassador needed to know. So, while I was aware of the al Qaeda presence and various U.S. teams coming and going, I did not know, nor was I told, what they were learning. When the Kenyans finally broke up the cell in the spring of '98, I figured "that was that." Whatever threat may have existed – and we never had a sense that there was any threat – was removed.

On Friday, August 7, we started another business day as usual. The DCM was on leave. Our Political Counselor was "acting" DCM and I had asked him to preside over the Friday Country Team meeting. I was finally successful in scheduling a meeting with the Minister of Commerce to talk about an upcoming the U.S. trade delegation – a big deal given how we stiff-armed Kenya --so I was not present. I remember asking that the Country Team discuss how our newcomers were settling in and whether we were reaching the right balance on issues of security – alerting but not paralyzing people to the dangers. In retrospect, that was a very ironic conversation.

The office of the Minister of Commerce was in the high-rise building across from our small rear parking lot. I walked across with two colleagues from the Department of Commerce, teasing my driver Duncan who was escorting us that he should be holding a little American flag we flew for official government calls. The Minister's office was on the top floor.

As was the case in many official meetings, the Minister had invited the press to ask questions and take photos before the real talk began. A few minutes after they left, we heard a loud "boom." I asked, "Is there construction going on"? It sounded like the kind of boom you get when a building is being torn down. The Minister said, "No there isn't." He and almost everybody else in the room got up to walk to the window. I was the last person up and had taken a few steps when an incredible noise and huge percussion threw me off my feet. I'll never know whether I totally lost consciousness or whether I was semi-conscious, but I was very aware of the shaking of the building. I thought the building was going to collapse, and I was pretty sure I was going to die. At the same time I was calmly thinking "this building is going to fall and I'm going to die," I was physically steeling myself for a fall. I vaguely remember a shadow, like a white cloud, moving past me and the rattle of the tea cup. Then I looked up. With the exception of a body prone on the other side of the large office, I was the only person left in the room

that had held about a dozen people before the explosion occurred. Almost simultaneously, the man I took for dead raised his head, and one of my Commerce colleagues returned.

Q: They left you.

BUSHNELL: My colleague rushed in saying, "Ambassador we've got to get out of here!" I tend to be calm in emergencies and I was probably in shock and maybe denial because I didn't want to leave the floor until we made sure that everybody else was out. We met up with a couple of people including the elevator operator literally ringing his hands saying, "Sorry, I'm so sorry, oh sorry, sorry!" For some reason I thought the building had been bombed because of a nasty banker's strike that was taking place. We were, after all, in the Cooperative Bank Building. So, off we went, down an endless flight of stairs. I have no idea how long it took, literally no idea. At every landing we would have to climb over the steel fire doors that had been blown in. Debris, blood, shoes and pieces of clothing were scattered at every floor.

What I did not know was that around l0:32, as the Country Team was meeting in my office, a truck with 2,000 pounds of explosives drove into the small rear parking lot I had walked across earlier. The lot was squeezed between the embassy, the Cooperative Bank Building, where my Commerce colleagues and I went to meet with the Minister of Commerce, and a seven story general office building. The truck drew up to the guarded entrance to the underground parking lot of the embassy. One of the two occupants got out and demanded entry. The guard refused and tried to alert the marines via radio. The perpetrator then hurled a stun grenade (the noise we and thousands of other people first heard), then ran. Seconds later, his companion detonated the explosives. The two tons of energy that hit the three buildings surrounding the parking bounced off and over the bricks and mortar with devastating effect. Two hundred thirty people were killed instantaneously. Over 5,000 people were injured, most of them from the chest up and most of them from flying glass. Vehicles and their occupants waiting for the corner traffic light to change to green were incinerated, including all passengers on a city bus.

The seven story office building next to the embassy collapsed and the rear of our chancery blew off. While the rest of the exterior of our building held – it had been constructed to earthquake standards – the windows shattered, the ceilings fell, and most of the interior simply blew up. Forty-six people died – about a quarter of the occupants – while others were struck or buried by rubble. All of the cars in the parking lot caught fire, which spread to the top of our generator. On the opposite side of the building, all of the windows blew in. In my office, the Country Team ducked as the windows blew, then crawled downstairs and exited the building along with everyone else who was still able.

The Acting DCM asked for volunteers to go back in and rescue colleagues, as the medical unit staggered onto the sidewalk and set up triage and medical help. The two front office managers began to record the names of people as cars still fit to drive were flagged down and the injured sent to hospital. Thousands of people were drawn to the scene, many of them crawling over the rubble of the collapsed seven story office building

to try to save those who were buried. Some of them climbed into the rear of the embassy to lend help and, some, to loot.

All this went on while, unaware, my colleague and I descended those endless flights of stairs in the Bank building with hundreds, maybe thousands, of Kenyans pressed together so tightly that I could barely keep my feet on the ground. All I kept thinking was that I just needed to get out of there, to get to the Medical Unit and we would be okay. At one point, the slow parade of people came to a standstill. Some people yelled, "Hurry up, move; there's a fire"! As smoke wafted up the stairwell, I thought for the second time that I was going to die. Again, it was a peaceful though because at least I'd be asphyxiated and not burned to death. Everyone around us remained just as calm.

When we finally exited the building, I looked across the street to see thousands of people behind a cordon gawking in shock. My colleague exclaimed, "Ambassador, there's press, put your head down!" He took the back of my head and literally pushed it down. Members of the press present at the beginning of the Minister's meeting were still in the area when the bomb was detonated. (Much later a group of Kenyan photographers won the Pulitzer Prize for the bombing photographs, the first time that black Africans had ever won the Pulitzer Prize.)

Because I was looking down, my first sight of the bomb's impact were shards of glass, twisted steel and, all of a sudden, the charred remains of what was once a human being. That's was caused me to look up. What I saw was fire (hence the smoke in the stairwell), rubble, destruction and the remains of what had been the rear wall of the chancery. A few steps further and we met the Acting DCM coming around the corner. He looked at me very calmly and said, "Hello Ambassador." I was astounded and very reassured that he seemed so calm. Maybe things were not as bad as they looked. What I didn't know was that, having organized and helped the team that returned to the building to help the buried, dead and wounded, he was now searching for his wife, like us, in shock.

At almost that same second, others caught sight of me and my colleague. I was grabbed and pushed as someone yelled, "Get her out of here, go, go, move, move, get her out, go, go, go"! I was literally thrown into a private jeep, where we met the second of Commerce colleagues who had been with me in the Minister's office. He looked awful, blood pouring down his face. He kept apologizing for that and for having so swiftly left the office. One of our Foreign Service National security people jumped into the front seat and yelled at the driver to get going. The driver, who worked for one of our political officers, had been walking up the front steps of the Embassy when the bomb was detonated. He had been knocked down, regained consciousness and had gone back to his car to assemble himself when it's bang, bang, "get them out of here, move, move, move, go, go, go!" The fellow stamped on the accelerator and --I will never, ever forget, so vivid is the vision – we careen toward a crowd of people almost crashing into a woman in Somali dress who had just stepped forward. We almost killed her. That was it; time to take charge. I ordered the driver to, "Stop, just stop and go pole, pole –slow, slow."

Because I thought the hospitals would be overcrowded, I opted to go to a hotel in the

hopes it would have a resident doctor. God knows why I thought that. At any rate, we went to the Serena Hotel where my Commerce colleagues were staying. The one colleague was still insisting that I cover my face, but when I looked at the two of them, blood streaming down from head wounds, I decided I couldn't possible look worse. Except for my lip, I did not feel any severe wounds. You can imagine the spectacle we made as we walked into the lobby, punched the elevator button and ascended to one of the rooms. Fortunately, there was a doctor, as well as a nurse at the hotel. One look at my companions and they were whisked off to the hospital. I was deemed fit enough to go to work, provided I have stitches put in my lip that afternoon.

Adrenalin had kicked in and I was very anxious to get out of there. The embassy radio net made clear the chaos around the embassy and listening to it I began to get a sense of the enormity of what had happened. I used the phone to call Dick, asked him to contact my parents and stay away from the downtown area. It didn't occur to me to break into the radio and it was only when I heard my driver who had been out on an errand and had gone to the British High commission requesting instructions that I spoke. I later found out this was the first time many people realized that I was still alive. I should have gone on earlier to reassure them. Lesson learned.

Q: Do you want to keep going for a while?

BUSHNELL: Well, let me finish the day. As soon as I could I went over to the AID building, located in a near suburb. The front office managers had already begun to establish a 24-hour operations center and were getting a satellite telephone hooked up when I arrived. The phone system in Nairobi, by this time, had gone dead. We were also in radio contact with colleagues doing rescue work at the embassy. A big part of my job was coordinating orders to the people on site to make sure they had what they needed to muddle through. It was chaos for a long time. Thousands of people were digging bare handed through the rubble of the 7-story office building that had collapsed in search of rescuers. The generator behind our building was going full blast with a fire on top of it. The water main in the area had broken, water was flooding the basement of the embassy as electrical lines swung loose. We also had people still buried in rubble.

At the AID building, I picked up the embassy mission telephone directory and handed it to somebody with instructions to start looking for our people, not stopping until everyone had been accounted for. Teams of Americans and Kenyans went into neighborhoods, hospitals and morgues looking for our folks. No one asked why, no one second guessed, everyone did what was necessary – did it heroically and well.

I had lost total track of time, but at some point early on the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs called. I had barely said hello, when the Secretary of State called on the other line. Both voiced shock about the bombing and about the vulnerability of the building. When I told the Secretary, "Madame Secretary, I wrote you a letter," there was silence. She had not seen it, she said. I wasn't about to quibble.

Not much later President Clinton called. When he called me "Pru" I knew someone was

passing him cue cards because there's no reason he would know that's what I call myself." Anyway, he instructed me to secure the perimeter of the chancery. He may have said "I'm sorry," I don't remember because I was so astounded by the importance of security now that we'd been blown up. This is supposed to be the guy who feels our pain. Once I confirmed that the building next door had collapsed, he ordered me to secure the perimeter there, as well. "But people are still trying to get others out from under the rubble," I explained. "Oh," he replied. "Well, then secure the perimeter." To this day that's the only interaction I ever had with the President about the bombing!

The information about what had happened and how people were doing came in waves. It got worse and worse as time went on. I mentally kept track of the people I saw or heard from and those I didn't as I learned that there were looters as well as people who wanted to help who got into the embassy from the rubble in the parking lot. I learned that our Marines had been sitting in their van outside the Embassy waiting for one of their colleagues to cash a check when the bomb went off. The one who went in to get the money was killed. Another fell down the elevator shaft but returned with broken ribs from the hospital to help in the rescue. I learned about the janitor who put his life at risk to turn off the generator before the water hit our electrical wires. I learned about acts of incredible courage and terrible deaths. As to security perimeter…that had been taken care of during the first hour. The Marines and a visiting security team donned helmets, flack jackets and guns and grimly kept people away. Kenyans who arrived on the scene to help, or not, were incensed.

As the day went on, the nightmare grew. Too many dead, too many wounded. Hospitals were flooded with thousands of walking wounded, most bleeding terribly from wounds to chest and face. Many had gone to the window when one of the perps threw the stun grenade and paid a terrible price. At some point I called as many of the Country Team as I could to organize ourselves. Washington, meantime, had set up a task force and questions were coming in faster than we had the information.

When a semblance of organization took hold I went home to change from the bloody suit and get my lip stitched up at the children's hospital next to the Residence. I returned to our operations' center at AID as soon as I could. Can't remember everything we did but I know I was incredibly grateful for the fact that we had a large mission with lots of willing hands and a senior team that was alive and experienced enough to take over when necessary. I was also thankful for the experience of having handled disasters before so I could provide the kind of instructions that would hopefully help save lives. About ten that night, I left the ops center in the good hands of AID and Embassy officers who could cope and went home exhausted. I was too tired to even wash off the clots of blood stuck in my hair.

Q: Okay. One thing before we cut this off. What was the reaction of the Kenyan government and all during this first day?

BUSHNELL: They were as responsive as they could be. Moi sent out the military, but the military is taught to be warriors. This was not the National Guard or FEMA. They had

no idea what to do and became more a part of the problem than the solution. So, they stood down. Moi himself was on the scene within hours to view the damage. The citizens of Nairobi really came together to begin organizing. A real estate developer brought a crane down to start lifting the rubble and thousands were on the scene to help out.

It was very clear they needed help and it was going to take time for any USG support to arrive. When someone in Washington asked is we could acquiesce to Israeli offers of help, I gratefully concurred – provided they check with the Kenyans, of course. It was a good thing they did come because the planes with the Fairfax County Rescue Squad and the one with State's FEST team both broke down! Both of them. It took over 30 hours before we got any real help from the States. By that time, the Israelis were the heroes and our name was mud.

Q: One last thing. Did you learn, I assume at some point you learned about what happened in Dar es Salaam.

BUSHNELL: Yes, almost immediately.

Q: Was there concern that there might be other bombs or other things happening?

BUSHNELL: The news I heard was that an embassy in Dar es Salaam or Kampala or Khartoum was also blown up. There was an awareness that there ware simultaneous explosions. It took awhile for it to come to light that it was our embassy in Dar but it was clear that these had been well planned terrorist attacks.

Q: *Was there any concern about further attacks??*

BUSHNELL: Not that day but we sure thought about it in Nairobi. State was going to pull out the combat Marines sent to provide perimeter security at the AID building within a couple of months, so they obviously didn't think so. On August 7, we were far too busy trying to save lives, tend to the wounded and find the missing to worry about further attacks.

Q: Was the media all over you? Were they a problem?

BUSHNELL: The Kenyan media was already on the scene. The next day the international media arrived in droves.

Q: We can talk about that next. We'll stop at this point and pick up with the second day.

BUSHNELL: OK..

Q: Today is the 1st of September, 2005. Pru, what happened? The second day you woke up, I assumed washed your hair?

BUSHNELL: The next day, yes, I washed my hair. To be exact, Dick, my husband,

washed my hair. Bandages on my fingers, hands and arms from superficial wounds prevented me from putting them in water so Dick did it -- one of those moments that would be accompanied by schmaltzy music in the movies.

It had been a horrible night. The phone in our bedroom kept ringing and when I answered, I'd get silence. I honestly thought that perps were telling me there were more of them out there and they knew I was still alive. We finally got it resolve a few days later – a disconnect between the guard house at the front and the one at the gate.

Downtown people had worked all night to dig survivors out of the collapsed office building. At our operations center, the night shift had been relaying information to the Washington task force (because Nairobi was eight hours ahead we usually interacted during evening and night hours) and keeping tallies our dead, wounded and missing. We had reached forty-something and were still looking for both Kenyans and Americans.

I needed to see the embassy so went there first. Reinforcements for the marines providing perimeter security had still not arrived but everything was calm. Our Security Engineer had established a lean-to office on the sidewalk and escorted me through the remains of our building. The devastation inside had a deathly stillness to it. I laid roses sent to me by Sally, he Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Ministry on the steps leading into the building because it had now become a sacred place. Duncan, my driver and I then went to the AID building.

President Moi had convoked the diplomatic corps to State House. Meanwhile, the worst of our injured had been prepped for imminent air evacuation via military plane. Our wonderful Regional Medical Officer suggested I go to the hospital to say good-bye, lest some not make it. I think it was at that point that the advice of a former mentor clicked in: "take care of your people and the rest will take care of itself." I asked our Econ Counselor to represent me at State House and went over to the hospital. Don Leidel's words became my mantra and leadership philosophy.

