Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

JANEY DEA COLE

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 17, 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Teacher training programs
Miss Marilyn McAfee
International Visitors Program
` Venezuelan type democracy
Economy
Government
Relations with Europe
Maracaibo

United States Information Agency: Andean Desk Officer 1987-1989
Operations
Charlie Wick
Chile
Columbia and drugs
Use of Agent Orange and Roundup
Visitor grants
Zhirinovsky group
US Professors in Visitors Program
Leftist forces

Capitol Hill: Fellowship; Congressional Staffer 1989-1990
Senator Lautenberg
Duties

Nepal: Counselor for Public Affairs 1990-1993
Government
Voting
Exchange Programs
India
Fledging democracy
Marxist-Leninist Party
Relations
Royal Family
Rana family
Human Rights
Role of women
Peace Corps
Local media
Social life
Tourists
Environment

United States Information Agency: Near East Bureau 1993-1995
Fulbright Commission Conference
Islamic intellectuals
Board of Foreign Scholarships (BFS)

Calcutta, India: Branch Public Affairs Officer 1996-1999
- Environment
- Economy
- Refugees
- Explaining American capitalism
- Universities
- Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen
- Programs
- Nehruvian socialism
- Coca Cola problems
- US commercial interests
- Internet
- African Americans
- Disarmament and nuclear issues
- Decline of cultural diplomacy
- Television
- Foreign diplomatic presence
- Tribal areas

New Delhi, India; Temporary Duty; Nuclear Disarmament Conference 1999

Islamabad, Pakistan: Cultural Affairs Officer 1999-2000
- US attack on Osama Bin Laden's camp in Afghanistan
- Ambassador Frank Wisner
- Calcutta economic conference
- IV Grants
- Missions Program Plan (MPP)
- President Clinton's visit
- Ambassador William Milam
- Environment
- Kashmir
- Public opinion
- Evacuation

State Department: Promotion Panel 2000

State Department: Policy Coordinator; Western Hemisphere Affairs, Public Diplomacy (WHA/PDA) 2000
- International Visitors Program
- State/USIA amalgamation

Retirement

INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Ms. Cole]

Q: This is tape one, side one of an interview with Janey Cole. Were you born with the name Janey?

COLE: Janey was my baptized name. J-A-N-E-Y.

Q: J-A-N-E-Y. C-O-L-E?

COLE: That's right.

Q: Middle initial?

COLE: Middle initial is Dea. D-E-A.

Q: Okay. When and where were you born?

COLE: I was born in 1944 in Brooklyn, New York.

Q: Can you tell me something about your family? First, on your father's side and then your mother's side.

COLE: Both my parents were originally Canadians from the Ottawa Valley. My father eventually became an American citizen. My mother did not because she liked to announce that if you crazy Americans did X, Y or Z she was going to go back to Canada. "Elect George Wallace President" was one of her favorites, I remember. I grew up in Brooklyn. My father worked for the American Can Company. He was a draftsman and a sort of a functional engineer and supervisor.

Q: Do you know anything about the Coles from Canada? Where did they come from, what they were doing, how long they'd been there?

COLE: Oh, they'd been there a long time and they were originally of English extraction. They were people who ran small businesses. My Grandfather Cole, whom I never met, apparently ran a plumbing concern along with a colleague of his. My mother's family were frontiers people. They had helped to settle large parts of eastern and Upper Canada; they were lumbermen, agriculturalists, and park rangers. My step-grandfather on my mother's side was one of the legendary park rangers of Algonquin National Park who have been written about quite a bit and I've seen his name in books.

Q: Well, how did your mother and father meet?

COLE: My mother grew up in a small village called Whitby in Ontario, Canada. It had no school beyond the eighth grade and the custom was to send the children to Ottawa after eighth grade for further education. So my mother was in Ottawa, had finished high school, and was going to business college, and she met my father. He wanted to seek his fortune in the United States so they came here in the late 1920s or early 1930s. And despite the Depression they did all right.

Q: Did you have brothers or sisters?

COLE: No. I was an only child. I came along toward the end of the war in 1944. I think I really surprised them.

Q: What about as a kid growing up in Brooklyn?

COLE: I grew up in a neighborhood called Bay Ridge where today the Verrazano Bridge comes down connecting Staten Island and Brooklyn. But in those days we spent a lot of time taking the ferry to Staten Island and then the Staten Island ferry to Manhattan to get around. And at that time, although my family is Irish, it was largely a Scandinavian neighborhood. It's now changed, it's got different kinds of people in it now, but then it was largely Scandinavian.

Q: Well, how about as a kid? What did you do? You always think of Brooklyn kids playing stickball in the street or what have you.

COLE: We played a game called Kings, you bounced a ball off of the front steps of the stoop of a house or off of the side of a building. I remember all the little girls in my neighborhood went to dancing school, as did I. George Balanchine of the New York City Ballet was very much in our minds.

Q: Did you see the movie The Red Shoes?

COLE: Many of the children did. I don't remember seeing it perhaps because by that time the ballerina had contracted polio, which was endemic in Brooklyn at that time, it was very disturbing for my family.

We also used to take the ferry boat over to Staten Island to go horseback riding, another favorite pastime. I was very active in the Girl Scouts and went away to Girl Scout camp every summer.

Q: Were did you go to school?

COLE: I went to P.S. 102, Public School 102 which went up to the eighth grade.

Q: How did you find that?

COLE: Oh, it was just fine. From there I went to Hunter College High School in Manhattan. This was one of the New York City's specialized high schools. Hunter was academic and all girls; you had to pass an exam to be admitted.

Q: Did you have any favorite subjects in elementary school?

COLE: In order to graduate from eighth grade we had to pass a test in the U.S. Constitution; I particularly enjoyed that.

Q: How about reading? Were you much of a reader?

COLE: Yes, all the time. I can remember my friends all read The Black Stallion series. There was also a group of girls who all read Nancy Drew. I could never quite get the hang of Nancy Drew, but I read some of them so I could talk to my girlfriends. Mostly I preferred to read dog stories, you know.

Q: Albert Payson Terhune.

COLE: Yes, yes, absolutely.

Q: Well, when, how about at home? Did you mother and father talk much about politics or the Cold War around the dinner table when you were growing up?

COLE: Not a whole lot. However, elections and voting were very important. My mother, even though she was a Canadian citizen would debate with my father and it was always a big question over how he would vote. Before we had a primary system the decision was actually made at the convention. We used to go down to the Jersey Shore in the summertime, and we would be absolutely glued to our radios, listening to what Adlai Stevenson had to say. My mother was a great admirer of Stevenson and my father didn't like him so there would be long, intense political discussions. It was in this connection that foreign policy issues would be raised in the house. And to this day I watch political conventions even though I know things are not resolved in them anymore.

Q: Where did your parents fall on the liberal/conservative spectrum?

COLE: I remember that my mother thought that Nixon was quite the best candidate. And I think they both liked the fact that he seemed to be protecting Quemoy and Matsu and they thought he had a good brain and he was going to be able to deal with the Chinese communists properly. They were more inclined towards Nixon than to Kennedy, whom they saw as being relatively untried in foreign policy. And I also think that they had some concerns about his Catholicism. Although they were uncomfortable admitting it, they thought that Catholic dogma would determine where he would stand and he would be compelled by his religion to try to impose certain things upon the American people. I was a very little girl when Jackie Robinson integrated the Brooklyn Dodgers, you know, and one of the very early things I can remember as a child was my father throwing somebody

out of the house, telling them to get out, because they used the mean word to describe Jackie Robinson.

Q: Well then, when you went to Hunter College High School, what was that like? You say it was a selective school?

COLE: It was. We used to joke that it was for the intellectually twisted, but actually it was for the intellectually gifted. It drew not from one district but from all over the city. It was racially and ethnically very much integrated although predominantly Jewish at that time. And it was intellectually very rigorous. When I went on to college I found that pretty much my first two years of college I could have skipped. I walked out of my senior year of high school knowing this stuff.

Q: Had you had much contact with the Jewish culture in elementary school?

COLE: Only occasionally. There was a synagogue in our neighborhood which always had a Girl Scout troop, and since Girl Scouts was a big thing in my community we interacted with those girls. And I had some classmates who were Jewish. At the time, I think, the tendency was not to talk about differences but to focus on things that were shared. Nonetheless, I knew about Passover and I knew about Rosh Hashanah and I knew about Yom Kippur and I knew that it was nice to be invited to a Seder, or to come in and watch Mrs. Cohen light her candles. And I also knew that my Jewish friends liked being invited down on Christmas day to see the Christmas tree and eat some of our specialties. So we saw our celebrations as one in a spectrum.

When I went to high school I discovered Chinese New Year because I had a girlfriend who was Chinese-American.

Q: Did Hunter specialize in anything?

COLE: Well, Hunter College High School was very, very good at science and math but, probably because it was all female, there was a thrust toward language and literature. I studied both French and Latin; other people studied even more languages. Our English courses were quite advanced. When I got to college I found I didn't really have to read very much because I'd already done it; for example, we read Beowulf in the ninth grade.

Q: Well, today everything's gone co-ed but there is another side that says separating the boys from the girls is actually a good thing. I went to an all male prep school, and looking back on it I think it probably worked out fairly well; it cut out a lot of the nonsense.

COLE: Though you probably weren't very happy with it at the time.

Q: Oh, I detested it. But the point being that it actually, looking back on it, I think it allowed more concentration. And I think there's even more talk today about guys sort of elbowing girls aside, you know, in answering questions.

COLE: And those mean girls, boy, oh, boy, they jacked the boys around, too.

You know, at the time I thought it was a very bad idea because we were going to go out into a co-ed world. We were going to go out into a workplace where there were both men and women; we were going to function in societies that weren't single sex. And we weren't learning how to function that way in high school.

On the other hand, we were gaining a lot of intellectual and academic skills that stayed with us. So maybe, maybe it was okay.

Q: You know, the jury's out and will never come in on this.

COLE: And there were lots of other areas to interact with people of the other gender. My church had a very active social group to which I belonged. There were certainly boys around so it wasn't as if we never saw any. And we had events with our brother schools, Brooklyn Tech and Stuyvesant.

Q: Did you have any favorite courses?

COLE: I was always good at history and became a history major in college. And literature; I always thought I was an English major manqué.

Q: Did your reading change? I mean, were you sort of hooked on the book-of-the-month club and all that or were you other books or what?

COLE: No. I can remember reading enormous quantities of Dostoyevsky. You know, it's great for teenage melodrama, but you get some great, classy ways of expressing it. I remember The Brothers Karamazov was probably my favorite novel of all time. And the nice thing about Hunter College High School was that it was not considered extraordinary to like Dostoyevsky.

Q: At the time you were going to Hunter, did you feel that as a woman you would have a career or were you going to go on and get an M-R-S Degree?

COLE: My family was just ferociously ambitious for me, and it was very much in the atmosphere that you had to prepare for the world of work. My parents wanted me to be thinking in terms of a career, and meanwhile do my homework, to be off to my ballet classes, and go to the library. So they were definitely pushing. My mother often spoke in disparaging terms of girls who were, quote, "domesticated." Actually, I really didn't learn to cook until I went away to college. And then it was a boyfriend of mine who said, "Oh, I'll show you how to make fried chicken. It's really easy. Even I can do it. You can do it." So, that's how I learned how to cook.

Q: Did you have any sort of career in mind?

COLE: No, I don't think so. I think we were expected to be more open ended at that age. Of course, adults used to like to ask what we wanted to be when we grew up because we had cute little answers. And I think I always said a ballerina because I was very impressed with Maria Tallchief at the time. But I think that we were supposed to be getting basic basis of skills and then going on from there.

Q: How about world events? Were you listening to news on the radio, TV or reading The New York Times when you were in high school?

COLE: We had a television when I was in elementary school so we were catching the news on TV and my parents read the popular press. I can remember, sometime around the seventh or eighth grade, getting interested in the fall of governments. I was fascinated by how the French or the Italians could go through so many governments, how did that work. And I must say I didn't really understand it until thousands of years later. And I can remember we were hearing about the war in Vietnam and about how our soldiers were over there working with the Vietnamese and the Laotians or the Cambodians and wondering where these places were.

Q: From Hunter High School, were you being pushed toward Hunter College?

COLE: Well, Hunter High School was then located right next to Hunter College which was also a New York City public school, and the high school had originally been founded as a sort of a lab school in which students majoring in education at Hunter College could practice their skills. But we were not particularly pointed toward Hunter College.

Q: Hunter College at that time was all female, too.

COLE: Yes, it was. It was.

Q: One other thing before we move on, how about the movies? Did they have much of an influence? And were you a moviegoer or a playgoer?

COLE: The very first movie I went to as I was a child was in Ottawa visiting my paternal grandmother. At that point the Canadians had absolutely no air conditioning and of course, no fans because it never got hot. Well, it certainly did get hot. So my mother said, "Let's get dressed up and go to the movies." So I was a very little girl holding her hand, wearing a little frock with embroidery on it and we went off to see Fantasia which I just remember as one of the best movies I ever saw in my whole wide life. And for the rest of my life I loved animation. I still love animation, and my friends kid me. They say, "Oh, if there's one person who's going to have seen Shrek or Finding Nemo it's going to be Janey. And that's true, I do.