The wounded Kenyans and Americans, were heavily bandaged but putting on as bright a face as they could muster. Even the most seriously wounded gave me a thumbs-up. On the way out of the hospital, I stopped by the room of the Minister of Commerce, the man who had been sitting next to me on the couch and had gone toward the window when we heard the first boom. He had forty stitches in his head. Had I not paused when the bomb exploded, it would have been me.

The rest of the day was a blur of activity. The medevac plane had landed without supplies or back-up crew and we were informed that the pilot and others required the mandatory 8-hour crew rest before taking our wounded to Germany. My hair caught on fire, as they say. Angry calls to the task force as I went up the DOD chain of command demanding action peppered the other activities.

The medical officer and I went almost as bezerk when Washington instructed us that we had to put at least some of our wounded on a plane the South African government had

sent – to show good well. We sent the three most stable, all Americans and got thanked by the Kenyan press a few days later with accusations of preferential treatment. Neither of the aircrafts carrying the Fairfax County Rescue Team and the State Department FEST team was going to arrive on time. All in all a lousy day. Thank heaven we had no further deaths.

The search for our people continued. We put an announcement out on the radio requesting all employees of the American embassy to report in. Meanwhile, family members of the missing were frantically coming in or calling to get news of their loved one. Our human resource people couldn't provide the information others were so desperately seeking, which stoked the stress. Americans, too, were calling the task force in Washington. The ultimate loss was 12 Americans and 32 FSNs but it took us until Sunday afternoon to make that determination.

Q: Where were they? Were they located in any particular place?

BUSHNELL: They had either been in the rear of the building near the parking lot where the detonation took place, or along the corridors that ended at the back of the building. The energy from the explosion came roaring down the corridors; anyone who happened to be in its path was killed.

American members of the community had gone to sit with those waiting for news of the whereabouts of loved ones, or reeling from information of the death toll. I visited a couple of them that day. Sue Bartley, spouse of our Consul General, Julian Bartley, was already aware that her son had been killed and was holding out the hope that Julian would be found alive. We were sure that he was not but did not want to stamp out that hope until we found the body. Julian, like other of our African American colleagues, had been mistaken for Kenyan and taken to one of the many over-crowded morgues around the city. It was not until Sunday afternoon that he was found.

One of our newcomers, Howard Kavaler, having learned that his wife, Prabhi, had been killed, decided to leave post immediately with his two daughters. Howard was amazingly kind to me when we said good-bye.

That evening the FEST team -- I think it stands for Federal Emergency Support Team -- and the Fairfax County Search and Rescue Squad finally arrived, along with a host of military personnel, as well as FBI agents. Suddenly, we went from having to manage chaos and tragedy to managing chaos, tragedy AND hundreds of people. The fact that no one came with a specific role or objective made things worse -- something I subsequently talked about at length: if you're going to help people in chaotic circumstances you really need to have your act together because, if not you create additional management issues for people already in crisis. The Department at this time had very little experience with the kind of situation Nairobi and Dar were in. We're very good at evacuating people and we're good at taking out our dead. But a terrorist attack that leaves some dead and some not was something we had much less experience with. So, there were inevitable run-ins.

Our Security Officer, for example, was prohibited from entering the AID building, to which we had transferred operations, because his embassy ID been lost in the attack. One of my most senior people, meanwhile, wanted to resign out of frustration that no one in the new group was listening to him. I pulled everyone into our operations center and laid down the law. I told everyone to "take a good look at me. I am the Chief of Mission. This is my mission and nothing happens unless I say it happens. Here is the Acting DCM. If I'm not here, he's the one who says what's going to happen." We then organized the visitors so that rather than meeting with all these little groups separately, they would coordinate among themselves, and I would meet with a couple of them every morning or twice a day. Over a period of hours and days things settled down.

Another example of how things became unwittingly complicated was the composition of the FEST team – an interagency group. Our senior Security Officer was brand new; his predecessor, who left only a short time ago, was put on the FEST team. I completely understood the logic of that but it gave me two senior security officers; one who knew Nairobi and had contacts, and another who needed to establish himself. I asked the former RSO to take on liaison with Washington as shadow consultant to the new RSO. If there was any trouble between them they were both gracious and professional enough not to let me know about it, for which I was most grateful.

Q: Well, you know, we'd talked earlier about Nairobi as being the magnet for every agency in the government, many of which have a very small presence abroad. You know, bad things aren't supposed to happen to bureaucrats who work out of Washington and all of a sudden something happens here. I would imagine you would have the Secretaries of every department wanting to show concern and all. I think it would be a bloody mess. Did you find this coming at you?

BUSHNELL: I think that the task force in Washington was dealing with that because I didn't experience much of that. Actually, I think the size of the mission and quality of people allowed us to fare far better than smaller embassies may have. Let me give you an example. One of the agencies was the Medical Research Unit of Walter Reed Hospital, which gave us people with medical backgrounds who were a great boon to us. Also, by the time we were attacked I had been in Nairobi two years and had worked hard to form a community. As I said the other day, it didn't matter what your job description was, people just went to work. We were also very lucky to have two Community Liaison Officers, who were both terrific. The CLOs, along with my husband Dick, were instrumental in working with the community.

It became really clear that there's no such thing as enough information. I think of New Orleans today. People were just desperate for information. I was not able to go on the radio every time there was an update, so we arranged to have the Marines at Post One who were accustomed to using the radio net to do it. We would write things out for them to read, because it was important that the information be absolutely accurate. Eventually, things settled down.

The worst three days of the crisis were the first three: Friday, when we were blown up;

Saturday when the rescuers finally arrived to create even more chaos; and then Sunday when we held a memorial service for the Americans and dealt with the international news media. Of course they wanted a press conference. I did not want any photographs taken, because I looked pretty banged up but was persuaded otherwise. I smile, because about a week later my OMS came up to me and said, "You know Pru, I really shouldn't be saying this, but I've been seeing pictures of you on television and in the newspaper and I have to say it's good that you got your hair done a few days before we were bombed. As bad as you looked, your hair was okay."

The experience with the international media was a lesson that I hope created systematic change in the way we handle situations like ours. The mission had a small USIS Public Affairs Office that was flooded with press requests from newspapers all over the world. Washington's concern, as always, was the American media; they could not have cared less about the local media. Any ambassador could go on the local media and say pretty much whatever he or she wants – not so with American media. So, instinctively our public affairs people were focused on taking care of the international and American press. They were aware of the Kenyan press and in the press conference they asked, "Does anyone from the Kenyan press have any questions"? But, essentially the international media came in and ran over the local press. That was going to come back to haunt us pretty soon.

Q: One question. I'm thinking about the American press. Were they picking up on the point of why hadn't something been done? In other words, it was probably common knowledge that you had been complaining.

BUSHNELL: No it wasn't.

Q: It wasn't?

BUSHNELL: At that point it wasn't.

Q: It wasn't. So, that didn't come up?

BUSHNELL: That did not come up at the time.

Q: Because that would have been a very tricky subject to handle.

BUSHNELL: It did come up later. I'll talk about that in a couple of minutes. But at that point, no, that hadn't come up. I had the press conference on Sunday morning. I was also dealing with what was going to happen to the remains of the deceased Americans. I got word that the FBI wanted to come in and do autopsies in Nairobi, which would have taken up to two weeks. I told them, "Under no circumstances." The people who had lost their loved ones wanted to leave and there was no way I was going to ask them to wait for autopsies. Instead, a plane was sent to return the bodies to the U.S.

I thought we needed to have some farewell and decided to hold a memorial service at the

Residence on Sunday afternoon. It was extraordinary to me. Word went out over the embassy radio net. Dick and I usually let the household staff go home on weekends because we enjoyed our privacy and we had completely forgotten to tell them to come in on Sunday. No one was there. I was enlisting my driver, Duncan's support to help when in walks a member of our community. "Can I help?" she asked. "Yes"!

A few minutes later, a neighbor offered her help and with the hard work of a couple of people, we organized the memorial service that included a pianist and distribution of roses. Our CLO brought a recording of taps. I was desperately searching my brain for memorial services I had attended to come up with a format. I remembered the funeral of a dear friend during which people had gotten up and talked about this person. So, I offered the opportunity to people to get up and talk about our friends and colleagues who had died in the bombing.

I started it off and soon others were coming up to speak, including the family members of the deceased, which was so poignant and sad. One of the last people to say something was Duncan, my driver. He may have been the only Kenyan there, because the event had been organized so quickly. At any rate, he stood up and said, "I'm a Kenyan by birth, but in my heart today I am an American," and went on with the dignity and the oratory skill which is so wonderful in Africans. He talked particularly about Julian Bartley, because as CG, Julian had decided that every FSN who wanted a tourist visa to go to the United States deserved to have one, and Duncan was one of the first people who had been given one. That had done so much to make the FSNs feel a trusted part of the United States Government.

After the service the head of the FEST team, who was the liaison with Washington, met with the family members of the deceased to let them know what would be happening. He told them that the bodies would go through Germany and would be met on Tuesday at Andrews Air Force Base at a ceremony attended by President Clinton. One of the family members protested because he would not have the time to meet his son in college in the South and get to Andrews to attend the ceremony. The response was a kindly "too bad." I asked the team leader to get back to Washington to see if the ceremony could be delayed by a day so that all family members would get a chance to collect themselves. He did and the problem was fixed. I don't know if you see the trend here – I kept pushing back and pushing back on Washington demands, creating a double-edged reputation for myself.

Q: Let's talk for a minute about, the problem of casualties of the Foreign Service Nationals. How many were killed or injured, approximately and what were we able to do about them?

BUSHNELL: Thirty-two Kenyan employees were killed. We lost a good part of our motor pool, a good part of the Consular Section, almost all of the shipping section, half of our budget and fiscal section, someone from USIS, and the FSNs in our political and economic sections. The Admin Section was hardest hit, and the horrible reality was that it was also the section on which we relied upon the most to keep things going.

Q: As always.

BUSHNELL: As always, exactly. It was the Kenyan employees who bore the brunt of bringing out the dead and wounded, finding the missing, renting the refrigerator truck when Nairobi morgues became too full, informing families of the status of loved ones, initiating contacts with the insurance companies, and on top of everything else, tending to the visitors. They barely had time to wipe their tears.

In Kenyan culture it was an important sign of respect to have the employer present at an employee's funeral. Some of our people were from the hinterlands of Kenya. We sent at least one American to every funeral, no matter where. Having made the decision, I didn't have to do anything further – I knew it would be taken care of.

When it came to the injured, Gretchen McCoy, our medical officer, and I insisted that Kenyan and American employees be treated exactly the same. FSNs would be evacuated along with the Americans. And if they needed long-term care, they would get it. Washington agreed, fortunately, and I know that some Kenyans to this day return for medical care.

That turned out to be one of the easier decisions. One example of the unforeseen complexities dealt with life insurance payments. A number of the FSNs who died were lower-wage employees whose families faced both incredible tragedy and continuing expenses. The local insurance company did a great job in coming up with the money quickly but the problem was who would get it. What about the employee who had two families, one in the village and another in Nairobi. So, who gets the money? Well, it was the person named as beneficiary, the others were out of luck. What about the families who decided that the widow should not inherit and literally took the money from her hands? What could we do about that? For some we helped open bank accounts, for others we could do very little. Problems went on and on.

Q: I want to ask a question. I'm speaking as somebody who is 77 years old, so I belong to a different era. There's something I've seen grow up and that is professional grief counselors. I find this something, almost alien to me. I mean, who in the hell are these people, but it's become part of our culture you might say. Did you have these people? How did you deal with them?

BUSHNELL: The US military had sent a number of doctors and counselors to help the Kenyans, because the Kenyan medical establishment was overwhelmed. Some of them did a good job and some did not. Grief counselors were pretty much an anathema to the Kenyan communities.

The very first person to arrive to help the embassy community was the Regional Psychiatrist from Pretoria. He decided that all employees of the mission should go through debriefings and he used military counselors to help. I think the results were mixed. We decided to do it at the Residence, because we wanted a safe comfortable place, and the Residence was a very pleasant spot. We also decided to have mixed groups

of Americans and FSNs. Our motives were good but I'm not at all sure the decision was the right one. I was desperately trying to make good decisions – we all were – but I'm not sure all of them helped as much as we had hoped.

I did have a separate debriefing for the Country Team because I could not talk as openly with other groups. Plus, some happened to be out of country that day and we wanted to integrate everyone into one team again.

My husband, Dick, played an important role in getting people to these debriefings. He is one of the most cheerful souls I have ever come across, the kind of man who almost literally wakes up singing, full of energy and enthusiasm. He made sure that all of the FSNs attended the debriefings and made all of the arrangements at the Residence. At one time we had five or six debriefings going on simultaneously.

Q: Well tell me. Did you find this briefing therapeutic?

BUSHNELL: I found it very useful. In the psychiatric community now there is some controversy as to whether these debriefings are good or not, but I'm glad we did them because I thought the "stiff upper lip" and "move on" tradition of the State Department was completely inappropriate to us.

Q: Which is the old attitude, I mean get on with it.

BUSHNELL: Right. So, as a gesture that I cared enough about the people under my leadership to take advantage of this was important to me, and I will stand by that. The concern was that there were some people for whom debriefing may discharge really high emotion and be more negative than positive, and I understand that. I'm still glad I did it and I would do it again tomorrow.

The briefing went like this. Everybody in the group was asked the question, "Where were you at the time of the bombing"? So, one would simply get the information out. By doing that one was able to see the different perspectives people had from those who were in the building to those who were out of the city or even out of the country. The next question was, "How did you feel then and what are you feeling now?" That's probably the part that could be more controversial. It was for me a critical question to address. I was the only woman on the Country Team and I was the leader. I was so aware of the fact that I had failed in my mission to keep people safe. Even though I had tried, I had failed. It was helpful to share that and to get the full-fledged loyalty of the team. While we never put words to it, it was certainly obvious in retrospect that we would have done anything for one another. I had a senior staff committed to dealing with the incredible challenges in ways that focused on taking care of our people. How much was directly due to the debriefing, I'm not sure but I know it was important.

Q: Was there a different attitude toward this from the Kenyan side of things? I mean, Americans are pretty prone to speak out and particularly the newer generation. Not my generation, but a newer generation is able to talk about feelings.

BUSHNELL: Dealing with post-traumatic stress and talking openly about feelings continued to be a big issue in the community for a long time to come. Among the Kenyans, therapy is not a part of the culture. We had counselors available for months, and once the military counselors left we tapped into the local Kenyan counseling community -- not just for embassy employees but the Nairobi community at large. A study on the effectiveness of the counseling that was done after I left post found that Kenyans did not take advantage of it, nor did they find it particularly helpful. Far more helpful for them was their church community and their families' support.

Q: I think Americans have been almost trained to accept counseling.

BUSHNELL: Americans maybe, but Foreign Service people, no. After all, if you see a counselor, you have to 'fess up for a security clearance. A lot of American employees feared that getting counseling would jeopardize their careers and so refused to go.

Q: There were hundreds killed who were just not part of our show, the embassy, I mean. They just happened to be there. Did this create any sort of a backlash?

BUSHNELL: It created an immediate backlash. Within a few days the local press was publishing horrible things, some of them due to decisions I made. A couple of days after the bombing, for example, we got word that Secretary Albright wanted to visit to pay condolences to the Kenyans. I took one look at the Admin Counselor, and I saw that no way were we in any position to host the Secretary. I told her that. She took it very well, though her staff did not. When she came on August 18, eleven days after the bombing, the Kenyans press was very negative.

Local media and opposition politicians were already making hay over efforts I had made to explain what happened on the day of the bombing. Immediately after the blast, our marines and other security people formed a protective cordon around the embassy. First of all, Kenyans did not understand why in the immediate aftermath we did not rush over to the rubble of the seven-story building to help dig people out. Second, they not understand why we were keeping people from our building. What they saw were armed white men with guns, which they interpreted as indifference at best and hostility at worst.

The attitude portrayed by the press and some politicians went like this: "We allowed you into our country and in our city and look what happened to us. Just what have you done for us lately? Worse, on the day of the bombing, rather than helping us and showing the spirit of *harambe*, you point your guns at us, you yell at us to stay out of your building even though we're there to try to help, and you don't do anything to help us."

Three or four days after the bombing, I went on local television and radio to explain our side. While the exterior of the chancery building didn't look so bad, at least from the front, the interior was devastated. The building was unsafe and we didn't want people going in and jeopardizing their lives. Furthermore, there were looters who had gotten in whom we had to get out. Saying that just put match to dynamite. The next day, the press

and some opposition politicians were ranting "American Ambassador accuses Kenyans of looting." I learned a big lesson that day: Sometimes telling the whole truth is completely inappropriate. I paid hard for that lesson, I can tell you.

When Secretary Albright did come I had two conditions: that we not have to prepare briefing papers, because we had lost all of our computers, and we had nothing, nothing. And the other, that she not spend the night, because the security involved in that would have been so astronomical. As it turned out, the plane had problems in Dar, where she had first stopped, and she had to cut her trip short. Rather than meet with the opposition political figures one by one, we invited them to a wreath-laying at the site of the embassy and the building that had collapsed. They were further outraged.

I, in turn, became almost as angry with them. We had personally supported all of them and funded quite a few. I was so mad at them that I refused to see them until Christmas. I didn't invite them to my house, I cut them off. The Country Team advised me to contact them earlier but I had decided to hell with being ambassador. These politicians were human beings to whom I had paid respect and support who chose to make a spectacle of circumstances for no reason but political show. Others at the embassy continued meetings but I didn't until December when we finally reconciled with all but one.

Q: Well, I think, you know, political posturing, at certain times this is not appropriate. I mean, it's disgusting in any culture. I think people should be called on this. What about the Kenyan reaction to al Qaeda and Islam? Did they get nasty?

BUSHNELL: The majority of Kenyans are Christian. The Muslim community, mostly concentrated on the coast and Somali border, had already felt marginalized, which frankly they were. Feelings didn't get better after the bombing, especially when, within 48 hours of the bombing, 250 FBI agents arrived. I had some tough negotiation about whether they would come with guns. Fortunately, the Special Agent in Charge, a woman, was terrific and we settled on short guns and soft clothes, i.e. regular suits and discrete weaponry. The Canadians gave the FBI a place from which to work. To understand the trail they were following I need to take you back to the moment of the bombing. Two guys in a truck with 2,000 pounds of explosives planned to enter the underground parking lot of the embassy. Our security guard said no. One of the men got out of the vehicle to argue, threw a stun grenade, panicked and ran away. The guy left in the truck detonated the bomb.

The perpetrator who ran away first returned to his hotel. Because he was injured, he then checked himself into a hospital. In his pants pockets were the plans for the bombing. The hotel clerk thought this guy was suspicious coming back in such bad condition and then leaving to go to the hospital, so he alerted the police. The police went to the hospital, found the guy and found the plans. So, there was suspect number one.

The FBI sifted through the rubble and pieced together the make of the vehicle, which was a key lead that soon led them right into the Muslim community. Of course they were working with the Kenyan police, so it was the Kenyans who were knocking on doors, but

nobody was particularly fooled. Everybody knew that the Kenyans were serving as the surrogates, if you will, and even if they weren't they had a lousy reputation. So, not surprisingly, rumors started about how people brought in for questioning were being treated, etc. I was deeply concerned both because the rumors weren't true and because I was now, in addition to everything else, trying to recoup the friendship of the Kenyan people. The last thing I needed was to deal with lies about how people were being treated by the police and FBI.

I was also concerned about the security of the FBI. If members of the Muslim community really got up in arms, so to speak, it would add another layer of danger. A couple of times I met with the leaders of the Muslim community with whom I had fortunately created a link long before we were bombed. I was able to bring them together with the Special Agent-in-Charge – who, by the way, changed every 90 days – to say "Would you please exchange telephone numbers so you can talk with one another, clarify rumors and help one another." For a while it would work, then rumors and charges would begin.

Q: The perpetrators of the bombing in Kenya, were they indigenous or recruited or had they been Saudis or Pakistanis or somebody like that?

BUSHNELL: None came from Kenya. Egypt, Comoros, Yemen I think, but not Kenya. I learned that when the Government of Kenya took down the al Qaeda cell in the spring of '98, we all falsely concluded that al Qaeda no longer had a footprint in Nairobi or in Kenya. Actually, they had simply gone underground. I also learned that there were a number of U.S. embassies under surveillance. Nairobi and Dar looked easy; plus, there was a female ambassador in Nairobi, and they thought they would get more play if they killed a woman ambassador. I was shocked when I learned that at the trial.

Q: Well, let's get back to the recovery. You mentioned that after the remains of the American dead were sent back to Washington you entered a new phase.

BUSHNELL: Things shifted. The worst of our wounded were in safe hands, the initial chaos was over as we could focus on the extent of our losses and what we needed to do. Dealing with the anger of the Kenyans was one thing; paying respect to the members of our FSN community was another. We held a memorial service in the garden of the Residence before the end of the first week for the Kenyan colleagues we had lost. We were a large mission so I spent a long time greeting people. I could immediately see those who had lost a loved one. I'll never forget the haunted, shocked, sorrowful expressions on their faces. Then, as I said before, there were individual funerals to attend and additional memorial services for individual Americans.

We also had to manage Washington, because once the press left and the crisis task force disbanded, we lost a cohesive way of dealing with the myriad of issues we faced. The Africa Bureau was as usual flooded with problems all over the sub Sahara and we were just one of many problems. The Department returned to business as usual much faster than we were ready and we felt that there was a lack of understanding as to just how blown away we literally had been. People would start saying, "Well, you didn't respond

to our cable, what's wrong with you"? "Well, our communication system had been blown up." For a while I was interacting with the Department via Hotmail – we were lucky that AID had an internet link.

Q: That's a private e-mail account.

BUSHNELL: Right. And via cell phone. We had nothing else. Our people literally had to dig through the rubble of the embassy and move as much as could be salvaged over to the AID building, where we were squeezed in. OSHA would have had a fit if they had seen us. Your office here would probably have had six people in it.

Q: We're talking about an office about 25 feet by 10?

BUSHNELL: We were cheek to jowl with wires all over the place. The AID building was in the suburbs of Nairobi. It had been built as an apartment building, but by Kenyan standards. It was so vulnerable that on the eighth floor where my office was we were allowed only one safe and that was put next to a pillar for fear it would otherwise fall through the floor. The AID Director had arrived just a few days before the bombing. He offered to give up his office but I thought that we would be in there temporarily, so I said, "No, no, no, I'll just take this little side office." It ended up being my office the rest of the time I was in Nairobi. It was a tiny little office. There were times when I wished that Jock had offered his office a second time, but he didn't. On the other hand, it showed people that I was in it with them, that I did not have any more perks than they did. Fortunately, the AID office building was not too far away from the Residence, so I could have many meetings there. It turned out not to be a big deal.

As you can imagine, we were hemorrhaging money. We were getting to the end of the fiscal year and rather that scrubbing the books we were writing checks. The Department kept saying, "It's okay, eventually we'll cover them" but our new financial management officer was terrified that he was going to be in violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act. The communications people fashioned a section out of the floor I was on and began to cannibalize the computers that had been blown up. Everything seemed to take so long to get fixed. I won't even talk about personal issues, like trying to get insurance to pay for vehicles or belongings that were lost. Being bombed didn't fit the guidelines for anything. Eventually, the Department created the Office of Victims Assistance to help in cases like ours but it didn't exist at the time.

Once the Secretary and her entourage came and left, we received what I began to call the disaster tourists. Well meaning people from various parts of Washington who couldn't do a thing to help us. In November I sent a cable to Washington requesting by name the people we wanted to visit. The response was "Now wait a minute, you're complaining about the visitors who are coming and now you want others. You're sending very mixed messages here." They didn't seem to understand the difference between those VIPs who could be part of the solution and those having their photographs taken in the remains of the embassy.

Among the visitors were two Congressional staffers from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which, at the time, was chaired by Jesse Helms – not exactly someone enamored of the Foreign Service. I had them meet with school teachers and community members because I wanted the staffers to understand the ripple effects of the bombing on the entire community. They heard the concerns and complaints of the community and took those back to Washington. I got into big trouble!

A colleague from Washington, and someone I had known for years, let me have it on behalf of the "Seventh Floor." He told me I had gone too far and that some folks back in Washington thought I had lost it entirely. He ended by saying that we were going to get what we wanted--attention from the Director General--but that he (DG) was coming to shake his fist in my face. I thought I was going to melt away. It took every bit of resilience I had to keep control.

Q: How did you respond to all of this?

BUSHNELL: I was dumbfounded. I hadn't been so upset since the week of the bombing when I was ambushed on camera by CNN with a question about the letter I had sent to the Secretary regarding security concerns. Someone had leaked the information and the Department had not yet figured out how it would respond. They were shocked and most upset when they called me and found out I had already been asked about it – as if I were the person responsible for the leak.

Anyway, the fact is that the Director General did come, listened and committed himself to run interference back in the Department when we needed it.

We desperately needed volunteers to help us get back up and running and people responded in best Foreign Service fashion. As an example, a FSN came from London to do nothing but write job descriptions for six weeks. We couldn't advertise the jobs of the people we had lost because all of our job descriptions had gone up in smoke. Without advertising the jobs, we couldn't hire, train or replace. This was typical of kinds of things we had to do to get as far as Square One. Another example of the invaluable help some people provided was the re-establishment of our Post Office.

I don't want to give the impression that we had received no help from Washington. On the contrary. Some of our colleagues were extraordinary. For example, there was a TDY team in town to review the status of our Army Post Office, given the few number of military personnel at post. They were likely going to close it down. The bombing, of course, made it a moot point. But rather than just leave, these people took it upon themselves to set up a new APO in the AID building where we had moved. I'm not sure anyone told them to do it. They just did. I can't tell you what a morale booster that was! Within ten days we were getting mail.

People volunteered from posts all over the world to come help. It was amazing.

Q: That was what you needed.

BUSHNELL: By contrast, a few weeks after the bombing I was told that the combat marines sent to provide the security perimeter lacking at the AID building would be removed for lack of funds. That conversation and my threat to call a press conference should the decision be implemented continued for months. The rationale in Washington was that, having been blown up, we would not be harmed again. We felt quite differently where we were.

We had already experienced the results of an intercepted package at the AID building. The sniffer dogs behaved as they do when coming across bombs and we all had file down into the basement of the building to wait the results of the investigation. It turned out to be an innocent package but the experience shook people to the core. The looks on their faces told me just how much we were still dealing with bomb effects.

Another security test came as a result of President Clinton's order to bomb the al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and a chemical factory in Sudan. Louie Freeh, the Director the FBI, had arrived that day and he and I were to meet the following morning. That night, however, I received an urgent telephone call advising me the Director was coming over to see me immediately. I got out of bed, threw on some clothes on and called one of the Country Team members who lived nearby to hasten over. This sounded serious.

When Freeh arrived he was beside himself. He had just learned that the U.S. was going to launch missile attacks and no one had given him prior warning. He wanted to know what I knew – which was less than he, at that point – and what my plan was. "I assume," he said "that you're going to evacuate. I'm removing all FBI personnel; I have five seats left on the plane coming in that I'll give to you. You can decide whom you want to send out." Then, he dashed off.

Huh?? I called Washington to verify the news – AF was as much in the dark as we – then had our security team come over to the Residence. We looked at one another with both shock and bemusement, then settled down to figure out the worse reaction we could think of. Given the anger Kenyans were feeling toward al Qaeda, and the small number of Muslims in Nairobi, about the worse we would experience was the ire of people coming back from Friday prayers at a Mosque some distance away from AOD. We decided to close the embassy at noon, advise people to stay home and see what happened. Nothing. Meanwhile, the FBI with all of their long-guns, short-guns and soft suits had high-tailed it out.

Yet another security ordeal came just before Christmas when we received credible warnings from Washington of another possible attack on a U.S. embassy facility, along with a local threat against the International School in Nairobi.

Q: This is an American school, not your school specifically?

BUSHNELL: It was the International School of Kenya, the school that the U.S. Government supported. We decided to cancel all Christmas festivities, close the embassy,

and arranged to have the Christmas packages and mail delivered to an offsite location. I didn't know how much worse things could get. Fortunately, they began to look up in the new year.

Q: Alright. We will pick this up from New Year's on when we move in to the real recovery phase.

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: Question, and you can answer it at another time. Given your prior complaints about embassy security, did you have a feeling that your record would be negatively affected or not, or do ambassadors get that sort of thing?

BUSHNELL: It was much more subtle. I had the feeling that I was deemed untrustworthy by senior people, especially after my efforts to get attention to the post after the bombing. The Accountability Review Board came to Nairobi with the full intention of holding me accountable. Members felt differently after they heard our views and concluded, among other things, that a succession of Administrations and Congresses, including the current one, did not pay sufficient attention to security.

Q: Which was a bad thing to happen to you?

BUSHNELL: In some respects. On the one hand, I became a pioneer among ambassadors who started pushing back because of their security responsibilities. On the other hand, to some of my colleagues and political appointees, I would forever be a person who didn't stay in the box.

Q: Well, we're going to have to continue this, but I've heard people who dealt with the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright at that time, she was surrounded by a group of people for the most part who were very protective of her and you know, almost vengeful on anybody who might hurt her reputation. Did you feel that at all or at least did you feel that there was a cocoon around her?

BUSHNELL: Very much so. I know they were very mad at me for not allowing the Secretary to visit in the immediate aftermath of the bombing -- they made that very clear to me. But, I really didn't see them as that vengeful. I had traveled with Madeleine Albright and her team when she was at USUN. So, I knew a couple of the people and we had gotten along all right. That said, there was no doubt in my mind as to where their loyalties lay.

Q: Okay. Well then, we'll pick this up the next time after New Year's, it will be '99?

BUSHNELL: Correct.

Q: And we'll pick it up then and the new phase.

Today is the 8th of September, 2005. Pru, you mentioned before that really up to the end of 1998 it was really an initial recovery phase. Now, we're talking about 1999. When did you put it together and back to being a diplomat again?

BUSHNELL: We didn't waste much time getting back to work. When I look at my calendar at the time I can see that I was juggling all sorts of things…memorial services with meetings on the economy; reconstruction issues with political issues, starting by repairing our relationship with Kenyans.

If I had to pick a point representing a new chapter it would be New Year's Eve, 1998. A longstanding embassy tradition was the sun-downer at Nairobi Game Park. Families would gather and watch the sunset over the park before going off to other New Year celebrations. It was terribly important that we reinitiate our traditions, and certainly the New Year's Eve sundowner was one of the wonderful ones.