Q: How about being within striking distance of Broadway? Did you get to see plays?

COLE: Oh, yes. But again, there was this idea of what was suitable for children. For example, my mother took me to see The King and I when I was a very little girl. I had

never been allowed to read Uncle Tom's Cabin because me mother thought it was patronizing towards people of color. So in the middle of the scene where Uncle Tom's Cabin is re-enacted, in a ringing voice, I inquired of my mother what this was all about and I had to be shushed.

And the other thing I remember vividly that certainly influenced me for the rest of my life was the ballet. We used to go see George Balanchine's New York City Ballet, at that time at City Center. Maria Tallchief dancing in Firebird was one of the high points of my young life. But I was very young and I saw only part of the program because I was thought to be too young to sit through a whole afternoon of ballet.

One other thing I should also mention in theatre was Joseph Papp's free Shakespeare in Central Park which was a very important part of my life in high school. Everybody expected that we'd see the plays. And it was something of a struggle because I lived in Brooklyn and you left the Central Park theatre very late at night; there were all sorts of policemen lined up to get you out of the park safely; and then you had to get on the subway and take this long, long ride back to Brooklyn. But at any rate, we did it.

Q: Of course, one of the things too at that time was that essentially the streets were relatively safe and you used to go anywhere. You wanted to go somewhere you just went.

COLE: Well, we were certainly rigorously reminded not to talk to strangers. And anytime there was some dreadful incident involving a child and some pedophile we were warned that this could happen to you. And I can remember the story of a little classmate of mine who was stopped by a man who said he was trying to find such and such an address. So she took him there and then he wanted to know, where to find such and such a person in the apartment house. She said, go over and look at the names on the mail boxes. And she showed him where they were. And he turned out to be someone who wanted to take advantage, sort of catching her in that dark corner. Fortunately she was a quick child and ran away. But my mother said, it was alright for her to show him where the building was but she should never have gone in with him. You know, that you don't do. So there was a lot of time and attention given to keeping us safe that way.

But you're right, you know. I used to walk a mile down to the Staten Island ferry, ride a bus for another 45 minutes, and walk another half-mile, all by myself when I was nine years old, to go horseback riding. I did it every week. Later, I would walk to the subway and ride for an hour to get to high school through the morning rush hour. I did have some bad experiences but you were supposed to learn how to handle that.

Q: What were you thinking about with respect to college?

COLE: Ninety eight percent of the students at my high school did indeed go to college. I remember two girls who did not, one because she chose to get married and the other because of her particular career interests. So the emphasis was on finding a college that fitter your circumstances financially. If you needed a scholarship as I did, that was a

major consideration. I wanted very much to go to a co-ed school and I also thought it would be nice to get out of New York City and see something different.

Q: So while you were in high school did you feel the pressure of competition from the large Jewish population of selective New York schools, the same way I think that today in California if you have a lot of Orientals in your class you feel the competition because these are cultures that really push their kids. Did you feel that?

COLE: You sure did. When I got to college I was surprised that people weren't studying. I don't think they understood what a gift their education was. Neither of my parents had been to college. My father went and apprenticed himself as a draftsman. There was a lot of pressure to succeed and to take yourself seriously and to compete. And maybe to some extent success was beating the other fellow although, you know, some people would beat you in math and other people would beat you here and you would succeed in this. There was a lot of range in which you could succeed.

Q: Where did you go to college?

COLE: I went to a small school in upstate New York where I had a scholarship. It was called Hartwick College; it was located in Oneonta, New York. And it was a beautiful place, it was God's country but it was very cold and the experience made it abundantly clear to me that I was a city girl. It had been established as a Lutheran seminary to train missionaries in the 1700s and 1800s to preach to Native Americans and still had a Lutheran connection. Most of the students came from upstate New York.

Q: And you were there from when to when?

COLE: 1962 to 1966.

Q: Did you feel you were out of place or not?

COLE: One of the nice things that my high school did for me was imbue me with an awful lot of self-confidence which other people, I think, perceived as arrogance or self-importance. I just thought, I was quite convinced they were wrong and I was right.

Q: Well, did you find that it lacked the drive you were familiar with from living in New York?

COLE: Yes. But, there were a lot of smart people there, and a lot of people who got good grades and who got a very good education. But there was perhaps less awareness of the value of the education that they were getting. You know, people seemed to have a great sense of entitlement. I remember one girl telling me, you know, how very important her family was, that they were like millionaires in their town, and I said, "Well, what do they do?" And she said, "Oh, my father's a veterinarian." And I thought, well, that's impressive but it's not brain surgery. It's a great profession, he's an educated person and

all that, but no, that's not like, as you'd say today, being Donald Trump. So, I do remember thinking, oh; it's kind of a different world.

Q: What were your subjects? You say you were a history major?

COLE: Yes, I was a history major. Somebody once said, "Janey, you majored in little theatre." I was certainly very active in our little theatre group. I was also very active in student government because, I felt they weren't doing it right. They needed me to tell them how to do it. Awful. Just terrible when I think about it. But I was a very good history student. I was on the Dean's List every semester and I gobbled up some scholarships.

Q: Did what was going on in the world having any impact: our increasing involvement in Vietnam, the Cuban missile crisis, the assassination of President Kennedy?

COLE: I don't remember the missile crisis with any great vividness. But everyone of our generation can say exactly where they were when Kennedy was assassinated and exactly what happened. It was a terrific intrusion of the outside world on a rather self-absorbed little campus life. And it, I think it was the first sense I had of national tragedy; what made me really understand the impact of Pearl Harbor.

There were people on campus who were against the war in Vietnam and who kept talking about it. I would listen to them and be interested but I can't remember having passionate feelings.

I remember sitting in the cafeteria with a fellow student who was very much against the war. I thought he was trying to recruit me and I said, "I don't do anything that's not part of my studies, student government, and little theatre, and that's what I do." I was clueless. Not quite clueless. But I didn't know very much about it. But even in this small place, very much off the beaten track, and without much tradition of protest there were people who were talking about what was happening in Southeast Asia and about how the draft was bad because it gave us unlimited manpower to try to impose our will on the world and that was breeding the arrogance of power.

Q: What about civil rights? I mean, upstate New York was very far removed from Mississippi.

COLE: That sort of thing I remember from high school, not college In high school I had friends who were very active in local civil rights. They were people for a sane nuclear policy and they were people working to integrate lunch counters. And I can remember signing petitions but I think that was just about all that I did.

I can remember being down in Union Square in Greenwich Village as a teenager demonstrating for a sane nuclear policy because I had friends doing it.

Q: Well, while you were at college did the subject of diplomacy come across your radar? Did you meet anybody involved in foreign affairs?

COLE: No. We had the usual foreign students that we'd all talk to. I don't think I even thought of diplomacy. At the time the professions that were open to women were limited. I assumed that I would teach. My last year in college there were seven of us living together in a house on the edge of campus. One became a nurse, I became a teacher, another went to a secretarial school and became a well-paid private secretary. Another became a social worker. We didn't have anyone who studied library science, this was another possible career and there were also increasing opportunities for lab technicians. And these limitations were reflected in faculty attitudes. I can remember my economics professor gave me a C. So I went to see him and he said, "Oh, I save my As and Bs for the boys." And I said, "Well, I think that if you were to re-average my exam grades, sir, you would discover that I qualified as a B unless you found something inadequate about my classroom participation. But I do notice that I only missed one class and that was when I was quite ill. But I've noticed that you've given good grades to some of my classmates who were absent; some told me how few classes they attended." Then he finally said, "Well, I suppose we could give a B to a blonde." And I played up, saying, "Oh, B for blonde. Very good, sir." That was probably feeding the beast but I did get my B.

Q: Oh, boy.

COLE: It gave him a nice out, because my eyes were narrowing and I think he had visions of me stalking in to see the dean of women and raising a fuss and who wants to deal with that?

Q: What about, you mention little theatre. What sort of things were you doing in little theatre?

COLE: Oh, Edward Albee. I remember starring in, playing in a play by Albee. That's the only one I can remember, curiously enough. They did Chekhov. I just loved it.

Q: What, well then, you graduated in 1966.

COLE: Yes.

Q: Whither Janey?

COLE: Well, in my senior year I had done student teaching in Liberty, New York, a small town in the Catskills in what was then called the Borscht Belt. Hartwick had set that up and monitored and helped me. It was a very positive and interesting experience. Then I landed a job in Monticello, New York, where I taught ninth and tenth grade social studies for some three years, including what was then an experimental course in African and Asian culture in the ninth grade. And then European history in the tenth grade. And I had fellow teachers who were very good at getting summer study grants. So I got a grant

one summer to do Asian studies at the East-West Center of the University of Hawaii. It was a marvelous six weeks. Another summer I went to Virginia Polytechnic Institute to study revolution. And then the 3rd summer I was headed off to the University of Hawaii's East-West Center for a Master's degree.

Q: Where is Monticello? I've heard of it but what's the student body like?

COLE: Well, it is about two hours outside of New York City, also in the Borscht Belt. It was at that time a location of a very large hotel and a number of smaller hotels that had developed during the era of covenants when Jewish people were not allowed into hotels so they developed these kosher facilities.

Q: Now, which hotel was it?

COLE: I knew you were going to ask me. Grossinger's.

Q: Yes, oh, yes, well, this is, I think, probably the most famous one of them out there.

COLE: Yes.

Q: Did you get to sample any of their entertainment? It was after Danny Kaye's time, though.

COLE: Yes, they still had performances and they were wonderful days.

Q: When you were at the East-West Center did Hawaii stimulate your interest in different cultures?

COLE: From the first day I started on my BA, I knew I wanted to have a master's. That was, of course, at a different era. Now I don't think you can do much with an MA. But then you could. So I was always pushing to get good grades to go on and get my master's. While I was teaching African Asian culture I decided that, having done my BA mostly in European history, it would be very interesting to get a degree in something related to China. I thought China was going to be the next big thing. I think a lot of people in the '60s thought that Europe was failing or it was old hat. We were wrong. But based on what we knew then that seemed logical. So we were looking towards new ideas and new models and this made China very interesting to me. That and a childhood spent reading Pearl Buck though I later learned to not say that to my professors who all thought her books were simply terrible.

Q: How about Africa, which at the time was newly liberated and seemed likely to become more important?

COLE: I was not attracted to it as much. I liked teaching about Africa, particularly because I had a lot of African-American students in my class. It was a diverse and educated community: a lot of German Catholics, a lot of African-American students, a

large Jewish population. And I can remember the first time one of my students came into class with an Afro. We just stopped the whole class and everybody admired his Afro and talked about it. We also studies India and passive resistance. We read some Gandhi and organized a little mock demonstration. And I wore a sari. We were able to link Gandhi with Martin Luther King and what he was doing. It was very much of the '60s and really rather marvelous.

Q: So you were determined to go on with China studies and get your MA. How did this come about?

COLE: I got a scholarship at the East-West Center where, at that time, they paid for your tuition, room and board, books, and passage to Hawaii and back. I was there from '69 to '71 including six months in Asia, mostly in Taiwan studying Chinese so I could pass the language test. Learning Chinese was the hard part. I did two years of Chinese in one summer, spending an awful lot of time in the language lab going "ma, ma, ma," trying to master the tones that are central to the language.

Q: Had you developed any views about China policy before you went to the East-West Center?

COLE: When I was teaching high school what I had always tried to do was to present a fairly sympathetic approach to the People's Republic of China and why they became communist – to explain who Mao was, what in his background had led him and his generation in this direction. And I think I'd also dealt circumspectly with the fact that we had perhaps mishandled our relationship with China, although maybe that was an irrelevant question, you know, "who lost China?". I mean, they made their own decisions.

Q: How did you find Taiwan?

COLE: Oh, I liked Taiwan. After having been in Japan and after all that bowing and scraping, it was sort of nice to arrive in Taiwan and get a Taiwanese taxi driver who spits out the window. Taiwan was just beginning to develop. It was uncomfortable. It was hard. But you could see change occurring right in front of your very eyes.

However, my main thrust was on surviving and studying Chinese and coping with loneliness because the Chinese view friendship as a very intense relationship; they aren't open to casual friendships. So you're very isolated.

And, of course, the Kuomintang government itself was very controlling. Almost all the Chinese that one could talk to, had a story about being watched by a car clearly labeled Secret Service. I remember saying to one man, a Chinese doctor, at least they're not watching you secretly. And he said, well, no, that would serve no purpose. They want us to know that they're watching us so that we will behave; it's to make you virtuous not to identify your lack of virtue. I thought, that's an interesting and Confucian way of thinking of it. But it was perfectly apparent, that it was a very controlling and oppressive sort of government. There was talk of corruption but I never experienced any of it. My

interaction with the civil service, from the Post Office on up to the Police Department, was with very honest and efficient bureaucrats.

However, I thought our support for Chiang Kai-shek was really stupid. Because of this, unlike many people who spent a fair amount of time at the American Cultural Center, called on the Embassy, and were on Embassy guest lists, I just didn't want to go to do this. Unfortunately, I think I cut myself off. But I just felt that what we were doing was excruciatingly stupid and that we should be smart enough and powerful enough to maintain a relationship with Taiwan and also recognize the Peoples Republic. And that we ought to be able to look at a phenomenon like the Cultural Revolution and other Chinese policies in terms of their historic roots.