A lot of people went out. All of us felt the presence of ghosts, people who had been there the year before who were no longer with us. Given the tension around Christmas when threats forced us to close the embassy and cancel holiday activities, emotions were high. Here we were, in this extraordinary landscape of savannah and acacia trees, near the Ngong Hills looking at a rhino in the distance. The sun began to set as someone played Auld Lang Sine. We hugged one another, many of us with tears in our eyes. We had survived but so many of our friends, colleagues and neighbors had not. Then I looked up and saw one of the most extraordinary sunsets of my life. Bright shafts of light and blue skies appeared between two thin layers of pink clouds. It was such a message of comfort. The sun does come up and go down, no matter what happens to individuals. It was a fitting end – or beginning.

The Consular Section was the first part of the embassy to be re-opened at a brand new site. Which reminds me of an amazing story. At some point after the bombing I ran into an American citizen in Washington who came up to me and said, "Are you the ambassador from Nairobi?" "Yes I am." He said, "Let me tell you something. My wife was in Nairobi as a tourist on the day of the bombing. Her passport had been stolen along with a number of other things. She was on her way down to the embassy to apply for a new passport when the bomb went off. When she arrived at the embassy a number of hours after the bombing, she met up with an American Foreign Service Officer, going through the rubble. My wife explained her problem and was issued a new passport." Isn't that an incredible? Our consular operations in some respects were never down, although we lacked the facilities.

FBO purchased and renovated a house for consular operations. They also found a building to which we could move pending the construction of a new embassy -- the AID was clearly unacceptable.

Mending our relations with the Kenyans was also a priority of reconstruction efforts. In early '99 we finally received Congressional funding -- $40 million -- to assist with the enormous costs the Kenyans had borne. We were not, however, to spend a penny for

overhead costs, which meant that in addition to everything else, we had to figure out how to dispense funds fairly and accountably. The AID staff did a wonderful job. We were able to cover medical costs, reconstruct some of the buildings and establish a limited scholarship fund for orphans. Unfortunately, the needs far outweighed the funds and a lot of Kenyans remain angry with us to this day for lack of compensation.

I became the human face of the USG – of course, I always was. I spent a good amount of time visiting hospitals and orphanages, going to various kinds of commemorative events and talking with people. It was heart-wrenching work and very important.

We also got back into policy issues. I already talked about what we were doing on the corruption front. Moi had won another term in the '97 elections; opposition parties were arguing for constitutional changes and power sharing; regional conflicts continued and our agenda remained as full as ever. In addition, we began working on joint and then regional military exercises. Easier said than done because Tanzania and Uganda were in the European Theater Command and Kenya was in the Central Command. Still, we were able to initiate disaster assistance exercises, which proved a wonderful precedent.

But, we could not ignore community issues and the impact of the bombing on the staff, families, teachers and thousands of Kenyans. As I've already said, counseling was not a part of Kenyan culture, nor the Foreign Service culture, so while we offered it, few took advantage. People were all over the place in their reactions to the trauma. Some moved on very quickly and others could not. The embassy community was divided. I called in as much help as I could get – from State psychiatrists to an expert from Oklahoma City to FSI trainers. I learned a lot from them but as a community member and leader, I can tell you that we had lots of ups and downs.

I learned that I could not make people heal. I couldn't take away people's anger or sadness or denial or anything that they were going through. What I could do was to create an environment in which they could help themselves to heal. I could create an environment in which people cared for one another. "Take care of yourself; be kind to yourself, and be kind to one another" became a mantra and a leadership philosophy. I was determined that we were going to get through this as a community even if as individuals we staggered and stumbled now and then.

Q: How did, you get this out?

BUSHNELL: Town hall meetings, staff meetings, newsletters, memos…all of the usual communication vehicles. Plus, we had memorials. Absent a location to commemorate the 44 people who had died in the embassy, I set aside a part of the Residence gardens to create a fountain, the lip of which had the names of all of our deceased. It was personally healing. I had hoped to use the commemoration as part remembrance, part celebration of the many acts of heroism displayed since the bomb was detonated.

Washington had given us a general Mission Award for Heroism but that was it. It was up to us to take care of whatever individual or other group awards we wanted to give. I

asked one of the political officers, poor guy, to do nothing but talk to people and write up awards. Another lesson learned. It was absolutely the wrong thing to do and turned into a mess. The process opened all sorts of wounds, anger and finger-pointing; it pulled people apart rather than bringing them together. So, we focused on commemorating the memorial fountain that day rather than the awards.

The Assistant Secretary for African Affairs came and, to our surprise, so did many of the family members of the Americans who had been killed. Unlike the family members of our deceased Kenyan colleagues, the Americans were very open in their anger -- at the way they had been treated by the Department, at the fact that their loved ones had died, at the tragedy imposed so suddenly. It was so painful to witness and even more so, to absorb during a tense meeting after the ceremony.

Q: Well, I assume that your husband played resident physiatrist when you came home?

BUSHNELL: He took wonderful care of me and of others. He had served as CLO years before and had always remained active in the community, even more so after the bombing.

I also had to help myself -- focus on first things first and one thing at a time and avoid becoming overwhelmed at the totality of our problems. I started the day swimming laps, did exercises, meditated -- whatever I could do to keep body and soul together. Since I knew I was going to Guatemala, I also began studying Spanish, first on my own, then with a tutor. It helped a lot to concentrate on something that had nothing to do with the bombing. Before I knew it, May had come around and it was time to leave.

Q: A question I want to ask. The immediate aftermath of the bombing, did you have a feeling that anybody in Washington was saying, "Maybe we better get her out of there." You know, I mean I can see people saying, "Well, maybe we better send a man in or an ex-soldier in" or something like that. Was this ever a factor?

BUSHNELL: If there were such conversations in Washington, they never came to my ear.

Q: Well, you're a powerful person and talking to you I would think it would be ridiculous. But, knowing Washington and people sitting around there….

BUSHNELL: The Assistant Secretary for African Affairs was a woman and so was the Secretary of State. These were formidable women who knew me before the bombing. I think I would have had to have gone pretty far astray. People got frustrated with me and people got angry with me, but I don't know that they ever thought that I was not up for the job.

Q: Were you aware or hear of happenings in Dar es Salaam?

BUSHNELL: I actually had very little contact with Dar es Salaam. In part, because it

took us a few months to get our communication systems up and running. I knew John Lang who was the Chargé in Dar at the time of the bombing. He and I communicated I suspect through Hotmail on a couple of personnel issues. The new ambassador arrived, a political appointee whom I did not know. Dar was somewhat different in that it did not have the extensive loss of life that we had. I was aware that they were reconstructing as well, but I can't say that we had that much interaction. Up until the moment I left, there was so much to do in Nairobi.

FSNs, in particular, were concerned about the transfer cycle and how their new bosses would interact with them. Would they understand the extent of the damage and trauma? Johnnie Carson, who had been DAS in African Affairs, was to replace me which was great news, but many of the others were unknown. On the Washington end, MED held briefings to alert people as to what to expect. In Nairobi, the DCM – who, fortunately was staying – and I met in small groups with all of the FSNs to give them whatever information we had about the building to which they would be moved pending the construction of a new embassy, and to listen to their concerns.

One, which had come up earlier, was the disposition of the old chancery and grounds. Fortunately, it was too damaged to every use again, so we pulled it down. (Among the myriad of decisions was whether to blast it down or chip it down. I decided that Nairobi residents did not need to hear another blast from that spot, so opted for chipping. Oh, the complaints!).

The grounds had been leased to us by the Kenyan government for 99 years and we still had lots of time left. People voiced concern that if we returned the land, one of the land-grabbing members of Moi's cabinet would seize it to construct heaven knows what.

I went back to FBO requesting that we construct a memorial park and began another round of mutually irritating conversations. "We don't do memorials!" My instructions were precise: hand it back. We did, but not before I cornered every senior member of Moi's government with the request that he support the establishment of a memorial park. The local American business organization had offered to landscape it and provide money for upkeep. I took a cue from the Vietnam Memorial in Washington and asked that a wall be constructed with the names of everyone who had died in the attack so that their children and grandchildren could come and remember them. By the time I left plans were well along and the park remains there today, although I understand it is short of funding.

I did my best to implement a good exit strategy and noticed that people were taking our departure fairly easily. At first I thought this was great. Then self satisfaction turned to irritation and then hurt. After all we had gone through, no one was going to organize even a standard good-by ceremony? The day before our departure, Dick and I had inevitable errands which included stopping by the DCM's Residence. We pulled into the driveway and there, lining each side were all of the mission employees. They had worked up a surprise party for me! I was shocked. It was one of the most memorable points of my life, because the message was, "Hey, Ambassador, you who have prided yourself on having such a good pulse on your community didn't know what we were doing. We put one over

on you. We did this as a community. It's okay, you can go." It was just such an incredible message. If it were a movie, you would have had schmaltzy music and garish sun sets.

Moi and I had our final tiff at the formal going-away ceremony. He was mad, I learned later, that Washington was not sending a white male to replace me and decided it was my fault. Fortunately, he did confirm that we could use the land for a park, so we got what we wanted in the end.

Q: Did you ever get any feedback about how Carson and Moi got along?

BUSHNELL: Oh, they got along very well. Three years later, when I returned for the commemoration of the memorial park and Moi was as nice to me as could be. He just happened to be grumpy when I took my leave as ambassador.

Q: But, it wasn't a time to get grumpy.

BUSHNELL: Well, like many despots, it was always about him.

Q: Before you left Kenya you knew you were going to Guatemala. How did you feel about that?

BUSHNELL: When Secretary Albright visited Kenya after the bombing, she asked about my next assignment. My husband, Dick, and Linda Howard, who had been my OMS for years, had already decided they wanted Guatemala. So, when the Secretary asked where I wanted to go, Guatemala was what came out of my mouth. It was a complete accident. She thought I'd be good in Guatemala, so that was it. WHA, the Western Hemisphere Affairs bureau, was less than thrilled to have an interloper come into their turf and let me know that in no uncertain terms. I was told they already had their "minority candidate."

Q: So, you were considered a minority candidate still at this point?

BUSHNELL: Yep, that's right.

Q: When was this?

BUSHNELL: We left Nairobi in May, 1999 and I had my confirmation hearing within two or three weeks of our departure. I then went into Spanish language training.

Q: Other than the flak you got from WHA on Guatemala, did you feel stigmatized? I obviously go back a long way. Ambassadors and people who had been kidnapped were really stigmatized, people would avoid them in the corridors.

BUSHNELL: With some people, yes.

Q: I think after Diego Asencio and Columbia, they made an extra effort to try and break this thing, but it was still there.

BUSHNELL: A couple of terrorist experts I talked to –and before 2001 there weren't very many – explained to me that it is quite normal fort victims to be stigmatized. Blaming the victim is not a new phenomenon. It was very subtle, however.

That summer was very difficult. I had spent so much time in Nairobi in the aftermath of the bombing focused on my leadership responsibilities that I did not fully appreciate how hurt I was -- not physically hurt, but how wounded I was. I never had the chance to be a victim. When I came back to the U.S. the world became surreal. I sensed that somehow I was not behaving the way a proper victim should – whatever than meant.

I also had yet another run-in before the first anniversary commemoration. I was told that the grand invitation-only event to be held in the Benjamin Franklin Room was in part a response to family members of the Americans who were killed, some of whom remained very angry at the way they were treated by the Department. In other words, it was a rather forced event. Space was obviously limited and I kept submitting names of people from Nairobi who had not been invited. I was told that I was ruining the seating chart and hit the ceiling. Then, of course, I was told I was over-reacting. So, the tension continued.

Q: Well, also too, something that will haunt you for the rest of your life. You're the person whose embassy was blown up. I mean, when I first heard about you that's what I got.

BUSHNELL: Well, they certainly had my number. During courtesy calls to the Hill before my confirmation hearing I was specifically told that I was not to talk about anything that did not deal with Guatemala. Nevertheless, I mentioned my concerns for security because the Department still did not ask for or receive fund adequate to address the problems embassies had around the world. Got into big trouble. In those days, you had to have someone from H accompany you. I was with a political appointee seeing a powerful Senate staffer, and began to talk about security. The baby-sitter interrupted and said, "Ambassador, you're not allowed to talk about that."

When we left the staffer's office I reminded him that this was the United States and as an American citizen I could say whatever I damn well wanted. Later that summer I ended up in the Department's medical unit with a terrible, terrible earache. The doctor who saw me said it was TMJ and asked if I was clenching my jaw a lot. I'll say. Anyway, after about six weeks of one-on-one Spanish at FSI, I got my 3/3 rating, and headed to Guatemala.

Q: Well, tell me, how did you find you were treated by Western Hemisphere?

BUSHNELL: Very nicely, very courteously. They helped prepare me very well, though I have to say I was shocked to learn during the last days of consultations that I would have 24-hour security guards, because one of our ambassadors had been assassinated in 1968.

Q: John Gordon Mein.

BUSHNELL: Right.

Q: He was killed in August 28, 1968.

BUSHNELL: You have a good memory. Thirty years later, Guatemala was still a violent country and bodyguards were not unusual among the elites and diplomats. It was so different from my experience in Kenya --I had an advance car, an armed guard in my vehicle and a chase car with more armed guards.

What was not at all different from Nairobi was the chancery. It was, in fact, the exact duplicate in architecture of the one that had been blown up. It was also on a main street with little offset, and not on any list to be moved. You can just imagine the conversation with the heads of FBO and Diplomatic Security, who, by the way, refused to see me individually. I found that rather amusing – less so when they asked "Why are you always going to embassies with no offset?" The three of us negotiated an agreement because, once again, the list of chanceries to be replaced did not include the one I was going to. The Assistant Secretaries promised they would respond as best they could to suggestions to improve the security if I would refrain from sending the kinds of cables I sent from Nairobi.

The first day I went to work, the driver out of habit drove the car into the embassy's underground parking lot, again a duplicate to the one in Nairobi. Every cell in my body went into panic mode, I mean every cell. I told myself, "it's okay, it's okay; this is not Nairobi. You will not make an entrance by screaming down the corridors!" Eventually, of course I got used to it.

The arrangement we came to with Diplomatic Security and FBO was to purchase the apartment building next door and entice Guatemala City's Mayor to close the other streets around us. A costly but effective way of gaining security perimeters.

Q: Well now, when you went to Guatemala you were there from when to when?

BUSHNELL: I was there from 1999 to 2002.

Q: What was the state of relations between Guatemala and the United States?

BUSHNELL: For the most part, pretty good because President Clinton had apologized for the role the U.S. had played in orchestrating the 1954 coup d'etat that began 35 years of internal conflict. This was a country in which the "war against communism" was played out in horrible and vicious ways. The human rights abuses were outrageous. In 1996, Peace Accords were signed that essentially reformulated the social contract between the government and the people and among the people themselves. They articulated exceedingly ambitious changes that would not easily be implemented. As a result, they were only partially and superficially implemented. The Accords provided an absence of war, not yet peace and tranquility.

The U.S. government was very invested in the negotiation and the success of the Peace Accords, to the tune of about three-hundred-million dollars in AID programs. Coming from Africa, I was stunned. Three hundred million dollars for this little country when the best the entire continent of sub-Saharan Africa could manage was eight hundred million!

Most of our programs were focused in the Mayan highlands, where much of the conflict had taken place. We were investing in education, particularly for women and girls, health systems, the rule of law, the environment – a variety of areas. Our efforts were to facilitate implementation of the Peace Accords as fast and smoothly as possible. On the surface, the Guatemalan government was giving lip service to peace, to donors like the U.S. that were providing funding. In reality, social change was moving at a snail's pace, the Presidential Guard was almost literally holding the president as hostage, and corruption was rampant.

Conditions worsened under the tenure of President Portillo, who was voted into office at the end of '99, three months after my arrival. As an example, a "white budget" existed for military expenditures that could be audited, but the actual budget was something else again. The military was up to its neck in corruption, intimidation and cover up. The country was still awash with mistrust and hatred.

Q: OK. Well, we will stop at this point. You've just entered Guatemala City. You talked about this theater of Guatemala politics and implementing the Peace Accords.

Today is the 16th of September, 2005. Pru, just listening to that last thing. At some point we wanted to get into the undercurrents in the political life as you got to learn all sorts of things going on within that society. How does one who is parachuted in to a complex society, a cooking pt like Guatemala learn about what is going on and what to do?

BUSHNELL: First of all, I did my homework before arriving. Having served as ambassador and DAS I knew the kinds of reports and information to look for. I also crammed for my confirmation hearings, which I had about 10 days after leaving Kenya. I held a roundtable discussion of desk officers from the agencies around town invested in our policies on Guatemala in addition to individual consultations. What I discovered was a huge split in the interagency group between those who felt we should work closely with the Guatemalan military and those focused on implementing the Peace Accords and improving on human rights. I frankly agreed with them because the Guatemalan military still had a lot to account for.

I have to say that I really began to question the attitude of the U.S. military, which was very different from the attitude of it held toward sub-Saharan African countries. There I found.....

Q: In Africa?

BUSHNELL: In AF circles of the U.S. government, civilians and military were in complete agreement about what needed to be done to improve military performance and

relations and with civilian governments. That was not at all the case of the interagency group focused on Guatemala. The U.S. military people I spoke to really wanted to embrace the Guatemalan military. They assured me, for example, that the Guatemala military was really "quite civilized" because they knew how to use forks and spoke English. I came away thinking that we're in big trouble if that's the basis on which we reach conclusions in Washington. While I was not familiar with the details of the Guatemalan conflict and its military, I was no stranger to the issues of conflict and the legacy that conflict and terror leave.

When we arrived in Guatemala, I intentionally got out of the capital and into the country side as soon as I could. I wanted first-hand knowledge; visiting AID and Peace Corps projects easily provided that. I think the first radio broadcast I did was from outside the capital.

Dick and I had a lot of interaction with Americans and Guatemalan employees of the mission so I picked things up that way. What probably helped most was the presidential campaign that began soon after my arrival. A lot of issues came to the surface.

Washington had given me two charges: To put pressure on the government to improve its human rights record – specifically, to get to the bottom of the murder of Bishop Gerardi, a human rights activist - and to persuade the government to disband the Estado Mayor, the Presidential Guard, which had a lock on the Presidency both literally and figuratively.

Q: Was there a commandant of the presidential guard? I mean, was he the man or was it a sort of a junta?

BUSHNELL: It was a junta more than a specific person.

Q: It wasn't a Noriega or something like that?

BUSHNELL: No, no. It was much more a band of brothers, elites in the military.

Q: Yeah. It sort of sounds a little bit the latter days of the Roman Empire, it was a praetorian guard.

BUSHNELL: Yes. They did everything from baking bread to keeping the President's calendar, providing his security and driving his car. They controlled everything, using sophisticated communications equipment.

Q: Before we get to dealing with these two things, a murder investigation and trying to do something about this elite group of military guys, what were your impressions, because particularly getting out into the field was so important when you got there. I mean, particularly talking to people like the Peace Corps and people who were out there working in the field. What were you getting from looking at the campesinos?

BUSHNELL: It doesn't take long to see the disparity of incomes. There are a few very, very wealthy families, some middle class and a mass of very poor people. Guatemala was second only to Haiti in statistics regarding poverty, maternal death, infant deaths, etc. It was second only to Columbia in gun ownership, violence, and kidnapping. And yet, perhaps this is apocryphal, I was told the country had the highest per capita rate of privately owned helicopters in the world. It did not take long to pick up a virulent strain of racism among some Guatemalan elites, nor the hard, cold mistrust of the Mayan people.

Q: I was wondering, what were you getting from some of our observers in the field, either the Peace Corps or, missionaries? What were they saying, because they were obviously dealing with the indigenous more than others?

BUSHNELL: There's a sizeable expat community, but most of the expats were in commerce, or hippies who had stayed. We had some, but not –

Q: I thought that area was flooded with evangelicals, because they were, you know, taking the Catholics to the cleaners.

BUSHNELL: But they weren't necessarily American evangelicals. Among Peace Corps and AID workers there was great concern about the pace of the peace process and about the continuing terror under which human rights advocates lived. There was also frustration about the lack of accountability for some of the abuses that had taken place during and after the conflict. Plus, an appallingly low rate of government investment in the country. Government services were practically non-existent, in large part because people didn't believe in paying taxes.

I had never seen a system that was set up to fail as effectively as the Guatemalan government. A president's term of office was limited to one four year term. Incumbents would fire everyone from the prior government to bring in a team that often didn't know their way around the building, much less government. They had very few revenues with which to work, a military that was not trusted and endemic corruption. Add to that, a profound mistrust of a huge Mayan population and a great division between the Ladino and Mayan people.

Q: Where was the officer corps coming from, because in lots of Latin America the officer corps is the place for the poor people to work their way up? Was this happening?

BUSHNELL: Regardless of their personal roots, the military was responsive to the elites. It a symbiotic relationship -- elites allowed the military to go keep the government and countryside under wraps and in return, the military ensured that reforms -- labor reform, tax reform, any kind of reform – were kept at bay so the elites could make the money they wanted.

Q: Where was the money coming from to feed the Oligarchs?

BUSHNELL: Guatemala is a resource rich country. There is no reason in the world for this country to be poor. That was part of what made me profoundly frustrated and angry. It has better tourist potential than Costa Rica. It has Mayan ruins; it has Spanish colonial ruins from the time it housed the capital. Guatemala has beaches; it has mountains; it has a wonderful climate and some areas of very fertile land. It is known for exotic fruits and vegetables and extraordinary coffee. It is also blessed with an incredibly hard-working people, both Mayan and Ladino, and a strong work ethic.

Q: You say here you have a very wealthy country.

BUSHNELL: A potentially wealthy country -- with a rate of illiteracy among Mayan women of something like 92 per cent and among Mayan men of something like 85 per cent. Children of the elites go to school surrounded by bodyguards while other children of Mayans tend the fields helping to eek out a living. In colonial society Mayans were required to wear the costume of their village. Each village had different patterns and colors to their hand woven fabric. This would identify them anytime they left.

Q: So it was an identifier, like the star of David or something like that, although prettier

BUSHNELL: A whole lot prettier. To this day you will find that lot of the women still keep their indigenous costumes. But as pretty and colorful as Guatemala appears on the surface, 36 years of internal conflict, along with a lot of guns and grinding poverty gave rise to high rates of crime , including kidnapping..

In the middle, between the Mayan people at one end of the spectrum and the oligarchs at the other, you had a middle class that was exceedingly conservative and fatalistic. A woman architect I once met told that when she and her husband entertained at dinner she never engaged in social conversation because it wasn't appropriate and, as a woman she didn't have anything to contribute. Given that cultural attitude, you can imagine what a lot of people thought of me as woman ambassador outspoken on human rights and reform issues! I raised hackles more than once. People wrote editorials to the *Wall Street Journal* about me a few times

Q: Wall Street Journal *being the conservative newspaper in the United States.*

BUSHNELL: One of the complaints was that I was promoting birth control.

Q: What you observed, because you parachuted into this society, was certainly not unfamiliar to American diplomacy. We've been involved there forever. Let's go from after World War II, when we started getting involved. What were we doing? Was this sort of a passive, let's keep them, long as they don't bother us we won't worry about it?

BUSHNELL: We were there, front and center, in the post World War II years. We had a base there during World War II; Guatemalans were allies. The first democratic elections after the war brought in Jacobo Arbenz-Guzman, who campaigned in part on a platform of land reform. Efforts to buy land from the United Fruit Company, which had enjoyed

favored status, to put it mildly, led to concerns that Arbenz had communist proclivities. At the time, John Foster Dulles was Secretary of State while his brother, Allan, was head of CIA. At least one, perhaps both were on the Board of United Fruit.

These men helped orchestrate a coup against Arbenz, in 1954 with the active participation of our ambassador. This sowed the seeds for the horrendous conflict and loss of life that was to follow for decades.

Q: It stands as a black mark on American diplomacy. It's sort of a benchmark. It's been thrown in our face ever since.

BUSHNELL: As it should be. I personally think it is quite outrageous that a couple of guys on the board of a fruit company could decide that what's good for the fruit company is good for the United States government and that justifies the fabrication of reasons for the overthrow of a democratically elected head of state. Again, I come back to the oligarchs. We were hand in hand with the landed elites who wanted to continue to control the economy and the people and worked through military regimes to do so.

Q: It's extremely important to take a look at this issue. Here you are, again, this is the thing about American ambassadors, they arrive and often they arrive with a different view that somebody who's grown up learning to accept the situation.

BUSHNELL: By the time I arrived in Guatemala it was well known that we, the U.S., had created the coup. President Clinton had visited Guatemala about a year before I arrived. He both acknowledged and apologized. That act made it easy for me to publicly acknowledge that sometimes governments do horrible things. Given our investment, I could also add that we are now investing $300 million in the peace process as part of an effort to do right by the Guatemalan people.

On the day I presented credentials I was told to deliver a demarche that the Guatemalan government needed to address some issue of concern to us. I don't remember exactly which – it was either to disband the presidential guard or act on the human rights issues.

Q: Was disbanding the presidential guard part of the peace process?

BUSHNELL: Definitely was. So here I was in a formal ceremony before clicking TV cameras, smiling as I advised the President that I needed to talk to him about a serious issue. Every time I see the photograph of the smiling new ambassador and attentive president, I am reminded about how much of diplomacy has to do with theatrics.

Q: Arriving on top of an election, everybody getting out, did you feel that you were going to have to sort of save your ammunition, to start all over again or were you able to talk to the candidates?

BUSHNELL: The U.S. ambassador in Guatemala is perceived to have so much power, I intentionally stayed away from the candidates except to make the requisite courtesy calls

on both of them. One of them made the appointment to see me and had his photo taken outside the residence, underneath our government seal. Naturally, the press accused me of favoring him. I had been manipulated.

Q: Quickly have to go over and get the other guy?

BUSHNELL: You bet. Actually, I'd been trying to see him. But in the meantime, I tried to get as much movement out of the current government as I could. This was when I learned about the *fuerzas obscuras*, the dark forces, they were called. The foreign minister came to the Residence one evening, sat down in the library and told me all about the dark forces and why this government could not eliminate the presidential guard before they left power.

Q: Were the presidential guard the dark force?

BUSHNELL: He didn't say they were but the implication was that they were certainly a part. Nobody would ever identify the *fuerzas obscuras.* I found this frustrating given my familiarity with "dark forces" in Rwanda, Liberia, Burundi and other parts of Africa – to say nothing of having been blown up by al Qaeda. I didn't buy the fact that in such a small country as Guatemala, where networks are close and well connected, no one would know who these *fuerzas obscuras* were.

Q: Was this a handy way for them to avoid naming names?

BUSHNELL: Probably, but I recognized that they were legitimately concerned, with good reason.

Q: They didn't want to know.

BUSHNELL: I don't know. It was hard for me to understand Guatemalans. I've learned that I can only try to hear what people are saying and explore as much as I can. But to get into somebody else's head, especially in a society as complicated as the Guatemalan society, is too much of a reach. So I pretty much took things at face value.

Q: Were there any sort of crusading reporters who were trying to get into this or not?

BUSHNELL: Crusaders ended up dead. Bishop Gerardi, whose murder was a source of great concern to the U.S., was a crusader. One of my charges from Washington was to promote labor reform and I saw first hand what happened to reformers. A group of agricultural workers planned a parade to highlight an issue – I forget which. Anyway, on the eve of the parade the organizers were hauled out of their homes, taken to the local radio station and with guns to their heads were told to announce that the parade had been called off. We spent two years trying to get the people who had done this held accountable. Everybody knew who they were; they did it casually. And yet people were terrified to testify against them because they were pretty sure they would end up dead. To

convince anyone to testify against these hooligans meant arranging asylum for them and their families in the U.S.

When I first arrived I baulked at the idea of having nine bodyguards around me literally 24-hours a day. The RSO persuaded me to hold off making a decision for a few months and it didn't take me even that long to understand the wisdom of keeping them given my proclivity for activism.

Q: How did you find, when you arrived there, the staff of your embassy as a window to what was happening?

BUSHNELL: My predecessor had a different way of doing business so we had little contact with the political opposition party – which won the elections. My priorities during the first few months focused on getting the Country Team and other staff to set objectives we could achieve. When the Portillo government was voted into office with all of the right rhetoric, we set our goals pretty high. Over the course of the next two and a half years, we found ourselves lowering the bar further and further. By the time we left, we were struggling simply to maintain what little ground we had gained in the implementation of the Peace Accords, respect of human rights and rule of law, a change in the culture of corruption and impunity, and so on.,

Q: During the internal conflict, the Central Intelligence Agency was very much involved, no secret. How did you find it there?

BUSHNELL: It had been decimated. I don't know if you remember the congressional hearing during the eighties – about the same time Iran-Contra was the scandal of the day. The CIA took a licking. In the 90s, budget cuts forced the closing of stations all around the world, including Central America.

Q: You arrived in Guatemala during the waning days of the Clinton administration. How was the United States seen at that time in Guatemala?

BUSHNELL: The elites were certainly waiting with bated breath for the conservatives to come back into power in the United States. They figured that the issues I was promoting as ambassador – human rights, tax reform, labor reform, intellectual property rights and the like – would go away with the return of a Republican White House. One of the first demonstrations in front of the embassy against me was a "spontaneous uprising" of the street peddlers protesting my remarks about intellectual property rights.

Q: Was there a copyright infringement establishment?

BUSHNELL: Oh, yes. Another subject I was told to raise during the last days of the Clinton administration was labor reform. Specifically, the reforms the Guatemalans had signed in 1952 but never ratified. I was instructed to tell the government and Parliament that we would cut Guatemala from the General System of Tariff Preferences if they didn't legislate intellectual property right reforms, which they eventually did. I was also

instructed to warn them that Guatemala would be removed them from the Caribbean Basin Initiative if they did not ratify labor reforms. When I delivered these messages the attitude I got was "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Come back after your elections." I advised them that they shouldn't be so cocky, that should the Republicans win, the Republicans may want to tip their hat to labor, no reason why the Bush Administration would want to gratuitously insult the American labor community and what better way than to continue to insist that labor reform and basic labor reform, signed in 1952, be ratified. And sure enough, that's exactly what happened.