Q: Did you have any contact with our Foreign Service officers who were going to school?

COLE: No. They were in Taichung and I was in Taipei, going to the Mandarin Training Center of Taiwan University.

Q: Well, what about Vietnam? Events there during this period must have hit you as they did everyone else.

COLE: Yes, they did. And I, like everybody else it seemed in my generation, I thought our policy was very bad, that we weren't going to win, that the war was not winnable, and that maybe it didn't matter too much if we failed. But in some ways I became more conservative in graduate school because I disapproved of the demonstrations and of the students who didn't want us to study. And I said, that the most radical thing that we can do is go to class and study about Asia. The most radical thing we can do is go to our classes and learn how to speak Vietnamese and Chinese. This is the best and most effective path to affect U.S. foreign policy.

I do remember one effort at the East-West Center to shut down classes. We had a wonderful old professor, a Chinese, who came to class in a scholar's robe. He'd actually been part of the May 4th movement, one of the first student opposition movements in China. He was very, very old and they'd try to push him around. I knew the organizer. In fact, I saw him when I went to my last alumni reunion in November 2003. He said, "I remember you. You flew in my face like a crow." I had said that pushing around our professor was shocking, and he was going to think that's the white kids. What you're doing is exactly what we're doing in Vietnam. We are dissing a people's right to choose their own path and to be who they are; we are a bunch of arrogant white people trying to make other people do it our way. And I said, you should be ashamed of yourself.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Cultural Revolution?

COLE: I think when I was teaching in high school I was more positive about it, intrigued by Mao's Little Red Book and all of that. Then I got into university and began to understand more of its origins and read more about it and discover more about the terrible

things that were going on. And I think one of the reasons why I never sought an assignment in China was that I found myself very rejecting of a culture that could produce such brutality. Now, I've come to be a little bit more philosophical. All societies have this cruelty in them and some societies do better than others in capping it.

Q: Was the Taiwan versus PRC issue a subject of debate at the East-West Center?

COLE: Yes, there were great debates about Taiwan and the Peoples Republic and the status of both. There were quite a few students from Taiwan there and a lot of the Americans were people who had returned from the Peace Corps or from work in the Pacific Islands or elsewhere in Asia and were very Asian and internationally minded.

Q: Well having your Master's degree, how did you hope to go on? Teaching or further study?

COLE: Well, I was disappointed because I thought my MA would open up more opportunity than it did. For one thing, I found that I was often competing with Chinese-Americans for jobs and if it was something to do with China people logically thought that Ms. Lee would be a better choice. And I could understand that. I did go back to teaching for one year and I found I simply didn't like it anymore. I wanted to do something different, something else. So I got myself cracking and I found myself a job working for International House in New York City, a residence for graduate students at various universities in New York City. The idea was to being foreign students and American students together. The students were largely but not entirely from Columbia. So I worked there for a year.

Q: What were you doing?

COLE: I was a program officer organizing events like the Christmas party, the talent show, the outing to the Cloisters.

Q: Was there any tendency for the foreign students to retreat into themselves? Did you need to figure out which ones needed a push to get them out to participate?

COLE: No, I don't think that was much of a problem. One of the nice things about International House was that it provided breakfast and dinner. And as everybody came to the cafeteria style breakfast and dinner there was a good deal of mingling that provided a lot of opportunities. But I remember doing some special outreaches for some groups, the Iranians of whom there were a great many in particular. They were disoriented at the time. This was my first experience with Muslims. We were very interested in the Arab students. We tried to go to events that they organized and to involve them in other activities.

Q: After about a year there, what did you do next?

COLE: I needed more money so I went to work for a large non-profit youth serving organization, where I stayed for some seven years.

Q: What was that?

COLE: Well, I don't think I'll go into it. But I will say that the seven years I spent working there I really enjoyed. My job was setting up international exchanges mainly for girls. At this point I was very much a feminist and I didn't think that the school systems were serving girls terribly well, from what I'd observed from teaching high school. They weren't serving them badly but there were things not provided by the school systems that I thought were very important for girls and one of them was international experience. So I was mainly working with high school age girls and getting them overseas. I was also working with girls from overseas, getting them to the U.S. And I spent a lot of time working with Muslims girls who wore the hijab, finding places where they could work that would give them successful experiences.

Q: This must have been very difficult, particularly in that era.

COLE: It was a question of finding the kind of community where girls wearing the hijab would be accepted, more where it was understood that these girls were not going to sit in a room without an adult woman if a member of the male sex was present. So you had to have people who were willing to adjust their expectations and be sensitive and responsive. And, we were able to make it work, often small town America worked very well. And an awful lot of our international students loved, loved going to the Deep South to visit Black families because they said it was just like home, because they were so family-centered.

Q: What year was it when you finished there?

COLE: It was 1980. It was then that I began to think about the Foreign Service which I had first been attracted to in '69 to '71 when I was at the East-West Center. But I hadn't pursued it because two of my friends had applied to the Foreign Service, passed the written exam, traveled from Hawaii to California to take the oral, and neither of them was accepted. Both of them at the end of the interview had said, now, can you tell us where we stand? One young woman was told you're very pretty, we're sure you'll get married; which indeed she did. And the other young woman was told we think you need to season a little while, and besides, we're only allowed to have two people from each state and we already have the two that are going to be from Hawaii. Why don't you just go and get a little more life experience, dear. So, I thought, they're just not going to accept women. And I knew too that at that time if you married you were required to leave. And, of course, the idea was prevalent that when you married, you would of course have children and when you had children you would stay home and take care of them. So, in 1971, I went back to New York, taught for a year, and then spent seven years running international exchanges.

Q: Well then, at the end of that time, what happened?

COLE: Well, before the end of that time I had a very charming boyfriend who was going to Columbia's School of International Studies where he had lots and lots of counseling from lots of professors. So when he decided to take the Foreign Service test, we thought it would be nice if we both took it. But neither of us passed. I was shocked. I had never failed a test in my life. And they broke it down, as you recall in that year, and I could see that the area where I hadn't done well was grammar. So, having in mind the possibility of taking the test again, I began to study a grammar textbook and also started to read a newspaper, The Christian Science Monitor, everyday, something I had not dome before.

When the written exam came up again my boyfriend, who spoke fluent Russian, had been taken on by the USIA (United States Information Agency) as a tour guide in the Soviet Union. So he took the test in Russia and I took it in New York. The day I got the notice, my very nosy next door neighbor was looking over my shoulder as I opened my mailbox and he saw that I had passed. But I decided not to pursue the opportunity and take the oral. I liked my job; I'd just gotten a raise and new responsibilities and I was concerned for my mother's wellbeing, since she was now alone living in New York City.

Meanwhile, my friend had returned from his Russian assignment and hadn't passed. So I told him I hadn't passed either. But, my next door neighbor told him, yes, of course she passed. So needless to say, he was very disturbed by this. And at about the same time my mother found out, and she said, are you crazy? Take it. Take it. She said, you know, you're going to need more money, you're going to need a new challenge, this is what you got your education for. She said, I'll be fine. So when they called me back two months later and offered me $2,000.00 more, I said yes.

So at any rate at that point I went down and he at that time was in Washington, DC, having got himself a job at Rand. And I came down, I remember staying with him, and I went to the oral assessment and I was very lucky in that I had a very dear friend who was our organization's librarian, this was the youth serving organization, and she was the historian librarian archivist then. And she looked up things about this kind of test that we were going to have. Do you remember, it was the situational thing?

Q: Oh, yes.

COLE: And so she found out all about it, did research for me, went to the Conference Group and got the lowdown on what this test was about and what it was like and how it was graded. So, I thought, wow, you know, what a shame that this isn't popular knowledge because it really gives the advantage to people who are told this.

But anyway, knowing this, I went in and sort of flew through the test. The only mistake that I can make that I can think of is that I assumed it was like a job interview, the oral assessment was like a job interview where they had your CV in front of them. Well, they didn't because it was thought to prejudice them. And at the last minute I finally said to this, said to the interviewer, I said, well, you know, I've outlined this on my CV, sir, perhaps that could be a quick and ready reference for you on this. He said, oh no, we

don't have your CVs. And I said what? He said, of course we don't have your CVs. And I said, well, outside of this experience interviewers have them. So I had about 60 seconds to tell him that, you know, I had a Master's degree in Chinese studies and I had lived and worked abroad and I would be fine. That was the only piece of information I didn't, because it never had crossed anybody's mind that they wouldn't have the CV. But I did have all the background on the test and how they graded it and what it was looking for so I also understood the tricks, you know, that they put in, distractions and. Of course, as somebody once said, the distraction that I had in my, they gave you a pile of memos, remember? You were supposed to.

Q: Yes, the in box test.

COLE: The in box test, right. And then the group negotiating test and then the interview. So I had the scoop on what an in box test was and what they were looking for and what they looking for in group negotiation all from my girlfriend who had done this research for me through the Conference Group, which had an element that dealt with hiring and testing. So, that was kind of a piece of cake.

Q: Well then, I think this is probably a good place to stop for this session. Then we'll pick this up, you've passed both the written and oral exam. This is in what year?

COLE: This was in '79, '80.

Q: Alright. So we'll pick this up in 1980, and find out what happens next.

COLE: Then I go off and join the Foreign Service.

Q: Great.

Today is the sixth of October, 2004. I assume you went into an A-100 course, the basic officer course. What were your classmates like, how did you relate to them and what did you think of what you were seeing?

COLE: Okay. Well, this was when public diplomacy was handled by a separate agency, the United States Information Agency, and so my A-100 course was really a USIA entrance course. I don't remember how many people were in my class. But, roughly a third were women and two-thirds were men. I really enjoyed the people I was with.

One of the things that I remember noticing was how much better educated the men were than the women. The women tended to have BAs and MAs whereas we had quite a few of the men were PhDs. I remember asking one of my colleagues about this who just laughed and said, that most of these men were put through school by their wives. In his case, it was his mother who put him through.

Q: Well, did you feel that your background was typical?

COLE: I was a little older than most of my class. Most of them seemed to me to be in their late 20s and I was probably in my early 30s. So I was a little bit older than many of them but not much. I felt that there was somewhat of a mismatch, between the training and our experience. Their assumption was that we were 23 years old and hadn't done anything much besides go to school. And while that was true of a few people, it certainly wasn't true of most of the people who had lived overseas and had had jobs and had some experiences. So, we were always nudging the system to try and make it more responsive. And indeed, USIA did subsequently reform the training system.

Q: But did you have any, as you got into this, did you have any feel for sort of what aspect you wanted to do or area you wanted to serve in or was it sort of let the system take over?

COLE: You know, I don't think that most of us fully understood until we got to the field that there was, you know, some sort of a gulf between the Cultural Affairs Officers (CAOs) who did exchanges and ran programs and the Information Officers (IOs) who dealt with the press. I actually have done both kinds of work and I don't see a great difference between them.

Q: Had any of your group come in with a strong background, worked on a newspaper for a long time or worked in museums for a long time?

COLE: Yes, we had some people who had that sort of experience, but I'm not sure that it determined the course of their careers. At that time the emphasis was on producing a Public Affairs Officer, a man or woman who could run the show. That meant you had to know how to be both a PAO and a CAO. You had to understand about the International Visitor (IV) Selection Committee, the role of the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission), and the egos of the political and economic officers. You also had to understand that occasionally the phone was going to ring in the middle of the night and it was going to be the press and that almost inevitably you would say something wrong and get screamed at. And I have a feeling this may not be entirely true anymore.

Anyway, we also had a counterpart State Department class and we all went off to West Virginia on a retreat, which was supposed to build up solidarity on both sides. And we went also through part of our training with them, and I did make some friendships that stayed with me for a long time.

Q: Well then, what happened? Whither Janey?

COLE: Whither Janey. Well, at that point, I had come into the Foreign Service, speaking pretty good Chinese having tested at the East-West Center at the equivalent of the 2-2. So I went in to see the personnel officer for East Asia (EA) and said, I do speak Chinese and I'm thinking about taking the test. He said, oh, don't bother my dear. We have men lined up for years who want to get into China. You're not going. So I thought, the mere fact that I have a Master's degree in Chinese studies with emphasis not on reading classic texts but rather on communicating in spoken Chinese and reading newspapers and

popular publications seems relevant. But then I thought, well, the heck with that. I think women have changed. I think the attitude today might be, well, fight back. But my attitude then was; I'm not so crazy about going to China anyway.

So anyway, they said, go and learn Spanish. So I went off to FSI (Foreign Service Institute) and studied Spanish. The Spanish language training was like a well-oiled machine because they processed so many people. It worked real well. There were large classes; they kept shifting us around so that we didn't get frustrated by being with people smarter than us or bored by people slower. They built a lot of confidence. We heard a lot of different accents. It seemed to me to be pretty good. And I passed my test and came back and said, fine, now I speak Spanish. And they said, oh, splendid, proceed to Bangladesh.

Q: Oh, yes, well, you can see the tie.