But let me talk about Guatemalan elections first. The candidate who won, Alfonso Portillo, was a populist and a horror in the eyes of the elites. His political party was run by Efrain Rios-Montt, a military dictator who had seized power in the 80s and went on to sponsor the most bloody and most repressive years of the internal conflict. He supplemented the military with civilian militias, giving them guns and saying, "Okay, go kill people in the villages over there." He had Mayans kill other Mayans and implemented a deliberate strategy to accomplish three things: engage in conflict in the countryside; keep the mayhem away from the Guatemala City; and punish the people fighting the military -- punish them, their families, their children, their fields, and their villages. People were baffled that Mayans would vote for the very man who created such horrors. But they did.

The elites decided that the sky had fallen, that hell had frozen over, that nothing worse could ever happen and that the American ambassador would, of course, have nothing to do with him. I didn't have that option, nor would I have chosen it initially because, as I said, Portillo was mouthing all of the right things about human rights, tax structures, reforming the presidential guard, implementing the Peace Accords – everything the U.S. government wanted to hear. I was lambasted in the press for dealing with the new government.

Portillo didn't speak a word of English, which was good for my Spanish, and was clueless about putting a government together. He had been a university professor in Mexico and made no bones about the fact that he left Mexico before he was brought to justice for killing. What a guy. Actually, he was more of a little popinjay with a big ego.

He lived near the Residence and would frequently come for breakfast. Over the period of two and a half years, my end of the conversations deteriorated. At the beginning of his administration I would start with something like "So, Mr. President, wonderful that you're saying all these good things. Certainly hope that you will implement them." This morphed into "Mr. President, it's now been six months, eight months, nine months, twelve months, two years since you have been talking about reforms but you still haven't implemented them. Things are getting serious."

I initially thought part of the reason he couldn't get anything done was an ignorance of basic management. I invited Portillo and his vice president for breakfast one day and asked each of them to answer the two things in writing. 1) Three things I want to be sure to implement during my term of office. And 2) I would like to be known in history as…."

Once they wrote their answers down I asked them to exchange papers. At one point I thought to myself, "I can't believe that I'm doing this.'

Q: Sounds like one of your management sessions.

BUSHNELL: It was, but it sure didn't accomplish anything of particular good. As time went on, conditions in the country degenerated further. One of my last private conversations with Portillo ended with the following. "Mr. President, we know for a fact that your personal secretary is accepting money from drug dealers." Portillo responded: "So that must mean you think that the money ends up with me." I shrugged and replied "Mr. President, what can I say?"

Q: He would accept this and still come for breakfast?

BUSHNELL: Yes, he would. I think that women can say things that would get other men in big trouble. Women colleagues have noted that, as well. Trust at some level is easier to establish, men do not feel as threatened by women, and a particular tone of voice can allow us to say the kinds of things, like "Mr. President, stealing isn't going to do you any good. You don't want to end up in history as one of the greatest thieves in the country, do you?" "No?" "Well, then, you just have to stop."

Q: My definition would be nagging.

BUSHNELL: That's what men always say when women give negative feedback. Think of it this way: the U.S. ambassador is advising a head of state to stop stealing while continuing her ability to influence. When *National Geographic* did a video called, "Inside an Embassy." Portillo was asked to say a few words on camera. Know what he said? "Relations between our two countries have never been as good and this ambassador, she's really good. You know, she pulls my ear now and then and tells me to shape up."

Q: Let's talk about the Jesse Helms connection. Senator from North Carolina, very right wing but very interested, either himself or some people on his staff, in Central America. How did that play in your business?

BUSHNELL: I found that there was an equal degree of skepticism on both the Democrat and Republican front as to whether Portillo was going to fulfill his promises. The few people in the Congress interested in Central America agreed on the need for good leadership and it didn't look as though Portillo would deliver. I've never played partisan politics overseas and I found Helms staffers personally supportive of my efforts. I know that some Guatemalan business elites wrote to Helms requesting my recall because of the pressure I was putting on issues of labor rights, intellectual property rights and other reforms, but I never got a bit of flak from Senator Helms or any of his staff.

Q: Did you get any congressional delegations while you were there?

BUSHNELL: We got a couple. They were always bipartisan and supportive of what I was doing. There's never any disconnect about our policy toward Guatemala, except within the interagency over the degree to which we should embrace the Guatemalan military. We had a sizable military component in the embassy left over from the conflict days – I think we had over 20 people.

Q: That's a good number.

BUSHNELL: It is considering that our policy was to exert pressure on the Guatemalan military to be respectful of civilian rule and to hold accountable people who had abused human rights or were continuing to do so. I was unwilling to support efforts to cozy up but never any issues with the Southern Command generals at the four star level.

Q: Who was located by this point in

BUSHNELL: Miami. My issues were with the rank and file at post. While they never confronted me directly about it, some of the military reps in the embassy were furious because I put one of the exercises on hold. The entire military contingent boycotted my farewell events. They were also outraged that I did not personally greet the Southern Command four star at the airport when he visited. The decision was an intentional one -- I wanted to be clear that, although I did not have the money, staff or toys he did, it was the ambassador who represented the President of the United States. I was gracious but I felt no need to be at the steps of the airplane. Some people disagreed with me.

Q: Did you raise this issue at all with the four star, when he came?

BUSHNELL: You mean the number of people we had at post?

Q: Well no, just, well, two things, then. One, the size of the military contingent compared to what we were doing. And the other one, the reason you didn't greet him at the airport

BUSHNELL: No, I saw no need to do that. And I never felt any tension from the senior commanders on that issue. The tension was coming from the colonels and the lieutenant colonels. I always got along famously with the senior people, both on protocol and policy.

Q: Well, was there any effort to sort of reduce the size of the staff, because, if you're trying to, well, as I said, you have to keep them busy and what do they do?

BUSHNELL: I raised the issue and finally got a policy review in Washington after I had left. I'm frankly not sure what they did. When I leave a posting, I close the door.

Q: Some of these exercises were going into, particularly into Central America, were National Guard engineer units going in and building a road or doing something like that and it's good training for the National Guard. This is before we got so involved in Iraq and other places. Was this a pattern? Was that going on or not?

BUSHNELL: I had absolutely no problem with these kinds of exercises. Civil affairs kinds of exercises were fine. During one of them they sent a helicopter into the jungle to lift out, intact, an ancient Mayan stele, a carved stone. No stele had ever been retrieved intact. It ended up at the museum in Guatemala City, and gave the U.S. – military as well as the embassy – wonderful publicity. So there were creative things that we were doing. But the issue of how strongly we should embrace the military was a source of tension.

Q: Well did you feel that the, was the tension because, the colonels wanted to have something, they're sent there to work with the military. What were they supposed to be doing?

BUSHNELL: I never told them they couldn't do their work, I simply wanted them to support the policies we had agreed upon in both letter and spirit. Understand that the Guatemalan military was involved in drug trafficking, alien smuggling, illicit trade, harassment and killing of human rights and reform leaders – to say nothing of the hold they exerted on the head of state. They wanted nothing more than tacit or explicit support from the U.S. That was not something I would be a party to.

When Pete Pace took over Southern Command and came for a courtesy call, I invited the Chief of Staff of the Guatemalan military for a private conversation at the Residence. He went on and on about how the two of them were "brothers who understand one another because we know what it is to shed blood. We have seen blood. Civilians never do." I had to interrupt because this particular civilian had seen blood. I wasn't going to sit there in my own residence and watch silently the attempted seduction of an American general under the guise of the special link culture warriors share.

On another occasion I intervened when our Defense Attache was going to attend the promotion ceremony of a colonel we knew was a drug runner. I had to order him not to attend that particular ceremony.

Q: I suppose that you were running into a different culture that had been around since the time of William Walker, I guess of Nicaragua or something, back in the 1850's or so. I mean a very close relationship. Also my understanding is that, a lot of these Central American posts, were good places to send colonels before retirement. It was a cushy job and you were breaking rice bowls if you tried to do something about that.

BUSNELL: I went to Guatemala with the intention to help promote the changes Guatemalans had spelled out in the Peace Accords. And in that respect I was "good for Guatemala" because I know how to promote change and turn ideas into reality. But what I learned was that the Peace Accords were only words on paper. People who benefited from the system that had created the domestic conflict meant to stay in charge. Some of the elites and some of the military were using one another.

In terms of the change the U.S. government was seeking I was the right person at the right time. I took my job very seriously, I pushed on a lot of issues and achieved

significant successes while maintaining a good relationship with the government, so that we got the votes we wanted in international issues a like the Human Rights Commission votes against Cuba. But, in terms of my position vis-à-vis people who wanted to maintain their lock on power, I was the wrong person. In their view, very much the wrong person. As a result it was a very tough post for me.

Q: Did you feel the tension that you're talking about between you and the military, the American military, did that play over into the Central American hands in your political-economic section?

BUSHNELL: No, I deliberately had a DCM and political counselors with significant Central American experience.

Q*: But did they see things the way you did?*

BUSHNELL: Yes, absolutely. As I think I said before, I had a series of goal-setting session with the Country Team to agree on our interagency focus. Our military reps never said a word in these discussions. Their beef was with me and their push-back was very subtle. I don't want to make too much of it because we accomplished things as a team that I'm very proud of.

We had an investment of $300 million in the peace process from the AID side, and if you look, if you combined all of the investments of all of the agencies at post it would have been considerably more. One of the objectives we set as a Country Team was to address corruption. When I convened people from AID, DEA, INS, as it was called then, and other law enforcement agencies to chart the links between corrupt people in the Guatemalan government, we were able to identify particular individuals. We went back to Washington and received authorization to revoke their visas. This took some time because we had to follow the letter of American law, but what we accomplished was the revocation of visas of some of the members of the *fuerzas obscuras*, the "dark forces" that the president and others had talked about. After September 11, 2001 drug running and alien smuggling became an important national security issue for us and we did something about it.

Q: But we're also talking about people on your team, had money to hand out. Could we do anything on that, to make sure the money didn't go to the wrong people?

BUSHNELL: AID, which had the bulk of it, had very strong controls. We withheld other monies. As an example, we had representatives of ICITAP, which is the part of the Justice Department that runs police programs. They wanted to set up a forensic lab for the Guatemalan police. Unfortunately, the Guatemalans prosecutors and the police were in a bitter feud over the issue of evidence control. As a result, lots of evidence was lost. The justice system was horrible to begin with and it was not helped by the turf wars between the prosecutor and the police. So I said that until prosecutors and police could come to agreement, no one would get the money. Alien smuggling was another big issue that got

a lot of our attention, although it did not directly connect to any particular funding program.

Q: Who were the aliens they were smuggling?

BUSHNELL: Everybody.

Q: It wasn't limited to Guatemalans?

BUSHNELL: Oh, no. We dealt with boatloads of Chinese and mixed groups including Iranians, Egyptians, and even an Australian -- people from all over the world.

Q: How can you alien smuggle to the United States out of Guatemala?

BUSHNELL: Because once they got into Mexico it was a free ride. The U.S. government had made the shores of Mexico a no-go zone. So the smugglers chose the shores of Guatemala

Q: And there was nothing we could do about that?

BUSHNELL: We could yak and yak and yak into the ears of Guatemalan officials. But one of the military, one of the admirals, was complicit. We also turned the screws of airport controls. I focused my efforts on those aspects of corruption that would have greatest impact on the national security of the United States. We knew there was no al Qaeda or militant Islamist cell in Guatemala, but we also knew there were porous borders that enabled people to pass through Guatemala into the United States.

I also tried, as I did in Kenya, to organize a group of the key donor countries. We called ourselves the *Grupo de Dialogo* and were quite successful in getting attention in the press to issues of corruption and other Peace Accord issues. Unfortunately, the multilateral banks, like the World Bank and Inter American Fund consider it their job to give out money, so we only had a minimal impact in using funding as a lever of influence.

As we speak, the man who was Vice President of Guatemala at the time I was there is now in jail. Former President Portillo slipped over the border back to Mexico with the posse behind him…literally. So much for the gang I dealt with.

Q: A new gang has taken over.

BUSHNELL: Well, actually, the people who have taken over are, for the most part, pretty law abiding and decent.

Q: You said there were a couple of things you were proud of. One was corruption.. What were others?

BUSHNELL: We got legislation for intellectual property rights. We got labor reforms on the books. We successfully pressed for the trial of the man who killed Bishop Gerardi. We even got members of the government, private sector and media to talk with one another about mutual issues of concern. I purchased many Spanish translated copies of the book Getting to Yes. I don't know if you have heard of it?

Q: What was it called?

BUSHNELL: Getting to Yes. It is a Harvard negotiating technique about how to get satisfaction on each side of a negotiation. I handed out copies to everyone I came in contact with to see if people from various sectors could build some bridges. I would invite people to the Residence for discussions and used my background as a facilitator to promote a dialogue. I also hosted a lot of musical events at the Residence to bring people who would normally never speak to one another together to enjoy an evening in one another's company.

Q: What type of music, by the way?

BUSHNELL: Actually, all kinds. We had American off-Broadway groups, opera and there were a number of local jazz musicians. Guatemalans discovered the musical talents of people within their midst, which was great. Our Public Affairs people had an American producer to work with young Guatemalans to do West Side Story. *W*e were told Guatemalans don't sing and dance, but of course they do.

Q: Romeo and Juliet, there it is.

BUSHNELL: This again was an effort to promote bridges. It was such a success that we did another, Once Upon an Island, with a similar theme. One of the lead players ended up going to the United States on a scholarship.

Another Country Team project about which I was very proud was bringing to public attention the deaths of children in certain areas of Guatemala from malnutrition. This was a great example of globalization. The price of coffee in the world market had plummeted, in large part because of a glut of Vietnamese coffee, which USAID had helped them develop. Although Guatemalan coffee was far superior to most other, it had not yet become a niche market and so was highly susceptible to global economic forces. When prices fell, coffee growers stopped harvesting. The coffee pickers, who lived a marginal existence in the best of times, received no wages with which to buy staples and children began to die. We brought this to Washington's attention and began working with various sectors of Guatemala. It was a struggle – AID/Washington did not consider death by malnutrition an emergency and the Guatemalan government couldn't have cared. I got on my high horse with both governments, while our public affairs and AID people created a campaign to bring information to the media and public. I think we saved some lives.

Q: You mentioned the problem being that Guatemala produced gourmet type coffee. Now by the time we're talking coffee has become a big business and gourmet, Starbucks and

other outfits in the United States, chains were pushing fancy coffee. Was that having any impact in Guatemala?

BUSNELL: As the niche market developed in the U.S., Guatemala benefited.

Q: One of the things we haven't touched on, I'm looking at my map of Central America and Guatemala has got interesting neighbors. It's got Mexico, which is about half of it. It's got Belize off to one side, Honduras and El Salvador. Maybe take each one separately. What about relations with Mexico? Where's Chiapas? Is that in that area?

BUSHNELL: Yes, Chiapas borders on Guatemala.

Q: And there'd been a simmering revolt, I guess there still is, in Mexico from Chiapas over basically peasants, natives, Indians or whatever. Did that spill over? Was that a tonal factor?

BUSHNELL: Relations with Mexico had the kinds of tensions neighbors often experience, especially if one is bigger and more advanced. On the whole, they were very good, however. Mexico had a terrific ambassador.

Q: It was a colossus to the north.

BUSHNELL: Exactly. It was a friendly tension - unlike the relationship with Belize. At one time in history, Belize had belonged to Guatemala and a border dispute simmered for years. It had been settled by the time I left. El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua also had land and maritime border issues but although there were periodic spikes in tension, relations remained on an even keel.

Q: What about the other countries' embassies there and all? Some of the initiatives you're talking about, anti-corruption feeling, malnourished children and other efforts, did you end up as the leader or were they involved?

BUSHNELL: The Nordics were very involved in the Peace Accords. The Swedish and Norwegian ambassadors were very active. So was the Spanish ambassador. The U.S. ambassador was irresistible to the media however. This had less to do with the incumbent than the fact of representing the United States. For an activist like myself, that had a real downside.

Q: Well it's interesting when one looks at diplomatic corps and all. If the American ambassador in most countries wants to be active he can move ahead. But you sense that, European countries and Latin American countries have a tendency to be observers. Did you find this?

BUSHNELL: A lot depends on the personalities of the ambassadors. I have worked with a Japanese ambassador who was very forward leaning and have known a couple of Japanese ambassadors who tended toward great reticence. As to Europeans, most have to

work through the European Union, which is very cumbersome. My experience is that the way any ambassador implements instructions from government is highly individualized.

Q: Did the Guatemalan community, which is so apparent right here in the Washington area play any role, or do these sort of immigrants keep their heads down or not?

BUSHNELL: They played a role during elections through absentee ballots and, of course, the remittances they sent home had a huge economic impact.

Q: What was the impact of September 11th, 2001?

BUSHNELL: Guatemalans perceived the U.S. to be invulnerable and, like so many others around the world, were shocked. The embassy was flooded with flowers. One young man bearing a bouquet asked the Protocol Assistant to let me know that he had recently participated in a demonstration against me. That was professional, he said; these flowers are personal. I thought it was very cute.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover about this particular time?

BUSHNELL: I left Guatemala with mixed feelings. I thought that the mission team could point to significant achievements but I was personally exhausted from the efforts. I had never been so vilified on the one hand and yet satisfied about what we accomplished. Even one-time critics in the media admitted I had made a positive difference. As to Guatemala as a whole, I felt that the level of mistrust and violence would shackle it for years. Yet, I was also struck by the sense of optimism among so many Mayan people who had and continue to suffer the most. Most of all, I left with a sense of having survived one tough assignment.

Q: I've been talking to many people who've been ambassadors. There are sort of can-do ambassadors -- Tom Pickering, Deane Hinton -- and, there are others who sort of move around. I would have thought this assignment would have raised your profile. You have any feel that anybody was keeping book on you?

BUSHNELL: The promotion panel was – I was promoted to Career Minister. On the other I hand, no "home" bureau anymore and no encouragement from the central system, i.e. the DG's office to seek a further assignment.

Q: Not in the old boys' network or the equivalent, gals' network.

BUSHNELL: At the most senior levels the gals' network doesn't exist and the old boys' network is at its most competitive. Plus, State Department culture in Washington is a very political culture. The kind of leadership that makes an activist ambassador effective is neither welcomed nor rewarded. In Washington, senior career people are expected to be implementers and managers of policy, not leaders of people or policy. We still have an old-fashioned system in which the most important work is done by the most senior level

people. Everyone else is expected to feed the next level up. It's a huge expenditure of time for possibly minimal results. But there you are.

Q: You left Guatemala when?

BUSHNELL: In 2002.

Q: Pru, you're getting out of the garden spot of Guatemala and leaving your bodyguard behind I guess and heading for the more dangerous area of Washington, D.C., the political swamp. Tell me about your assignment.

BUSHNELL: I had been offered some DAS jobs but was not interested in becoming a deputy again. I was frankly thinking of leaving the Service when plans fell through and I found myself actively looking for an interesting assignment. I saw that the job as Dean of the Leadership and Management School was still open and called Kathy Peterson, the Director of the Foreign Service Institute. I considered the job a gift of the cosmos. The last three years turned out to be among the best of my career. This has been a wonderful place from which to pass on what I learned to other people coming through the ranks.

Q: Will you tell us a bit about the genesis of this job and what it entailed?

BUSHNELL: Well, remember I had earlier headed up the Executive Development Division in the School of Professional Studies from '86 to '80. Around 2001, it was incorporated, along with the Senior Seminar and all management and crisis training divisions into the newly created Leadership and Management School -- LMS.

Secretary Powell, who was appalled by the lack of leadership and management training State Department employees received, mandated leadership training for all Civil and Foreign Service people from GS 13/FS 03 through newly promoted senior executive and Foreign Service personnel. I arrived at the point when that mandate was to be implemented, which meant training 7,000 people by the end of calendar year 2006. From then on, leadership training would be a prerequisite to promotion. People promoted into the senior service would have to take the equivalent of a capstone seminar within the first year of their promotion. The new training was added to the 49 courses LMS already offered.

LMS also had the challenge of becoming an organization with a single identity and a brand. The co-locating divisions from different parts of the Foreign Service Institute into one building and calling them a school did not make it so in any real sense. I had worked with some of the LMS staff in the 80s and had a great deal of respect for them. I knew the very high caliber of their work and I wanted to turn the Leadership and Management School into the Harvard of Washington training. What the team accomplished over the three years I was there was absolutely extraordinary and a hell of a good time.

We were lucky because Powell had created the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative designed to make up the numbers of personnel slots we had lost during the famine days of the

nineties. For years we had been hiring to one third of retention: two thirds of the people who left were never replaced. Powell wanted to get back to hiring to the numbers who were leaving in any one year plus and have a ten per cent float to enable people to have training. With the resources we received, we had the means to fulfill his mandate and maintain a high standard of training and morale among our direct hire staff and contractors.

We had several delicious challenges. One was to create a better sense of understanding among the different tribes of the Department. Civil Service, Foreign Service generalists and specialists and contractors all inhabited the same organizations with different hiring and promotion systems, and different ways of attitudes toward work and one another. What they all have in common is a ferocious desire to do a good job on behalf of the American people. In our training programs we wanted people to appreciate both diverse and common values.

Some of my LMS colleagues were understandably skeptical of our ability to come together as a school, continue our course offerings and train 7,000 people in leadership. Like most Civil Service people, they had plenty of experience of a Foreign Service Officer coming in with ambitions to create change for the sake of change and a good performance evaluation. My personal challenge was, on the one hand respect their concerns and on the other hand to encourage movement into the direction I thought LMS could go. It was a very different leadership challenge from the ones that I faced in Nairobi or in Guatemala and it really was a good one because it made me far more reflective about the need to adapt one's own leadership style, to pace oneself and to think carefully about the changes you are asking people to make. The LMS team taught me a lot, especially about pacing.

It became very clear within the first year that we had a real problem with the Senior Seminar. It had a long and fine tradition of putting 30 people from the interagency through nine months of reflection and fun learning about the U.S. It also consumed a huge amount of resources: four fulltime staff and about a million dollars for nine months, which was too long to keep participants motivated about the experience. Plus, we kept losing our Associate Dean of the Seminar to "real" jobs in the Department.

Q: Nine months is, I know from language training, is a long time. There's a certain point when you really want to get out

BUSHNELL: And do real work.

Q: Do something, if not stop your classes you really should get out, do it in the field or something like that.

BUSHNELL: As much as Colin Powell appreciated training – even long term training – he hated the Senior Seminar. He wanted it shut down and the sooner it was, the happier he would be. I was told by the Under Secretary of Management shortly after my arrival that the Secretary was very displeased with the Seminar. The Director General at the

time, who had been the head of FSI, had very different views. For me, the issue came to a head when, for the third time in two years, the Chair of the Seminar was plucked for another job. The FSI executive office agreed we would see the final year of the Seminar to its completion, then do away with it. We had, after all, been ordered to create a capstone seminar mandatory for all newly promoted senior officers – the same pool from which Seminarians were chosen.

Q: You might explain the origin of "capstone."

BUSHNELL: I think it's the term applied to the training provided newly promoted flag officers in the military -- when the training turns from a focus on leading good soldiers to understanding how the world of politics, the world of Washington, the world of senior leadership works. Powell wanted a civilian counterpart.

Some of the people who created the capstone were the same who worked with me on the Foreign Affairs Leadership Seminar in the '80's. I had decided to eliminate that program in favor of the capstone as well. The end of the Senior Seminar and the FALS course generated a fair amount of controversy. I could understand the consternation -- I had enjoyed the Senior Seminar and had helped create FALS.

Q: I have to say that, being objective, when I looked at my Senior Seminar time I found it fun. I had a great time. And actually did something that was professionally good. I peeled off one of the trips and called on foreign consular officers and then wrote an article. Actually it's the only article I think ever written on foreign consuls. So this was professionally enhancing but I have to say, it's a hell of an adjustment for 15 people. I think three or four had already been to War College and they were put in it as sort of a parking place. I think one or two retired shortly thereafter. But I wonder if you could talk about firestorms in a teacup because you had some very powerful people who were very much beholden to the idea of the Seminar.

BUSHNELL: Actually, I was surprised that we didn't get more push-back. The Senior Seminar Alumni Association had heard the rumblings that Powell didn't like the Seminar for about a year, but they hadn't come up with counter arguments. In the end, they rightly complained that the rug was pulled out from under them because the final decision was made so quickly. From my vantage, that decision had to be made quickly because we were just about to start identifying people for the following year. I was sorry that it had to happen that way.

I was also sympathetic to some of their arguments. The one that I was most endorsed and really wanted to replicate was the interaction of people from the different agencies. It makes a big difference when you actually know the people sitting across the table in policy discussions.

Q: The National Defense University doesn't really do that. It's so dominantly military. Others come in and they bring their stuff but the Senior Seminar was the one place where the mix was not dominantly military.

BUSHNELL: Right. You can become very close over the course of the program and it's a wonderful thing - and useful to your effectiveness at senior levels. I recognized that we needed to replace that aspect. I also knew we needed to find a way to bring the quality and caliber of speakers to senior grade people. I tried to see if there was a way we could replicate the Seminar on a three month basis or a six month basis but I kept running into fiscal and transfer cycle realities. We could not afford to put people on per diem for long periods of time, nor keep them from their jobs for that long. So, there you are. We made lots of people unhappy. That said, I knew we had made the right decision when I looked at the expense of the Seminar against the number of people who had gone through the Seminar in the 46 years it was in existence -- around 640 Department of State officials. Given that the Leadership and Management School was going to be training 7,000 people in the on-coming four years, resources had to be realigned. Ultimately, Colin Powell received a letter of protest about the demise but I never saw the backlash that I had anticipated.

Q: Maybe break this down in components. At the 03 or major level, we talk about leadership, what are we talking about? How do you train somebody to be a leader? In the military you're trained in command, learn command voice and how to do drills and expect obedience. There's a whole system that they can tap into. But we're a bunch of pipe smoking intellectual types or something, a little hard to get that type of thing going in our particular society.

BUSHNELL: The notion of leadership has changed dramatically in my lifetime and therefore yours. When I was a little girl I never could have dreamed of being a leader because the notion at the time was that you were either a born leader or you were not – it was not something that could be taught. Plus, with rare exception, leaders were men. The leaders engaged with people from the top down, keeping a distance to maintain a certain aura, had access to information that others didn't, and were deemed to have all of the answers. They would make the decisions for everyone else to implement. In return, they were given the attention, resources and respect from below.

With technological changes, new demographics in the workplace, globalization, specialization and a host of other differences in our world, new concepts of leadership have emerged. Among them is the notion that a number of leadership behaviors can be learned. Also, that leadership means motivating and enabling others to go in a certain direction. The effective leader leverages team's efforts toward an accomplishment, rather than going it alone. This is a different notion of leadership.

The way we think about people has also changed. We used to think that people needed to be prodded and closely supervised to perform well. We have learned that people actually like to work and achieve, that many are self motivated to do a good job. With the right skills like listening and engaging effectively, developing trust and the right environment, a synergy can be created between team and leader that can accomplish great things.

Our training reflected these views, as well as the notion that good leadership begins with self-knowledge. So we adapted training that went from the inside out. Some people declared this touchy-feely as if understanding your own values is out of line. I'd tell people that if they didn't care how they touched people or understood how others felt, they had no business aspiring to leadership.

Q: I always noticed, it might go back to an earlier era, that I could, listen to inspirational lectures and walk out feeling good and the next day I would have forgotten just about everything. How do you train this sort of thing? I guess things are different now.

BUSHNELL: Lectures are not effective teaching tools. Adults are not empty vessels into whom you pour wisdom. Adults learn by applying their own experience to whatever the issue is at hand. LMS trainers learned quickly that they only had to devote a few minutes to theory then they could get on with application. Not that application was always popular-- it is so much easier to talk about something, as you do with case studies, than it is to practice a new skill. Our bottom line was to make a difference in the workplace.

The Powell team wanted to change the State Department culture through training. I once heard the Deputy Secretary, Rich Armitage, explain to a group that he twice turned down the offer to work at State because, in his experience, it was such a nasty place. I had heard many colleagues echo that over the years – the culture and its systems did not value people. That was certainly something I experienced before and after the East Africa bombings. If there was anyone enthusiastic about embedding concepts of leadership into our organization it was I.

The LMS staff began in 2002 conversations about how we could train logistically 7,000 people in the time we had and moved into discussions over time about culture change. Are we making culture change? How are we making culture change? When do you get to the tipping point? Have we done it? Is this a different organization from the one that Colin Powell walked into?

Q: Did you find that in doing this, that people with other experiences were a different breed of cat from the old Foreign Service --, which was essentially somebody out of grad school. Back in my era, we were all male, we had military. Not that we were military minded, we just did it and then got over it. People today are different, much more computer literate, maybe more touchy-feely. They hug! We don't hug! I mean things of this nature. You find this?

BUSHNELL: There's been a lot of discussion about the differences in generations – how Gen X and Gen Y are different from the Baby Boomers. And you're the generation before mine.

Q: I contributed to the Baby Boom.

BUSHNELL: To answer your question, yes, the people recruited into State today are very different. Some of the people come out of the military, others are coming from private

sector careers and some are still coming from right out of college. But wherever they come from, they are a very different group of people.

Let me give an example. In 2000, 2001, something like that the Director General made the decision that as of a certain date, the entering Foreign Service Officers who could prove the requisite salary history would be brought in at the highest step of the grade for which they were hired, rather than the lowest step. This was in response to complaints about low starting salaries. Within weeks people who had completed the A-100 orientation classes that same year became organized through e-mail to pressure a retroactive decision. A-100 classes had not only stayed in touch within class, they organized with others, from Baku and Kathmandu. We never did that. Nor would we have considered demanding a shift in policy decisions. Three to six months later, the Director General made the pay retroactive.

Here's another example. Entry-level officers began hosting conferences. I heard deputy chiefs of mission complain, "It's not fair! The junior officers are having conferences and we're not!" No one had ever said they couldn't, they just never took the initiative! The different attitudes are going to create a far more diverse workplace.

Q: How did you evaluate or see the results of your mandatory training? Was the idea that at almost each step as you reach major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, level you go through the equivalent of something of this training, that you would bring something more in and do it again but at a more complex level?

BUSHNELL: The first level, Basic Leadership, introduced participants to a range of skills, many of them supervisory and management. Intermediate Leadership broadened the scope of skills and deepened the depth of examination. Advanced Leadership went into even greater breadth and depth, all based on performance competencies. In other words, participants would learn and practice those skills necessary to perform well in the jobs or grade levels they occupied.

Q: Well how do you bring your trainers up to snuff? Are they getting feedback? Do you have a system of getting together with the trainers to talk about their experiences and what they could add on? Because I assume that there was a training process going on both ways, wasn't there?