COLE: At that point, I had started to learn a little bit more about the Foreign Service. I said, I'm not going to Bangladesh unless I get Bengali. I made common cause with a chap called Claud Young, who was African-America who had gone through Spanish with me. He was going to a consulate in the Philippines. So the two of us complained and together I think it sort of focused people and we both got appropriate language training.

Q: How did you find the language?

COLE: Oh, I loved the Bengali language. The teaching reflected the way things are taught there. But still I got a quite a good background. I remember my teacher making us memorize the names of flowers from Tagore's poetry. And they were very poetic, little eyes of the angels, or little starflowers that bloom in the spring. I kept thinking, shouldn't we know the common name? But when I got to Bangladesh, I learned that Rabindranath Tagore used to write his poetry on his family's farm. So he'd spend the monsoon season out on this farm on a barge that would float higher and higher and higher as the monsoon swept through. Then he'd go back to West Bengal in the winter and perform it or publish it. Then when I got to Bangladesh, I discovered everybody called these flowers by their Tagorian names even people from the villages. So I said, well, I guess my teacher was a lot smarter than I thought.

Q: Well then, you were in Bangladesh from when to when?

COLE: 1981 to 1984.

Q: What was your job?

COLE: I was at that point what they called a Junior Officer in Training (JOT), sometimes called a Public Affairs Officer in Training. We started off as a rotation. First you spent a month or so at the USIA office doing anything that needed to be done. You went out to the airport to greet speakers. You translated the wireless, which was full of static, with blips and stars and things that looked like the curse words in Beetle Bailey comics. And

you had to translate those into letters and there was a whole code for that. You made tea when an eminent journalist came in. One of my jobs also was to turn up at my PAO's (Public Affairs Officer) house and make sure that his beagle, who was slightly senile, didn't peepee on anybody's foot. Fortunately I liked the beagle, he was a swell dog. Or to make sure that his Irish setter didn't get loose and jump on anybody. And I got a wonderful education that way. I got to see a real pro work.

Q: Who was the PAO?

COLE: John Core, who had a spectacular career and then left the Foreign Service quite angry.

Q: On what, do you know?

COLE: What was he angry about? Oh, boy. All kinds of things. I think I'd rather not tell his story

Q: Who was the ambassador?

COLE: Well, when I first got there it was an Ambassador David Schneider, who'd been asked to stay on. I remember him saying it was terribly embarrassing because he'd already had his farewell parties and been given his silver tray. But he was not there for very long. And then Ambassador Jane Abell Coon arrived. Her husband, Carleton was our ambassador in Nepal.

I did skip something though, you know. Part of the very interesting thing of being a JOT in Washington, in addition to studying the Spanish and the Bengali – I was here for 12 months, they used to do that – was I got to work in the area office. And this is where I got to know Bill Rugh, Ambassador Rugh, who was the area office director. And Jack Harrod was one of the senior people in the office, one of the rising stars.

Q: Bill Rugh was an Arabist, wasn't he?

COLE: He certainly was, certainly is.

Q: I interviewed him.

COLE: I'm out of order now, but at one point I was looking after the Fulbright program and we were working with AMIDEAST (American-Mideast Educational and Training Services) to do certain things and I was able to arrange some grants from them to conduct some activity and I remember he called me up and invited me to come on over and have tea with him, which I did. He thanked me and it gave me a very nice feeling. I said, do you remember I was a JOT? He said, yes, he said, I remember you bought me jellybeans. Because this was when Reagan came in. Remember the jellybean mania? So, I trotted on down to what was then Woody's and bought everybody, you know a variety of different kinds of jellybeans. So, when Mr. Wick, who was then appointed the director of USIA,

came through everybody who wanted them had these jellybeans on their desk. And all those years later Bill Rugh looked at me and remembered them. So, we both had a nice laugh over it.

So, I was a JOT in the NEA (Bureau of Near East Affairs) office. And Louise Taylor, do you remember her name?

Q: Oh yes, I've interviewed her.

COLE: She was the desk officer for Bangladesh. And she said, Janey, I'm going away on two weeks of vacation. Take over.

Q: Tell me, in Bangladesh, what was – it was called Dacca?

COLE: Yes.

Q: What was it like when you were there?

COLE: Bangladesh, you know, we all fall in love with our first post, don't we? I remember just before I left Washington I was buying some clothing and I heard on the store radio that there'd been a coup d'etat and General Ziaur Rahman had been killed. I was so shocked. And I remember the lady in the dress shop saying, was it somebody you knew? And I thought, well, it feels like I do.

I arrived in Dacca shortly after that, flying into Dacca during the monsoon when about two-thirds of Bangladesh is under. I came in just as the sun was setting and I was looking out over this great plain, this great estuary, and it was all silver, a sheet of silver. It was beautiful, just beautiful.

What was Dacca like? Well, at that point it was famous for having the worst embassy building in the world in terms of the physical appearance. The building belonged to the Ministry of Youth which occupied the upper floors. As you walked into the building it smelled like a toilet because that's how people used the ground floor. And then you could take this tiny and rickety elevator – run by a little tribal gentleman who used to sort of sit perched on a stool – which was always getting stuck between floors. Then the operator would stand up on his stool, knock open the little door in the top of the elevator, grab the cables and jerk them. Or, you could walk up the stairs which were full of homeless people who were living there. And in certain seasons, the stairwell was full of jute-moths, which, if they brushed against you and you had been perspiring would leave welts on your arm. The building also had a stairwell in the center which was intended to improve circulation. It was covered over with wire netting; someone said they must have put the wiring over it so people wouldn't commit suicide by jumping down. It was filthy and full of garbage. And it was so depressing.

Also, for most of the time I was working at the embassy there was a huge struggle going on in the government bank across the way, where the government was trying to fire all

the people who did no work. It got quite violent and we used to have bullets bouncing off our windows. I was in the office that had the great big copying machine in it and all the supplies for tea and it was about the size of really a clothes closet. And then there was a desk jammed in there where I sat with my back. When they started to shoot, I would either run out and chat with the secretary or I would crawl under my desk.

I remember a journalist came to see me one day and stuck his head in and there I was underneath my desk. "Miss Cole?" I said, "Yes, get down, get down!" So, you know, it was typical junior officer stuff.

Now, what was not to like.

Q: Yes. How about living conditions?

COLE: Actually, they were pretty good. I was the first single woman to be given a house to live in. Previously, they had put all the single women into apartments for their own safety. But, I was supposed to be learning how to entertain like a USIS (United States Information Services) officer. And I was slated to become the deputy PAO as my follow-on there. So it was important that I have house. And I got this darling little beautiful house. Nothing bad happened to me, so, that broke the back of that particular tradition.

Q: Let's talk about your work. I imagine you did a variety of jobs. You know, take different aspects and say what you were doing and what the situation in which you were working was like.

COLE: Okay. Well, I was there for a very interesting stretch of three years, a long time to be in a very difficult post. After the coup d'etat the situation stabilized for a while and elections were held. However another coup d'etat then overthrew the elected government. So, we were dealing with a lot of political turbulence. However, the main emphasis of our embassy was on development. The main thrust was family planning. The idea was that if you could help people keep their children alive they would have fewer of them. So there was quite an emphasis on conquering diarrheal disease because that's what killed most children. And on clean water and on getting family planning information to women. At the time it took quite a leap of faith and many of us thought it was hopeless. But, in fact it was largely successful. Population growth in Bangladesh has been brought under control. Now people in villages say, we used to have a lot of children because a lot of our children died; we don't have to do that now.

Q: Well, did your work involve passing out information about this program?

COLE: Yes. USIA handled a lot of the informational work with the press. In performing public diplomacy, as it's now called, we were not only talking to the government. We dealt occasionally with government officials but dealing with them was largely the job of the political section, the economic section, or other elements of the embassy. Our job was to speak to people who influenced public opinion, the gatekeepers they were called. And this was an interesting and exciting time to do this in Bangladesh because Bengali

intellectuals, are very lively, interesting people whose brains do work. They are also ideologues in a way that Americans are not so I had to learn to think in a very different way and to present information within an intellectual framework where all the pieces were expected to fit together.

Journalists, of course, were principal targets as were university professors who, in a largely illiterate society at that time, exerted considerable influence both within their classrooms and outside. Performing artists and other creative people also had considerable influence and I did get to know some of them.

Q: You mentioned that a lot of influential people were ideologues and you had to present things through their intellectual framework. Can you give us an example or so?

COLE: Even at that time we were trying to make the world safe for American capitalism. There was, then as now, a great pharmaceuticals debate, having to do with intellectual property rights. So you had to be able to put intellectual property rights in a way that socialist-oriented people would understand what they were and perhaps be sympathetic to the idea.

Now, this is where creative people come in, because creative people live off their ideas they can understand that you can't have people stealing them or not paying them for their ideas. This led me to get involved with movies and moviemakers because the Bangladeshis made a lot of bad movies which were exported to the Middle East.

Q: Were these like Bollywood films?

COLE: They were the Bangladeshi version of Bollywood.

Q: Did everyone have a song in it?

COLE: Oh, several, and a wet sari scene. But they were pretty mild, pretty family oriented. They would appeal to South Asian workers in the Middle East but they were also watched by lots of other people in the Middle East because they were wonderful stories and the music was great. But the really upper class mode of entertainment was television. It was widely believed that a lot of movie actresses were women of dubious morality but the TV starlets were not.

Q: How did the policies of the Reagan administration fit into Bangladesh at that time?

COLE: Not easily. Just before that it had been common to emphasize the aspects of our society that might be regarded as socialistic such as our extensive public school educational system or Social Security. But after the Reagan administration came in you couldn't really emphasize those aspects of our culture. You had to approach it somewhat differently. And I can remember the PAO being called up for a meeting with the political office and the DCM and he invited me to come along. They were criticizing him for being so right and saying why is your organization so rightist? He said because that's

who we elected president of the United States. You're perfectly right, that's our job. They tell us what to say and we go out and say it. He brought along a lot of material for them to read and their eyes pretty much glazed over and that was the end of the meeting.

Q: Was there any spillover into Bangladesh from our embassy in New Delhi?

COLE: Yes. I was in New Delhi an awful lot mainly negotiating for more resources. They had a very good book publishing program. USIA would get the rights to some American books that would be republished in India where instead of costing $25.00 they would cost $2.00. There was a system to get the publisher to distribute the books, USIA would keep some of the books, some of which would be sent to us in Bangladesh to give away. I remember saying, as a woman functioning in a Muslim country I can't send whiskey as Christmas presents. I can send a book. And since status is a high motivating factor in South Asian cultures, having a book from the U.S. embassy meant you put it right out where everyone could see it.

Another of my responsibilities was to run our translation program. We translated books into Bengali which we then presented as gifts. Choosing these books, acquiring them, finding the people to do the translation, finding the people to do the editing, getting them through the process was quite a job.

We also ran something called Table of Contents, TOC, as well as something called Article Alert. TOC involved sending out to select recipients the table of contents of certain publications that were coming into our library, for example, we would send foreign ministry officials the table of contents of Foreign Policy Magazine. And people certainly liked getting this. Or we would send a playwright the table of contents of some magazine of theatre arts dealing with subjects he was interested in. The program was very, very, very focused; a select group of people were being provided with a service they liked a lot and that encouraged good relations.

I remember going along on a call to a powerful government official to be the note taker when I was on rotation in the political section. But the official just wanted to talk to me saying, you're the one who sends me that table of contents. I remember working on yours, I said, I understand you take an interest in the arts, sir. That was a blind guess because all Bengalis are cultured. He told me what he was particularly interested in and there I was, taking notes. When I handed him the non-paper, he just threw it in a drawer. When we left his office, my colleague said, "Well Janey, you were obviously the star."

Q: Would the table of contents service bring them to the library?

COLE: Yes, or they could call me up, or call up our librarian and ask for what they wanted. There was also something called Article Alert which was supposed to replace Table of Contents but people wanted both. This was a list of articles, from which you could select those you wanted to order from USIA. They were from thousands of different magazines. We would send them over or deliver them personally to provide the occasion for a useful conversation.

At the time, the government was starting a school for diplomats, like our Foreign Service Institute. They did not welcome visitors but I suggested coming over to deliver some material, bring the USIS librarian and find out what material they might want. I was one of the few people to actually get in and meet with the director who told me what kinds of things he was interested in and how he was using them. And then some of his deans and professors came through because word was out that there was this pretty little American lady sitting there with the head librarian. I got to meet most of the faculty. So, it was a real door opener.

Q: How about the universities? So many universities around the world have a strong Marxist faculty and all and the students are ardent Marxists until they come out and get into the real world. Then they become ardent capitalists. What was the university situation in Bangladesh when you were there?

COLE: Well, it was pretty bad. In 1971, during the secession from Pakistan, the universities had been thoroughly trashed by the Pakistani army. Intellectuals were put up against walls and shot. Female students were raped; male students were killed. After that the university was just wracked by politics. We set a couple of goals for ourselves and then we used our resources to achieve them. We wanted to strengthen the teaching about the United States. We found that the people in the political science faculty although they were Marxists, were a little less devoted to Marxism and a little more interested in comparative studies of constitutions or political systems. So our strategy was not just to encourage a course about the United Sates, because that would be taught from a Marxist point of view but to provide them with more and better information. This was at the time when USIA was sending out piles and piles of copies of the U.S. constitution. We discovered that a lot of what they taught was driven by the books they had. So we helped do a textbook of original sources translated into Bengali – declaration of independence, the constitution, and a variety of other basic documents that you would need to understand the U.S. political system.