BUSHNELL: Yes, the trainers would get together and look at the curriculum, review participants' evaluations and see how things were going. They were also getting feedback from HR and others in the workplace. Plus, I initiated monthly brown bag lunches with all of the trainers. Inevitably issues would just pop up – women trainers, for example, experienced many more challenges than our male trainers. Everyone experienced a certain degree of initial cynicism about the training.

What was new to participants was a 360 evaluation. Everybody, from Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Leadership through the Senior Executive Threshold Seminar, the capstone course, was given the opportunity to have peers, bosses and

subordinates anonymously answer questions about performance and impact. So you would get a 360 assessment of yourself.

Q: You're talking about 360 degrees around

BUSHNELL: In terms of the people around you.

Q: Viewpoints, yeah, go ahead.

BUSHNELL: You would receive an assessment of your skill in areas like handling conflict, motivating people, I can't think of all of the areas. This was the basis of the training for both the trainers and the participants. If you see that everybody agrees you're pretty lousy in a certain area, if you've got any sense at all you're going to pay particular attention to that area when it comes up in the training. We've been doing these 360 assessments for years and have developed a good sense of the high and low marks of the Department as a collective.

The issue of whether the training has made a difference is one of the most difficult issues we faced because there are so many variables. It's very hard to assess the impact of training separate from everything else that affects a person.

We did get some type of feedback. In 2002 and again in 2004, the Office of Personnel Management did a satisfaction survey of all government personnel across agencies. The survey asked the same questions about supervisors, tools required for the job, etc. One of the questions was something like: "I think my supervisor does a good job." In 2002, the Department's ranking was 26 in a field of 29 agencies. In 2004 we moved up to fifth. That is stunning! The difference, I think, showed two things. I'd like to think the training was part of it, that our training for supervisors was taking hold. And I also think that the impact of Colin Powell and his attention to leadership at all levels made a palpable difference. I'll be very interested to look at future results to see if we maintain our upward trend or if we dip. We'll see.

Q: Was there concern about a type that we have in the Foreign Service? Particularly in our business, if you just produce good managers, you got a problem. We have to have people who are beyond managers, who think ahead, whither China today, or whither Russia or what have you and who add that intellectual element that's vital to a sound foreign policy development. They're loners. Some have made ambassador by sheer brilliance but never supervised anybody, often aren't very good mission leaders but at the same time add something that sort of a good manager might not add to the intellectual development of a policy towards a country.

BUSHNELL: That is the business of the Department of State, isn't it -- to influence matters of policy? If you are not focusing on policy issues you're in the wrong business. The mistake we have made is to separate policy from leadership, as if they are different. We need to shift our either/or thinking. The definition of good leadership in our business should be the design and implementation of effective strategic policies leveraging the

resources – including people – at hand. It is a mistake to evaluate leadership and policy separately, which we still do. If you're going to be effective in the senior ranks you have to be both. That doesn't mean you can't think lofty, strategic thoughts in your windowless office and contribute to policy discussions but to be effective you also have to interact with people, listen to what they have to say and take their views into consideration when making policy. They could be right! I think, at least I hope, that the amount of tolerance we have for senior people who are brilliant and abusive has shrunk. The world has become far too complex to be ruled or even explained by a single person, however smart he thinks he is.

Q: Looking at leadership, did you find people coming back and saying, "Hey, I've just been out there and so or so or my boss doesn't meet the criteria of this, this, this and this, creating all this discontent?

BUSHNELL: We sure did – time after time. On one occasion, an entry-level, A-100 orientation class complained to the Deputy Secretary about the cynicism of participants of the Deputy Chiefs of Mission seminar. At a joint social function the DCMs allegedly told entry-level people, "Just you wait! You think things are great now, just wait 'til you've been in this organization. You'll see how awful things are and how you get screwed by the system" etc., etc. The Deputy Secretary called everyone of the DCMs at the seminar to give them a piece of his mind, reminding them that if you don't want to be a leader, then step out and if you do, straighten up and fly right! Senior people became careful of their language very quickly.

Q: I'm probably stating a bias but we've just finished a very peculiar four years, the first four years of the Bush Administration, which from my historical point of view probably is the depths of American foreign, I mean, it's the pits in American foreign policy. The only comparable thing I can think of is 1807 when Jefferson and Madison cooked up the embargo and stopped all traffic with Europe, practically destroying American shipping. I mean it's really been awful. As far as the attitude, many people, our friends as well as our enemies, have a load of ammunition against us. Yet everybody loves Colin Powell and you've attested to this. And I'd like to know, what sort of reaction were you getting from the junior class, particularly, because they can't help but pick up the bile that is felt in the intellectual circles in Washington.

BUSHNELL: I found concern. I served as mentor to one of these A-100 classes, and they had a lot of questions about the Iraq war and what we were doing. Now this was before Abu Ghraib.

Q: That was the scandal about how we were treating Iraqi prisoners -- the capstone of our disillusionment.

BUSHNELL: But the numbers of people applying to the Foreign Service haven't diminished.

Q: I know they haven't. It's interesting, though, that within the Foreign Service, I talk mainly to retired people who normally come from all political stripes. I've never seen such almost unanimity despairing about what has happened in the last four years. Things can only get better.

BUSHNELL: Well, our diplomats live the policy, explain it, and witness the consequences. When I was growing up in postwar Europe, we lived in a bipolar world. The whole purpose of diplomacy was to win the Cold War and the tools that we had to work with included our military tools, our public diplomacy tools and our influence tools. Diplomacy at senior levels was conducted government to government, among people speaking diplomatic language behind closed doors. Now we are in a world in which you having to practice diplomacy on multiple fronts

Influencing governments is no longer enough; you have to influence the people as well. You can't promote democracy, as we have, and expect a government to do what we tell it behind a closed door. We have to work with interest groups, NGOs, and the public of a country. Plus, our areas of policy have multiplied, as well. I don't know if you saw today in the Washington *Post* the article about the State Department hosting a meeting with eighty different countries on avian flu. Such a conference would have been unthinkable when I was young– health issues were not part of diplomacy. Now, it is front and center, along with topics like environment, human trafficking, terrorism, energy, HIV/AIDs, etc.

If you are going to be effective in this complicated new world of ours, people at the top have to be thinking about how to leverage their resources to wield the kinds of influence and make strategic decisions on a huge array of different fronts. In other words, you have to exercise leadership. That is the culture change that the Leadership and Management School was trying to impact and I think that Colin Powell understood it.

It was my ambition for LMS to provide the space and wherewithal for people to think about the kind of a world we're dealing with and the tools which would allow them to more effectively operate in this world. The question that my colleagues and I have grappled with is this: are we training people for the last century or are we training them for this century and the century to come. If the latter, we need to provide people the kinds of leadership tools that will enable them to be both flexible and confident.

The crisis management work LMS did is a case in point. Who ever heard of crisis management as a component of traditional diplomacy? Crisis management training began after the bombing of the Beirut embassy in the 1980's. The Inman Report, which examined the attack, strongly recommended that embassies exercise their emergency action plans. For a while there was money to do that. In the 90's, crisis management training went the way of resources -- down the drain. After the East Africa bombings in '96, we once again had a surge of attention and resources. Responsibility for the training was put into the Leadership and Management School. We spent a lot of time refining our approach to ensure that focus was on the crises to come, not the crises of the past. In an effort just to become better educated about crises, we conducted the first ever statistically valid survey of the kinds of crises direct hire State Department employees face overseas.

Q: I can say I had two major earthquakes to deal with.

BUSHNELL: We wanted to get the evidence underneath the anecdotes. I was actually quite surprised at the reluctance of some of my senior colleagues to conduct it. And I had to really push hard, not at FSI, but at Main State.

Q: Was this just bureaucratic "Why do this?" or was there concern for the underlying results that you might end up with?

BUSHNELL: The reasons were never articulated. Once we overcame the obstacles, we were careful to define our terms and target our audience, which included Foreign Service Nationals, Civil Service people on excursion tours and Foreign Service generalists and specialists. "Crisis" was defined as those crises that are included in the Foreign Affairs Handbook, which is the handbook that deals with emergencies, i.e. terrorism, bombing, hijacking, hostage taking, chem./bio events, natural disaster, draw down evacuation and the like. It did not include things like crime, divorce, traffic accidents or events we could call crises in more normal circumstances.

Q: Would mob action be included?

BUSHNELL: Political unrest. And there's a list, so we took that list. Once we identified our audience and defined what we meant by "crisis," we defined what we meant by "experienced." And our definition of "experienced" was that you or a member of your nuclear family has personally been involved, or that you have had the responsibility for resolving the crisis.

Q: Nuclear family being defined as spouse, children.

BUSHNELL: Right or you have had the responsibility for resolving the crisis. The survey produced a 45% response rate, which is terrific. We learned that 64% of all direct hire Department of State employees have experienced one or more crisis as defined by the Foreign Affairs Handbook. If you take away the Foreign Service Nationals from the equation, the percentage jumps to a little over 67%. If you look at Foreign Service generalists who have been in the service 15 years or more, that percentage arrives at 87%. That is a huge percentage. We are in a dangerous profession that is becoming more dangerous and we need to prepare ourselves. Getting people through dangers requires training and good leadership.

The data underscored the changes we were making in the Ambassadorial Seminar. It had been contracted out for 18 years and was frankly out of date. So we brought it in-house. With help from a couple of colleagues, I redesigned the training and remained personally involved in its delivery till I left LMS. Needless to say, the emphasis was leadership: thinking strategically, acting intentionally, behaving with integrity and taking care of your people.

A number of non-career participants in the seminar were shocked when they learned of the extent of their responsibilities and the paucity of their control. We brought the non-career appointees in for a day of orientation before starting the actual seminar. They would arrive very excited at the prestige and honor of becoming an ambassador and, by the end of the first week, begin to manifest real doubts about what they had gotten themselves into. We didn't exaggerate but we didn't hold back on the realities of today's ambassadorial challenges either.

Q: I would think that you would have political appointees who were going out to Luxembourg or Switzerland or some place for which they'd paid a lot of money in. The threat was almost minimal. The political appointees for the most part tend to go to safe posts.

BUSHNELL: There is no such thing as a safe post. Look at London.

Q: We're talking about a recent set of bombings in the London Metro system.

BUSHNELL: Right. Just proved what the crisis survey told us: there is no such thing as a safe place in the world today. Europe is as vulnerable to terrorist attacks or crises as any other place. Africa scored higher on political unrest and Latin America on natural disasters but no place was immune.

In making the results of the survey known, I made that point at the most senior levels that the Department, especially the Foreign Service, needs to change its self image, as well as the way it takes care of people. I'm sorry to say no one paid much mind. Undersecretaries, career or non-career, were just not interested. People seemed to view me as little more than a Cassandra.

Q: What I'd say about being that type of Cassandra, it's going to happen and it'll happen again and again and again, just by going abroad. You're going to have these disasters.

BUSHNELL: I think that if we don't change our self-image and our image in the eyes of the American public then we will be burying many more of our colleagues. If we don't care enough to say, "Look, members of Congress, you're looking at a profession that is far more dangerous than the military." When you think of it, only a portion of the military actually sees war and, whether they do or not, the issue of force protection is huge. Contrast that with State. A huge proportion of Foreign Service sees crises that members of the military are never faced with. If we don't look deeply into the eyes of the American people, the American media and the American Congress to help them understand our need for consistent resources and force protection then you're going to have more people die. Until and unless we as an organization start to take responsibility for ourselves, rather than hoping that some political tourist who is coming through, be that tourist Democrat or Republican, then we're setting ourselves up for a lot of hurt and pain in the future.

Q: I think we're going through a particularly bad patch.

BUSHNELL: This has nothing to do with our political masters, nothing. This has to do with us, the career people. The stewardship of our organization has been left to flounder. I see almost no sense of responsibility for stewardship among my senior career colleagues, except those directly involved in management. If you recall, Colin Powell arrived in 2000 to stacks of reports from within and without the Department of State that essentially said, "Welcome! The ship of State is sinking!" And Colin Powell plugged us up, brought us to the surface, and got us the resources. Before he even left the Department the mantra became, "Oh my God! What are we going to do when the Secretary leaves? Oh my God, I hope the new Secretary will take care of us! Oh, my God, oh my God!"

To expect political people in senior positions to implement short-term presidential agendas to assume the responsibility of taking care of our organization and our people, is to be hopelessly naïve, to say nothing of abdicating leadership responsibility.

Q: One reason for doing this oral history is that people do not look back. It's a "me" organization, how can I move ahead? What's the job at hand?

BUSHNELL: I do think things are changing. I don't want to leave on a negative. The people who are soon moving up are a different breed of people, at least I hope they are. When I looked at the difference between the people coming through the Deputy Chief of Mission Seminar, 1986 to '89 in contrast to 2002 to 2005, I see an extraordinary shift in attitude and mindset. This gets to your question about diversity. There used to be a lot of cynicism about diversity and people started out hating the mandatory diversity course. Now, we have actually added a second course that is not mandatory and people are still signing up because there's a growing recognition that these are management skills that are essential if you're going to run an effective workplace.

Q: I think so and also I think there was a feeling as it went through its first stages that these are essentially advocates of give better jobs to African-Americans. There were African-Americans on the TV course and all. You're talking to a white body who is a bit reluctant to get that message.

BUSHNELL: Yeah, I know, people don't like to share power, which is a different conversation. I think that we have in the Department of State a collection of hugely patriotic people who have joined because they want to make a difference. We sometimes mask it with cynicism but underneath it we really care. That's why we joined and that's why we ask our families to put up with very difficult circumstances sometimes. They do because they care, too. Doing a good job and making a difference in today's world is far more complicated than it used to be and far more dangerous than it used to be.

The whole point of leadership, and why I have such passion about it, is to make it easier for the people who want to make a difference to do so. Without leadership, we will still attract smart and committed people but they will end up doing a job with one hand tied

behind their back. It's the loosening of the hands that my job was all about these last three years .

Q: Pru, I've done oral histories which cover from, basically from 1945 on. In that time, our people abroad, and the United States are leaders in just about everything you can think about. It's often the U.S. ambassador on the ground who, as you've mentioned can, say, "I was out there pushing the president to be better on civil rights or this or that or get him to face up to AIDS." Whereas most of our diplomatic colleagues from other countries, in most circumstances and I emphasize most, not all because there are great exceptions, are essentially passive observers. They will join with us if we're willing to take the leadership but the leadership seems to fit the American personality. Also, because of our strength, we seem to be carrying the banner on an awful lot of things all over the world. If we weren't there the world would be a quite different place. So in a way you're training world leaders. Did you have that feeling?

BUSHNELL: Absolutely. Often, if we don't do it doesn't get done. And the question for a senior leader is how do I do it? I can race around the world or a particular a country and spend all my time having bilateral meetings. Or I can engage my entire team to be influencing at different levels. And today, when so many people question what the U.S. is doing, it is the people overseas outside of senior ranks who are helping us retain our place and relationships. The elected and appointed senior levels of government come and go. The steadfast relationship is maintained by career people that allow us to withstand the storms and hopefully temporary setbacks.

So there you are. I had a wonderful career. I believed strongly in what I did and I have no regrets in leaving.

Q: It's been a fascinating career and the thing I've appreciated is that you have a management approach or a leadership approach, leadership is probably the better term, how things work rather than "I did this, I did that" and talking about the system. I want to thank you very much.

BUSHNELL: You're welcome.

End of interview