We also wanted to encourage teaching of American literature because of the high status of literature in their culture. Although we knew it was going to get a Marxist spin, we felt it's important to read Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost, poets who are not hard to understand and could affect the perspective, particularly of young people. We were able to put the resources USIA was providing into people's hands. We were able to give them material so the professors could lecture knowledgeably about Emily Dickinson or about Robert Frost or Ann Sexton or Sylvia Plath or whomever.

Q: Was English pretty much a second language in the academic population?

COLE: Yes. We were fortunate in that almost all educated people read English quite well and most of them also spoke it fairly well. Also, we were translating a lot of material into Bengali, which was kind of revolutionary and certainly it was helpful to the students. In that respect we were getting around the formal system as well as infiltrating it by putting

these books out through publishers and donating them to little regional libraries and to high schools and learned societies.

However, our major thrust was on teaching English as a second language and getting U.S. content into the instruction. English teachers were remarkably non-ideological; their business was to teach their students how to read and speak English. So, anything that would make that easier they would use and we could provide them with a lot of material. I got to know most of the master teachers of English in the university and normal school system and I got very involved with the academies that were training the teachers who were then going off to the high schools and elsewhere to teach English. And we did a lot of programs designed to improve their English and a fair number to try to get resources into their hands. Using literature to teach English was very successful and we had a lot of resources to provide.

Q: What about the press? What was the Bangladeshi press like?

COLE: The journalists were great fun, but they were very ideological. They'd all been through the struggle for independence from Pakistan and were very political but they were interesting. And so we did the old-fashioned things. We'd call on them and have tea and listen and try to find out what they wanted. Did they want to go to the U.S.? Did they want to get their junior reporters to the U.S. to see what real newspapers were like? Were they interested in American cinema? Well, we could send them Table of Contents from an American movie publication. Or, what book would they like. And what about The Wireless File? How did they get it; how did they choose articles; what could we do to get them to choose more, or use more, and publish more?

Q: Where did Bangladesh fit at this point in the Cold War?

COLE: Well, they wanted to be on the Soviet side because we were the enemy for not having supported them in 1971 in their war with Pakistan. So they would have liked to have been Soviet allies but there were difficulties with that. The Soviets didn't particularly want them. The Soviets didn't produce very much by way of aid because the Soviet theory was that you had to overthrow your capitalist government and become Marxist, Leninist and all your problems would go away, economically, and all would be fine. So they didn't provide any of the aid the Bangladeshis needed. They used Dacca as a dumping ground for their ambassadors; they sent one who didn't speak English. They did have a huge embassy compound however and their big asset was swimming pools and restaurants. Their technique was to invite intellectuals to come for the weekend; they could swim and could hang out in air conditioning so this was very seductive. They had a cultural center. They had a chess club, which was popular. They showed Russian movies. They had some things that were appealing. But on the whole, I think we were better armed.

Q: Well, was India a massive presence? I mean, were the Indians doing a lot of stuff there?

COLE: Yes, the Indians were actually fairly active and they were a huge, looming neighbor. Bangladesh had been part of Pakistan when it had broken away from India; India was the Hindus, Bangladesh was the Muslims and India was kind of scary whereas we were kind of warm and fuzzy. Our major competitors were really the Germans and the French.

Q: I'm surprised the French were paying much attention to Bangladesh.

COLE: Oh, the French pay attention to culture, don't they? Everywhere, even the most obscure places. They had a program for painters, which was actually pretty good; I met a lot of painters in Bangladesh who had been sent to France. The nice thing about the French is that they didn't tell them what to do; they just said, go to museums, spend three months, enroll wherever you want and off they went.

There was also a minor Bengali tradition of studying French rather than English. It must have been a sign of rebellion in the colonial period to study French and to look to France for your cultural linkage, rather than to England. They were still teaching French there and teaching it rather well. And the British Council, of course, was extremely active. I learned that they sent over people who were helping the Bangladeshis write their textbooks. And so I got hold of the people doing a literature textbook and gave them copies of Emily Dickinson's poems they thought were perfectly splendid and should be included in their textbooks. So I asked what if I give you some more to read and you choose what you think is suitable. So we got Dickinson in and then they put a little Robert Frost in. But they decided Sylvia Plath wasn't suitable for children. There were others as well whom I can't remember.

Q: What about the exchange program?

COLE: Before I joined the Foreign Service in my earlier job I'd been on the receiving end in the program for bringing people to the U.S. So I knew a fair amount about what would happen these visitors in the U.S. And so I focused on learning how to run an international visitor (IV) program, skills that served me for the rest of my career. I don't see any great changes between the way the IV program is now and the way it was 30 years ago except that it's shorter now; we used to send people for six weeks and now it's four or three. It seems to me that we had a little less input in the program then; there's more creativity now. I can remember the point in 1986 where we started to design our own IV projects which wasn't something that we could do before. During the Reagan administration grants began to be given to private organizations to set up programs, for example a USIA grant supported a program for social workers, or for junior politicians, or teachers. And we would be asked to nominate organizations. In its early stages it was a mess but it became very efficient under what is now the Office of Citizen Exchanges and is partnered with private sector organizations.

Q: How about your library? How well was it used?

COLE: Thousands of people used it, it was perpetually jammed.

Q: So many countries really don't have what amounts to a good library, a really open library system.

COLE: No. They don't have the money for it, they don't have the mentality for it. Eventually USIA, now PD (Public Diplomacy) within the State Department, came to the conclusion that it was not our job to replace the public library system, that countries should have or to create it. So our libraries were severely cut back and focused on policy. But as long as we kept them they were awfully good. And fortunately in South Asia, they were able to keep libraries going. There to be literate in English gave you status, so we had a self-selecting audience of fairly important people who patronized our library. Sometimes they were just students but they were going to grow up to be somebody, that was obvious. I thought our disinvestment in libraries was very sad.

Q: Yes, I agree with you. I've often felt that our exchange programs and our various libraries and centers were so important and it's shortsighted to cut these out.

COLE: Well, I don't think that exchanges have been severely cut. There was considerable criticism of the Fulbright program until Mr. Wick, who was for some eight years, the director of USIA, discovered that it wasn't really our program, it was a Congressional program named after a senator. And so the Senate was determined to keep it.

Q: How did you find being a young woman embassy official in Bengali social life? How did that work?

COLE: It worked wonderfully. You know, my FSNs (Foreign Service Nationals) were great. At that point in Bangladesh the embassies were the place to work and the American embassy, which was famous for always paying you your salary, on time, attracted some rather marvelous people. So they made sure that everybody knew who I was. In South Asia women have higher status than men. So Bangladeshis are flattered when the U.S. sends women officers. It means to them that the U.S. knows we'll be respected and safe there and recognized that Bangladeshis are spiritually and culturally superior people.

People wanted to invite me to their homes because this gave them status and recognized that they were advanced culturally. So I was very sought after and I would be out night after night and my PAO taught me to have goals for each of these occasions. Who was I trying to meet and what was I trying to accomplish? And he said, just keeping the channels of communication open is a perfectly valid goal. You may just be going there to see who's there, to see who knows who, who sits with whom, who's related to whom, what do they have on their walls.

Q: What about lectures or performances and that sort of thing?

COLE: Oh yes, we had quite a few American speakers, then called AmParts. These were people who were experts brought out by USIA who spoke at the university to the various

ministries and training academies and confer with the editorial board of the leading newspaper. We have to have real expertise, just not a smart person. But this was the time of Charlie Wick's blacklist of people who were ideologically not acceptable. Walter Cronkite was one of them. You would propose someone and some little bureaucrat would write down, "not to be asked." They got it all wrong, they had a blacklist.

Q: Well, after that did you end up going native, wearing a sari and all that sort of thing?

COLE: Oh never. Not at that point. Never. I did have a sari that I'd gotten before I joined the Foreign Service and whenever the FSNs invited us to a party, I would wear it. And everybody just loved that.

Later on, it was towards the end of my career that the mentality changed and I also got sufficiently senior to say, the hell with the mentality, and I was able to wear my salwar kameezes for dress up in Pakistan. You needed to have pretty clothes, because Pakistani women were always beautiful. In fact, Pakistani men in their silks and their embroideries and their diamond buttons were also wonderful to look at. And what are we going to do, turn up in a little black dress? No thanks. Plus, the little black dress, you know, showed your lower legs, which were considered wildly sexual. You didn't want to do that. So being able to go out and buy a beautiful salwar kameez meant that you were properly dressed and that you had something to talk to the women about, even the very traditional ones. If they could talk a little English you could talk to them about what you were wearing and ask them for their advice and help. And I learned a lot.

Q: Well then, you got exposed to everything in the business didn't you?

COLE: That was what the junior officer or a public affairs officer – a PAO or a JOT – was supposed to do, see the full array of USIA activities. Plus we also rotated through different components of the embassy. The secretary in the political section, the wife of the administrative officer, didn't think that this rotation made any sense at all and she wouldn't do anything to help me. So I arrived there with no desk, no telephone, no chair. So I asked the USIS FSNs to talk to their cousin who ran the warehouse and quickly a chair materialized. And when the chair arrived this nasty secretary had to point to a desk. And then a day or two later somebody produced a telephone for me, through the FSN conspiracy network. I did my couple of week's rotation in the political section and then I did Econ. The econ officer wanted somebody to run a catalog show for him. And so I called up my FSNs over at USIS and said, what is this? They said they'd go find out, so they did, and we set up a catalog show. And I also rotated through Admin, which was the section I enjoyed the most.

Q: I take it you were hooked by this time.

COLE: Yes, it's true. You know, my first couple of weeks I wondered what a nice girl from Brooklyn like me was doing in a place like this. But yes, I certainly came to enjoy it and I also came to appreciate the fact that for the rest of my career, whenever somebody

had a really bad idea about what I should do I could always say, you know, I spent three years in Bangladesh. And they'd dismount and walk away.

Q: Yes, I did this the same way. You know, when I was in Vietnam, you know, I used that ploy quite often.

COLE: Yes, so you know, there's a lot of people out there who have dues to pay; I'm not one of them. Go bother them. Yes, it works, it's good.

Q: Well then, what, in '83 you left?

COLE: '84.

Q: '84. Whither?

COLE: Venezuela, because I had Spanish. My ambassador, Jane Able Coon, asked me if I wanted to go to China. And I said, no, I don't. I want to go to South America.

Q: So you went to, where? Do we only have one post in Venezuela?

COLE: Actually we had, at that point, two. We had Caracas and Maracaibo. I went to Caracas, to the capital city, as the exchanges officer, a position which at that time was pretty good. Now they've downgraded all the exchanges officers enormously, but at that time Venezuela did not have its own Fulbright commission. So you had to do that work yourself, which is a model we should follow. Venezuela being one of our main sources of petroleum, we had a lot of grants under the international visitor program. Then there were other miscellaneous exchanges like the citizen exchange program. There was another officer who did speakers.

Q: Well, you were in Venezuela from when to when?

COLE: I guess it was '84 to '87. Three years.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

COLE: It was Ambassador George Landau, who didn't like female officers very much. We were okay when we were fairly junior.

Q: Yes, sort of cute young things.

COLE: Yes, and whenever I had to go see him I always dressed a certain way.

Q: Well, we'll come to that later on. Who was the PAO?

COLE: Our excellent PAO, Marilyn McAfee, who eventually became an ambassador.

Q: '84 to '87, what was happening in Venezuela at that time?

COLE: It was quite an interesting country. Jaime Lusinchi was fairly pro U.S.A. During the periods of political disruption he had gone into exile with his wife and had ended up in the U.S. where they let him practice medicine. They put him to work in some, I'm sure, perfectly awful hospital in the middle of Spanish Harlem but he thought that was wonderful. He was doing medicine. So he always liked us. And the Venezuelans at that time were pretty pro-U.S.A. at all levels. The anti-U.S.A. feeling that the current Venezuelan administration is tapping into surprises me a little.

Q: Well, let's talk about your work there. First, what were the elements of Venezuelan society that you wanted to reach?

COLE: Venezuela was a very different experience. It was difficult. It was much harder to identify whom you wanted to reach because it was a well-educated, highly-literate society with a lot of activity, and a lot of creativity. We kept our eye on the press but there were no identifiable columnists or pundits. Anybody at anytime would pop up with an article.

Q: You didn't have, as the French do, a corps of intellectuals?

COLE: Not much, no. It was very surprising. The Venezuelans had gone in for mass education. So you had a country with a very high literacy rate, a lot of people got to go to the university. It was like the United States. In this country if you were doing the same work, how would you do your targeting? So we watched the newspapers and who read what newspapers. I spent an enormous amount of time at the universities because I was running the Fulbright program; we had no Fulbright commission. I targeted faculties. Again, I found political science to be more modern less hidebound than others. I found study of the United States very well incorporated into the teaching of English. I did a study of high school textbooks with my FSN. Marilyn McAfee was wonderful; she hired an extra FSN for me whose job was to study what was going on in high school education. So I talked to some people back in Washington, friends who'd served in Scandinavia where there were some of the same issues. How do you figure out where to aim? And they were not aiming at the university; it was taking care of itself. They aimed at high school education, secondary education. In Venezuela's very centralized system just a couple of textbooks were used. We went through the history books to try to find what they were teaching about the U.S. And then we went through the English language materials to see what they were saying about the U.S. I tried to write this all up so the next person wouldn't have to repeat it. We pursued programs very aggressively for sending teacher trainers to the U.S. And we focused a lot on teacher training institutions. But I have to tell you, it was really quite a challenge. One of the things that I did there that I was proudest of, again, this was with Miss McAfee's leadership, was to design our own international visitor program.

We designed our own IV group project when these were very new. We would take a group of eight and combine members of the Venezuelan military, with which at that time

we had good relations with some politicians or party intellectuals, or university professors or journalists. For awhile those were wildly successful. Venezuelans appreciated them as a way of getting to know each other which they had not done in the past because the military was totally segregated. And so they went off to the U.S. to take a look at grassroots democracy, something Venezuela did not have.

Q: Can you give an example of what this disparate group would see and do?

COLE: Venezuelans, as I say, didn't have any grassroots democracy. They voted for a party with a slate of candidates. So your representative didn't come from your neighborhood or your state and you didn't select him. You just voted for the party which got a certain percentage of the vote and then selected a certain number of people to be sit in the legislature. They would have to consider peoples' preferences but basically you weren't casting your vote for a candidate; you were casting it for ideology, for a party. As Venezuelans got better and better educated they got less and less satisfied with this, and were more and more interested in having more control over selecting their representatives. The idea of splitting a ticket was becoming more acceptable to them. The idea of having local self government became more and more appealing. So, we would have them look at city government, state legislatures, political campaigns, how people get elected, how do local elections work. The League of Women Voters always had a nice program.

There was always a briefing at the Pentagon and people loved that because just walking through the Pentagon was exciting. I talked to a political scientist who said he'd studied it all his career but to actually be in it and see the size of it was remarkable. They'd get a very good military briefer who would talk to them about U.S. military policy. We would brief them on how we managed our military. Their soldiers, unlike ours, can't vote. Venezuelans had no absentee ballot arrangements; they were intrigued by that. Because they were influential people, we had them received by the deputy assistant secretary (DAS) for South America who, with others on his staff, would discuss political, economic, and trade issues with them.

Sending military officers was something new and when I was in Bangladesh I had actually sent a military officer in a civilian capacity and all hell had broken loose. It had taken my PAO a stack of cables to get this cleared because I hadn't known any better. The military always wanted to know what to wear. And I said, you can pack your uniforms but you can't wear them for much of the program. You can wear them when you go to the Pentagon and Fort Leavenworth but not in-between. So I got copies of magazines like Esquire or Gentlemen's Quarterly, and we'd look at clothes.

Q: Obviously we're selling the United States but what you're saying is, look, we've got a great system here. Implicitly, why don't you change your system? I mean, this gets tricky.

COLE: And you can only do it well if people have approached you and said at some point we're going to have to change our system and we'd like to see yours; we'd like to see the Canadians, we'd like to see how they handle this in different countries because

Venezuelans are becoming well enough traveled to realize that their system is for children. It was probably okay at one point but it was no longer alright. So, they wanted to know, and you have to find something that will interest and hold them and will not seem patronizing.

Q: Speaking about universities, I've never served in Latin America but I have the feeling that these universities more than anywhere else are citadels of Marxism and whatever it is, but you they're sort of no go areas.

COLE: No, no, no, no. You just have to know how to do it. In Venezuela the older generation were the doctrinaire Marxists. Ah, but youth, their purpose in the world is to make their parents crazy. And what was the best way to do that? Become a supply side economist. So we were very interested in speaking to them. We made friends with the vice chancellor, who was a Marxist but we established a personal relationship with him, personalismo (in Latin America, the practice of glorifying a single leader, with the resulting subordination of the interests of political parties and ideologies and of constitutional government is very important). And he actually gave me a grant from the university to fund a group of student leaders to go to the United States. He was just getting tired of people rioting in the halls and disturbing classes and whatnot. So we sent this group of young people off to the U.S. and they had a ball. And they came back perfectly armed to drive their parents crazy. And we did a couple of those. I remember my PAO just being tickled to bits because she got this money from the university to pay for part of it.

Q: The political scientists in the United States have gone over the edge trying to turn the subject into a science looking for formulae and trying to reduce everything to figures.

COLE: At that time that was happening in the economics department, but not in political science. And he was anti-Marxist because that ideology didn't determine how you did your equations which was still more of a study of systems. In economics they were moving on to using equations and very much changing the way in which they thought about economics. We did get a speaker from George Mason University, but he wasn't terribly good, and then we got a Fulbrighter, who was one of the new economists, and he was quite good. So we got him to a university where he could spread his poison.

Q: Were there any events that particularly influenced you during this period?

COLE: Well, I was still at the point of gaining skills and I think, Venezuela is really where I learned how to read a newspaper.

Q: You mean how to extract things quickly?

COLE: Yes, because I was following educational issues and that was important.

Q: How about other countries? I assume the French were pretty strong there, weren't they?

COLE: It was more the British Council; teaching English was kind of a business. Our bi-national centers were aiming at the masses, whereas the British Council was kind of the Cadillac of the system. But I used to spend a lot of time talking with the British because we didn't want to trip over each other. We did that only once. When they closed down their school in Maracaibo, they donated their equipment to a private English teaching institution. I said, you should have given the equipment to the international school instead of generating competition for us.

Q: Looking at Venezuela today, there is Chavez, who is pretty much anti-U.S., and he has appealed to really the lower social order. Were we looking at that group, were they reachable or not?

COLE: I don't think that we were. I was in Venezuela at a time of relative social peace. Jaime Lusinchi was a very popular president. He was born out-of-wedlock. He was devoted to his mother, an Italian immigrant, and people admired that. He was a nice, pleasant fat man who looked like Santa Claus, and he was like Clinton in terms of his common touch. He was also like Clinton in terms of his love life but in Venezuela, a man who didn't have a mistress probably wouldn't have been trusted. The drama between his wife and his mistress kept everybody entertained. His wife, poor lady, was no doubt suffering terribly. It seemed to me that everyone in most social classes was relatively content at that time. The country was prospering. They'd been through a bad downturn and now they were turning up again. It was fairly optimistic. The reformers thought they could change the political system; this was why they were going off to the U.S. to look at things. El Presidente (The President) was popular, accessible; in his own way quite a man.

I remember Venezuela's national day was July 5 and I remember him at our Fourth of July party, linking arms and drinking with our ambassador. He stayed and stayed and of course, none of us could leave while the President, and the Venezuelans weren't leaving. It was getting to be 3:00 a.m. and this man who would have to be very active the next day was still swilling the ambassador's champagne. He downed copious amounts of liquor and he danced and he hugged and he kissed and he schmoozed but next day he was perfectly fine. He went through the entire Fifth of July celebrations, did it all again.

It was a time of moderate economic stability, social stability, optimism and a fairly popular national leader. So, I don't think that we were reaching out to the lower social orders. We were focused on the gatekeepers. And I think our focus on secondary school education was pretty good. And just as I was leaving I got involved with vocational education but I didn't get very far with that; I had to leave that for the next person. But no, the outreach that has come in recently to a broader, deeper, younger, population to the degree that we've continued it, was something of a revolution.

Q: Did Venezuelans look to the United States as opposed to Europe?

COLE: Yes, there's no doubt about that, although they also look to Europe. They had a huge scholarship program, the Fundacion Gran Mariscal Ayacucho, when all the money was rolling in from oil. And this had sent hundreds of young students to the United States to get degrees. The fund had offices in New York and in Venezuela, and all over. It was credited with quelling the student rebellion movement because everybody was off in the U.S. where you pay attention and divide your time between having fun and going to class. There hasn't been a sustained student political movement of the kind they have in South America. Even though an economic downturn stopped the program while I was there, a lot of young people in entry level positions and mid-level positions who had been to the U.S. to be educated and were very pro-American. They, of course, were amongst the classes of people that Chavez attacked.

Q: How about Maracaibo?

COLE: I was in charge of the link between Caracas and Maracaibo. At that point we had an American officer there who was the head of the bi-national center. A big problem was created by a law requiring the heads of all educational institutions to be Venezuelan. So we got some help from an eminent Venezuelan educator whom I found, and he advised us to split your English teaching from your bi-national center. It can be physically located there, but find somebody to head it who's a Venezuelan, perhaps an American woman married to a Venezuelan. And that's what we did.

Q: So, 1987 you're off, you came back to the States.

COLE: I came back to the U.S. for a posting as a desk officer thanks to Marilyn McAfee's assistance. She was the PAO in Chile and she wanted somebody on the Andean desk, which then included Chile, who would understand her needs.

Q: Okay, today is the 27th of October, 2004. Janey, you were back in Washington from '87 to when?

COLE: 1987 to 1990.

Q: So about a three year tour.

COLE: Two years of it was on the Andean desk in the office of what was American Republics (AR). For one year I had a fellowship to work on the Hill.

Q: Okay, well let's talk about when you were in AR doing Andean affairs. What did that include?

COLE: Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia and Venezuela at the time.

Q: What sort of work were you doing?

COLE: At that time, and I think probably still today, desk officers were kind of a bridge between policy and the field. We fed in reactions, ideas, and developments from the field into the Washington machine, and we passed to our posts what policy was and what needed to be done. You also spend a fair amount of time troubleshooting. You get a furious call from somebody in the IV department who wants to know why the international visitors from one of your countries are so awful. And so you say, no, don't send a cable, don't write a memo. Let me call and talk to the CAO (Cultural Affairs Officer) or the PAO (Public Affairs Officer). And you do.

You also spend a lot of time passing out scarce resources: international visitor grants, private sector grants, Fulbright grants, speakers, world nets. Sure there are more people that want these resources than can have them because of limits on money, staff, and hours in the day; you spend a lot of time negotiating with your fellow desk officers and then with the cultural coordinator – Lynn Seavern in my day – to work out who is going to get what and why. And then you spend a lot of time talking to the boss (in my case the area director at that time was Jeff Dietrich and the deputy was Carl Howard), and getting their interpretation of priorities from higher up and translating them into the kinds of actions that will look good, that will fulfill the requirements.

Q: Well, you were there, you were more or less at the end of the Charlie Wick era, weren't you?

COLE: I entered the Foreign Service in 1981, just as Reagan was coming in and Charlie Wick, therefore, was also coming in. I came back towards the tail end of the Wick administration. I have to say that as unpleasant a person as he was, in some respects he really did make a change for the better.

Q: Well, for one thing he had ideas and some of them weren't bad at all.

COLE: No. Quite right.

Q: And he also was able to get money. You know, sometimes when somebody's been there for almost eight years their interests, their power and everything else begins to run down. Was there a feeling of waning of interest or was he still keeping up the pressure?

COLE: Maybe the pace of the ideas slowed, because I think he had already managed to achieve most of what he wanted. But, I don't think that his energy or his interest ever slackened. I think he got smacked a few times by Congress and learned that there were some things that he needed to back off on. For example, we were finally able to do some WorldNets with Walter Cronkite, who was supposed to have been on his blacklist. And I think he also learned that certain management techniques, which are entirely legitimate in the private sector, cause a lot of heartburn in government. You know, such as tape recording his conversations with people. I believed his explanation that he did it so that he would remember what the action items were so that his secretary could type them up. But, of course, it upset people enormously in Washington.

Q: Well, as a matter of fact, I've talked to people who were staff aides to the secretary of state and his immediate deputies and they usually have a rather junior officer listen in on calls and make notes to record what needs to be done. This was very much a practice and, in theory, not a bad practice one because decisions are made on the telephone but you don't remember what they are.

COLE: Because another call comes in, someone else walks into your office, somebody calls you up and hollers about something and it goes by the by.

Q: Well, were there any particular issues dealing with your Andean parish?

COLE: Chile, at that point was always the big issue because the Reagan administration wanted to take a stand; show that they were against dictatorships. So Chile was their exhibit where they could line up with the liberals on the Pinochet regime and demonstrate support for democracy. This got a fair amount of attention and I attended a number of conferences and meetings where I explained this to the assembled liberals. And it worked very well because that got us lots of funds to support activities for Chile.

Drugs are always an issue and it's always a code word for Colombia. Drugs overwhelmed everything else in our relationship with Colombia and that was very bad because, obviously, not everybody in Colombia is a drug dealer. And there were a lot of people who wanted to talk to us about something else besides drugs. That pitted the State Department against DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration). And we were fortunate finally in getting a good ambassador down there (I can't remember his name) who understood that if you wanted to address drug issues you had to talk to people about other things, keep the channels of communication open.

Also, the other issue was Roundup, a type of defoliant chemical related to Agent Orange. DEA wanted very much to use it, you know, to drop it over the fields of coca plants and destroy them. I thought that for a number of reasons this was a very bad idea (eventually, the company that made Roundup refused to sell it to the government). When I came back to my last assignment after many years away from Western Hemisphere affairs and after years in South Asia, we were spraying Roundup and exactly the issues that we thought were going to arise were arising.

Q: How about visitor grants of various kinds? Was that a smooth working program at your time?

COLE: It was excellent. It was very, very good.

Q: Were we able to go across the political spectrum or did we have holds in people who were too far to the left?

COLE: I think that there were holds on people. Later, in 1989 to 1990, when I was on loan to the Congress and was a staffer in a senator's office, the Moscow embassy tried to

send a group of right wingers and some of these people were anti-Semites. In many ways it was a very good choice but it really raised hell on the Hill.

Q: This was the Zhirinovsky group, I think, who were quite important within the Russian political scheme.

COLE: Yes, they were. It probably would have been good to send them to the U.S. On the other hand, that was not necessarily how the Hill saw it.

Q: Did you have any connection with Charlie Wick or was he too far up?

COLE: No, much too far up. I was in Venezuela when he visited there but my job was somewhat removed from his interests. I was instructed to keep our Fulbrighters out of his way. Although we invited them to the reception it was with strict orders not to talk to him. Or if he asked, talk about your family. And most of them thought it was very funny but they all did what I asked because I told them if they didn't I would be in trouble.

Q: What was the issue? He just didn't like to talk to them?

COLE: Well, I think he thought that a lot of college professors were lefty anti-Reaganites and were not really supportive of U.S. foreign policy. And he was quite right, you know. However, this is a Congressionally mandated program that we are charged to carry out. One of the hardest things in the course of my career has been to explain that this is not our program. A good officer treats it as if it were and attempts to make it so but in truth this is the U.S. Senate's program and they give us the money to run it for them. So they intervene if they don't like the way we're running it. You can find yourself in a lot more trouble than it's worth to get cross with your Fulbrighters. But of course you do try to make policy implications clear to them and you do try to help them be effective and not get into trouble with the embassy.

Q: Did any embassies give you any particular problems? Or PAOs?

COLE: One doesn't like them all equally, I must say. But on the whole they were pretty good and pretty effective, I thought. We had good PAOs; I don't have any horror stories.

Q: Were you hit hard by our policy in Central America? El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras were all bubbling over at the time with the contras and the Sandinistas and the death squads.

COLE: Yes. All those nice leftists in the Andean republics were on the side of the rebellious leftist forces. But there were also significant groups of people, influential people in the Andean countries I was working with who were not on their side who didn't think they were going to win, who didn't think they were right, and who regretted the damage that they were doing. At that point we had a lot of good friends in Venezuela who were perfectly happy to provide asylum for people from Central America but who basically were very critical of leftist movements. And the Colombians, being plagued by

some very nasty leftists, were not always sympathetic to the various leftist movements in Central America, nor were the Peruvians, who had one of the nastier ones.

Q: Shining Path.

COLE: Yes, Sendero Luminoso was pretty mean and a lot of people who were themselves leftist were very disconcerted by Sendero and also, they were busy with their own concerns and their own political problems. So I was surprised. It was there, it was an issue we had to address. We were denounced; we saw the headlines; but it was not as virulent as I might have expected it to be.

Q: Well then, in '88, you moved over to Congress?

COLE: Yes, '89 to '90. I was there under a program administered by the American Political Science Association; in which you stayed on salary with USIA (United States Information Agency). First you attended a little mini-program at Johns Hopkins that got you up and running, brought you up to date on how a bill becomes a law in reality, not what we learned in sixth grade. And then you went out and had to find somebody to hire you.

Q: How did you go about looking? Did you have anything in mind?

COLE: We were advised to look for someplace where there was a connection. So I tried the Hawaiian senators, but they weren't interested. Then, since I came from New York, I shopped around with the New York/New Jersey senators, mainly focusing on Democrats and ended up with Senator Lautenberg. This was in his first term. That was fine. I never changed to the House; I stayed with the Senate.

Q: Senator Lautenberg was the senator from where?

COLE: At that point he was the junior senator from New Jersey; the senior senator was Bill Bradley.

Q: What were you doing?

COLE: Well, being a Congressional staffer is all about getting legislation through and it took me awhile to understand the process. Initially I was just learning the ropes, which meant I was meeting with various pressure groups from New Jersey and writing up the pros and cons of their proposals. This was at a time when Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were moving out from under the Soviet Union and there were a lot of people in New Jersey who belonged to these ethnic groups. So I spent a lot of time on the phone with them and a lot of time writing up what they were saying. My high point was when the foreign minister of one of these countries, a woman, came to Washington and testified. I was treated as the expert, having been dealing with these obscure ethnic groups and told to write the Senator's questions. And I got to sit right behind him with my briefing book on my lap and I was on television. My mother was very proud.

Also, I tried to educate my colleagues over there about how the State Department worked and where they could go for information. Because most of them were in the habit of calling desk officers or when there was a crisis they'd call the information center. But I said, why don't you learn how to use INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research) and talk to people who are really knowledgeable.

Q: How did you find Senator Lautenberg as both a politician and as a person?

COLE: He was an excellent manager and I really felt lucky to be working for him. An awful lot of the senators were not particularly good managers. They had no management experience; they were lawyers or they were politicians; they ran campaigns. But he had been the person who had brought to us computerized payrolls. That's how he made his millions, and he actually knew how to run a company. So he was very good to work for, very clear. His own staff thought that sometimes it was too bad he was a little less interested in the Senate because of course, that was their whole lives. But, I think he had a grasp of the fact that most of the things that happen in America don't happen because of something a politician does or says; they happen out in society, in the economy, in the culture, the universities, the newspapers; they happen in other places. So, he was pretty calm about the whole thing. It was nice to represent him to business people. They'd all tell me, we'd much rather talk to Lautenberg's office than to Bradley's office, because Bradley's people were interested in making their senator president of the United States. They were not interested in talking to the Glassmakers Union, or some little businessman who was interested in getting in on the ground floor in Poland.

Q: Well then, how did this experience play in your later career?

COLE: Oh, it was wonderful. My next posting was three years in Nepal, right after the movement for democracy and the re-establishment of parliament and political parties. I was there for the promulgation of the constitution, the setting up of the parliamentary system. It was amazing how much more I knew than a lot of the other people there about how our government worked. Our ambassador was Julia Chang Bloch, who was very political. She started out as a Peace Corp volunteer and then had gone on to work for Senator Percy. The thing that she said she was most proud of in her government service was the passage of the bill that required that whenever we spent money on development, we had to evaluate the impact this would have on women.

Q: When were you there?

COLE: 1990 to 1993.

Q: What was your job?

COLE: I was the PAO, and the ambassador's counselor for public affairs. (That was kind of a reward for being effective on that international visitor from Russia.) At that time in USIS there was a PAO, an APAO (Assistant Public Affairs Officer) and an executive

secretary and a sizeable number of FSNs (Foreign Service Nationals). I always said "après moi le deluge" (after me the deluge) because it was really severely cut after I left.

Q: Well, what was the situation in Nepal when you arrived in 1990?

COLE: Hopeful. They were trying to get the parliament up and running, getting political parties organized, dealing with a lot of underpinnings in a country that went from say the 14th century into about the 18th century in a couple of weeks. If you could dial back in a time machine it would be a lot like being with our founding fathers, at the end of the 18th century as they wrestled with the divine right of kings – deciding who would vote and how, how you would set up your congress, what would your institutions be like? They weren't starting from scratch, they had some models of their own. But creating national institutions and making them work was quite a challenge. And, that's about where the Nepalese were. They had some models from earlier periods of their history; they had conducted elections before but they were looking around for models; they were trying to make it work.

Q: Well then, what was it you were doing there? What defined your major activities?

COLE: PAOs always have to keep the ambassador informed about what's in the newspaper and I had to spend some time doing that but mainly I spent my time supporting democracy. The ambassador made USAID give us some money so we could support more IV grantees. So I had to negotiate that through, and then design the IV projects and help select the participants, get them oriented and on their way.

Q: I would think that if Nepal is moving towards democracy there would be tremendous pressure from the Indian government, say, look at us, don't look at those other people.

COLE: Well, I don't think the Indian government had to exert much pressure because indeed, that was what would naturally happen. The leading opposition, the leading party in support of democracy in Nepal was called the Congress Party. The role of India in Nepalese democracy was well acknowledged. But, it's also true that India is the local great power and everybody hates the local great power, so the Indians were wildly unpopular in Nepal. Nevertheless, their influence was enormous.

Q: Well, was there interest in American as opposed to, say, the British type of democracy?

COLE: The new leadership was looking in all directions. They were very impressed with the Japanese model because the Japanese had an emperor and they saw parallels with their king and in the way Japanese society worked. They spent some time in Norway looking at their hereditary monarchy. But, if there was any system that they would know beyond the Indian it was the British, so they were very interested in the British system. I had a lot of trouble with my colleagues in AID and I spent a lot of time saying that whether they adopt our political modalities is not the issue. What they have to understand is how our government works so that their expectations of us are reasonable and their

understanding of how we make policies that affect them, is based on reality, not on some sort of mythic image of the West. I said that's my number one priority. If they also learn how to set up and run a congressional committee system, all the better. And of course AID didn't see it that way. They were interested in practical outcomes. So we had to craft and compromise and negotiate.

Q: Nepal has had this sort of Maoist group going. Was there much in that line when you lived there?

COLE: They were there but at that point they were in the government. And there was a Marxist-Leninist party that was very much inside the government. So it was a period of relative peace, but there was always tension over whether we would work with those people or not. I thought we should work with them and others thought we shouldn't.

Q: Did you have much contact with them?

COLE: The embassy was not happy but we had a little contact with them. We brought in a Senate staffer to talk to MPs. The speaker of the house and I had to work out a system where he invited the Maoists and I could go to the ambassador and say, I couldn't stop him? But I think she understood perfectly what game was afoot. So we did bring them in that way and I did spend time talking to some of them and to some of the more leftist members of the mainstream Marxist-Leninist party.

Q: Did they have much feel for the United States?

COLE: No, no they didn't. The people who rose to leadership positions in the new democracy had either been in exile, usually in India, or underground, or in jail for any number of years. And what they knew about the outside world was really somewhat limited. They knew about India and they had an awareness of China and of Britain; if they knew any democracy it was Britain. But no, we were a surprise to them.

Q: How would you describe the royal family, their role, and our contacts with them?

COLE: That was handled mainly by the ambassador so I never met the king, the queen or the crown prince. The princess royal was accessible but I never met her. Those I met were sort of secondary royals like my next door neighbors, who rented me my house. Once a year they'd come for a Christmas party and once a year I'd go to their house. I didn't get to meet various rebellious members of the royal family who were leading human rights movements or some of the Rana families who were smart and active.

Q: How about the crown prince who went out and killed everybody?

COLE: Yes, wasn't that terrible? No, I had never met him although I had a good friend who was a Rana and the most senior woman in the civil service as the permanent undersecretary of the supreme court. She knew him, but I don't think anybody foresaw what was coming. I also met the young woman he wanted to marry and understood who

she was and who her family was and why he would want to marry her; she was lovely. And I was very surprised to learn of the queen mother's opposition to this match. So no, his behavior came as quite a surprise to me.

Q: Would Rana, what was that?

COLE: They were the hereditary ministers of Nepal in the period when for many generations the king was sort of a captive inside his palace while the country was run by the Rana family. But, of course, the Ranas had all married into the royal family because they were of the same caste so it was very hard sometimes to sort them out.

Q: What was the human rights situation when you were there?

COLE: Oh, it was certainly improving and I thought actually it was fairly good, all things considered. When Tom Korologos, the Republican lobbyist visited us, the ambassador and I went with him, a Nepalese journalist, and the speaker of the house, on a helicopter trip up to the high country in the winter to watch the yaks being herded down and visit a Sherpa village. As we flew, the speaker of the house looked down and said, that's where I was in prison. And he pointed to a little village in the foothills of a really high mountain. He told us this story and in a way it was a symbol of how bad things had been. He said he had been a worker for democracy and was told to resist being arrested. He said some five or six really big guys came down and grabbed him on the front steps of the courthouse – he was a lawyer – and hauled him just like he was a load of laundry into the paddy wagon and pitched him in the back and closed the door. And he thought, oh my God, this is it. I'm going to disappear. They drove for what seemed to him to be days (probably actually 24 miserable hours) and then they dumped him like a load of laundry in this really remote prison. Initially he had no way to tell his family where he was; he was scared to death they were going to come for him some night. But eventually he made friends with the warden who was not a stupid man and figured things might change and got word out to his family where he was.

He was so high up his heart was pounding, and it was very cold. He had a little money in his pocket that he used to buy a knitted cap from a local woman. He put it on, he said, immediately his head was warm; it was the first time he was warm. He said it was the first time he felt safe or decent or comfortable in the whole experience was when he paid her five rupees and she left ecstatic to have this money and he got this wonderful hand knit hat he was wearing when we took this ride. So the human rights situation had been very, very, very bad.

Q: How about the role of women when you were there?

COLE: Nepal at that time was still governed by the code of Manu, the traditional Hindu code which was very, very hard on women. But, we were seeing more and more women politicians and the ambassador did special outreach to them and we did everything we could to be supportive of their situations as well as women academics and other women.

Q: Were the Gurkha a force?

COLE: The royal family were from the Gurkha nobility. I was always surprised that the Gurkha were not much of a force but maybe that was because we knew less about what went on in rural areas where a lot of them settled when they retired.

Q: How effective did you find our Peace Corps there?

COLE: They seemed to be very effective. I traveled with the ambassador a bit because I was her spokesperson and I used to joke and say it was because she could send me into the ladies room to check on the toilet paper. We did visit several of the Peace Corps sites. In terms of their relationships with people, my guess is that they were very happy. But they were less happy with their professional achievements. The educational system, although improving was still very bad and people didn't work hard and didn't take their job seriously and this was hard for Americans.

Q: A public affairs officer always has to deal with the media. What was the media like?

COLE: They were typical of the Third World, where you became a journalist so you could express your opinions not so that you could report the truth. So the media was very opinionated and very personalized. I spent a lot of time saying to journalists: in our country you put your opinions on the editorial page; you separate what's news from what's opinion. I was concerned for accuracy, and I spent a lot of time talking to the men who ran the Marxist Leninist party newspapers saying, you know, this is not helping things. Do you believe what's written down here? And they'd squirm and they'd say, well, it does seem sort of farfetched, doesn't it. And I said, well, does it help things? Does it promote democracy? Does it promote good international understanding? Does it help to solve the problem that you're writing about? So, we would spend a lot of time on this. But how helpful it was I can't say.

Q: What about TV? Was it all Indian, or did they get TV from anywhere else?

COLE: Everybody loved watching TV. They had a Nepalese television studio that was run by one of the competent Ranas. When they were good they were really good; you can see how they ran the country for so long. And they showed a fair mixture of things including American soap operas.

I used to be invited over for dinner and to watch television at people's houses. I used to say, this describes your families; it's not accurate on ours. All of these illegitimate children and multiple marriages and scandals, I said, sounds like some of your nobility, not like us.

Q: Was the nobility the jet set type?

COLE: No. There were a few people like that but for the most part no.

Q: What about Americans? Did you have a problem with both ends of the spectrum? From the hippies at one end of the spectrum coming overnight to get drugs, and at the other end the wealthy mountaineer types who are used to getting their own way.

COLE: There were no hippies or very few when I got there in the 1990s. Freak Street was a thing of the past and those people were gone. It was mainly backpackers and trekkers and every climbing season we would get the mountaineering groups. There were always parties for them and you always went because you knew some of them weren't going to come back; the mountain would take them. But since I wasn't doing consular work I didn't have trouble or didn't encounter these people much or have trouble with them. Our consular officers used to have to go and try and find the bodies, but I didn't have to deal with any of that.

Q: Did you get any high level or medium level visits from Washington?

COLE: Oh, yes. Sichan Siv, who was the deputy assistant secretary, came. He was an Asian American; he knew the ambassador. Oh, there were others too. Korologos came as did former Senator Percy.

Q: How did you find Ambassador Bloch? How effective was she and how did she operate?

COLE: She was excellent. She understood politics. The chief justification for political appointees is that they can do politics. She understood politics and politicians and she could sit down at a breakfast with some group of what I thought of as particularly slimy politicians and I'd be there to pass the coffee. She'd have them passionately engaged in explaining what their strategies were. That was a great plus; it gave us great insights into what was going on. It would be nice to think that there are people there who are that skillful now.

I was later to see that same thing in India with Ambassador Richard Celeste who had been governor of Ohio and he understood exactly how politics worked.

Q: Well then, you left Nepal in '93. Where'd you go?

COLE: I had to come back to the U.S. then because my mother was very sick; I was very concerned about her condition. So I asked for a home posting, and I was put in charge of the section of the Fulbright program that worked with NEA (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs) from Marrakesh to Bangladesh.

Q: So, we were, essentially tapping into the Islamic world. You were doing that for how long?

COLE: Two years, from 1993 to 1995.

Q: How well was it working? Were you able to get people you felt were the right people?

COLE: Yes. I thought it was working reasonably well. I think we tried a couple of things that didn't work out during that period.

Q: For example?

COLE: Just before I came onboard we had given a grant to the Fulbright Commission in Cairo to manage a large conference to discuss U.S. relations with Islamic countries. It turned out to be too dangerous to do it in Cairo so the conference was held in Germany. Then we learned that a lot of the American scholars were not willing to express any opinions because they didn't want to get in trouble with the host governments whose goodwill they needed in order to conduct their research. If your area of expertise is 17th century Syrian glassware you've got to be able to go there, and if you're on the Syrian government's enemies list that's not going to happen. So the Americans were very hesitant to participate actively and the conference was largely dominated by the Egyptian intellectuals who are very strong and very vocal and sometimes resented by folks from other countries. So my own feeling was that maybe we ought not to do this.

Q: Did you feel that Islamic governments were cutting down on the intellectual dialogue? It really strikes me that even then. in the mid-'90s,there was a hardening of the intellectual arteries within the Islamic world as far as opening to the United States and Western Europe was concerned.

COLE: I think that this hardening of the arteries intellectually had been going on inside Islam for about two to three hundred years. There was also the post-colonial awareness of the newly freed. I spent most of my career in countries that had been colonies fairly recently and it was suddenly clearer to these countries that they could control the flow of information and they could control access to their country by scholars from the U.S. or elsewhere. Getting host country clearance for our Fulbrighters was very, very difficult.

Q: Were our posts striving to do something about that?

COLE: The program was largely owned and operated by Fulbright commissions, in which the presence of U.S. government officers was often limited or weak. I never served on one. Often it was a fairly junior exchanges officer who went to their meetings. Often they were pretty much owned and operated by host country nationals. It was difficult; I spent a lot of time meeting with these folks. It was difficult to understand at times whether our scholars didn't get their clearance because of incompetence or laziness, or whether it was a political decision. Certainly most of the scholars who worked in the key countries in the Middle East believed that the decisions were political. And they were people who spoke the language and knew the culture and had been there before so I accepted what they said. Getting permission to leave or enter the host country was fraught with politics. And you had to step carefully. Getting a Fulbright grant approved through our end of things also had its political aspects.

The oversight organization, the Board of Foreign Scholarships (BFS), was made up of political appointees of Democrats and Republicans. One of the hardest things we had to explain to other people including our embassies is that the program is owned and operated by a higher power and it's necessary to tread carefully. If the ambassador decides he's going to expel some Fulbrighter he doesn't like for joining a Maoist demonstration in front of the embassy, and if that Fulbrighter has good connections with his congressman or his senator, they can make life difficult for that ambassador.

I remember a member of our board of the BFS who was concerned with NEA, a man called Daniel Pipes, who was very pro-Israeli. Occasionally Israelis would roll their eyes and say to me, with friends like this I'm not sure we need enemies. But he was a very skilled and knowledgeable Middle East scholar. Also, he didn't like women's studies; he didn't think that was a real academic field. And so he tried to block a woman from Sri Lanka who was coming to do women's studies. And he didn't think theatre arts were appropriate so he tried to block a U.S. scholar who was doing something in theatre. He had a lot of good ideas, though, and he was sincere, and he was disciplined and hard working. I happened to think he was wrong but that doesn't invalidate his opinion. I had to spend an awful lot of time dealing with kind of the political problems he generated. We had a professor, an African American law professor who was going out to work with the Supreme Court of India and they were interested in two things. They were interested in affirmative action and the issues relating to it and they were interested in judicial education. And this chap had real expertise, but Pipes didn't want to send him out because he said his area of expertise was affirmative action and civil rights legislation.

But there was someone else on the NEA subcommittee who had been an associate of Senator Fulbright and was a friend of Bill (Clinton). I went to him and told him what Dr. Pipes had said. And I said, I take it you don't agree with the professor's objections. He said no. Sp I explained that the nomination would go back to the BFS subcommittee for NEA, and I gave him the names of the members, their phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. (Of course, I had to be perfectly neutral in this.) The professor did go out. It seemed to me that there were ten such cases a year.

Q: After two years you left there?

COLE: Yes.

Q: And then what? This would be, we're talking about '97 or so.

COLE: Yes, thereabouts. Calcutta opened up and it had always been my dream to go to Calcutta.

Q: Why was that?

COLE: When I had served in my first post in Dacca, Calcutta had been this promise land where you could go and buy food, go to the movies, and walk on the street and it was just wonderful. Also, I had studied Bengali and I had liked it very much; it was a language of

my heart, and the idea of going back to where it was spoken was just enormously attractive to me.

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

COLE: From '96 to '99.

Q: Today is the third of November, 2004. What was Calcutta like when you got there in 1996?

COLE: It was a city that had greatly improved since I had seen it in the early 1980s. The supply of electricity was much, much better. The telephones worked a whole lot better. It seemed to me that almost everything had improved. I think it reflected the fact that India was emerging from the Fourth World into the Third and their economy was growing, the country was becoming more confident and competent.

Q: You know, when I hear people talk about Calcutta I always think about the beggars in the street. How was that?

COLE: Not bad. I mean, even in 1981 the popular image of beggars in the streets was not quite accurate. At the birth of Bangladesh in '71 enormous numbers of refugees, thousands, maybe millions had come across the border to Calcutta. These were Hindus who had been driven out by the Pakistani army and were afraid to go back. They were refugees in dire need who overwhelmed the infrastructure in Calcutta, then essentially a 19th century city. It had Dickensonian industries and being there was like being in the middle of a novel by Dickens in many respects. But by the time I got back a lot of those refugees had been absorbed into the fabric of Calcutta.

Q: What was your job?

COLE: I was what we used to call the branch public affairs officer. But our PAOs in New Delhi were more or less freeing us from the constraints of working through the center. So we were able to negotiate our own programs, do our own reporting and be the PAO for a district that included all of Eastern India, millions and millions of people.

Q: Who was the PAO in New Delhi?

COLE: Well, first it was Ashley Wills and then he moved on to be DCM and eventually became our ambassador in Sri Lanka. And then it was Frank Ward, who had been his deputy and then moved up.

Q: Who was the consul general in Calcutta?

COLE: At that time we didn't as of yet report to the consul general. When I arrived it was Bob Boggs. He went on to become, I think, political counselor in Delhi and then DCM in Kathmandu. After him it was Cheryl Simm who is still in the midst of her career.

Q: What were your objectives there?

COLE: A long-term objective for USIA and public diplomacy today, is to make the world safe for capitalism, particularly American capitalism. We did an enormous amount of economic programming attempting to explain, particularly to the Marxist-oriented Bengalis, what capitalism was, what a joint venture was, why it wasn't a big scary thing to have American or foreign partners in a joint venture. For a lot of the other people living in Eastern India you didn't have to do this because they themselves were entrepreneurial. But the Bengalis dominate politically and intellectually so you have to talk with them.

Q: Who were the entrepreneurial-minded people?

COLE: A lot of people who at partition were driven out of Pakistan into Calcutta. There were a lot of Sindhis, Hindus from the Sind in what is today Pakistan who fled for their lives. They tended to be small and medium range traders. Then of course there were the Marwaris; these are people from Rajasthan who back in the British period immigrated into Calcutta and established themselves as the great trading class or clan and they are traders by caste, traders by inclination, by training. Some extremely respected and some extremely disliked.

Q: How did you work with these various groups? Did you find opportunities in the university? Was Marxism influential there?

COLE: I loved working with the university. One of the things that I had learned in Venezuela is that the young always want to exercise their prerogative to make their parents crazy. And if you want to drive your dear old Marxist Leninist professor father bananas, what do you become? A Reaganite economist. So it was wonderful fun to go out and talk directly to students. You'd ask them, why should you have second class things? Why should your only choice for a car be one that was based on a 1940s British model? Because that's what the masters in Delhi have decided should be manufactured. And why should they improve it when there's no competition? And I asked, why are your mothers, continuing to wash stuff by hand when you could have a clothes washer and make it really hygienic. And this appealed to people.

We were also very lucky in that a Bengali intellectual, long settled in the West, named Amartya Sen who won the Nobel prize. And a lot of his work was in social capital.

Q: This was the Nobel prize for economics?

COLE: For economics, yes. Like most good Bengali boys, he came back every winter to see his parents. They lived in Santiniketan, the community established by Rabindranath Tagore, right in the bosom of Bengali culture. And he was a great proponent of the argument that while the state should be interested in generating the infrastructure of economic success, it shouldn't be busy managing the economy.

Q: How did USIS translate this into action?

COLE: We took policy and turned it into programs or actions to explain it and to change people's behavior. One of the things I remember doing was sponsoring an address by Amartya Sen, and then having it transcribed and printed up in the magazine that was published in New Delhi and circulated to some of our contacts. We also staged conferences where we would bring in a variety of experts both from India and from the United States to talk about joint partnerships, what they were, how they worked, the intellectual framework for capitalism. We had professors come through and they sat with the academics at the university and talked about the issues related to being entrepreneurial.

Q: Well, I would think that you would have run into strong opposition from the entrenched faculty of the universities.

COLE: That was not necessarily the case. Bengalis all have ironclad beautiful manners; they're a real credit to their families. And they are interested in ideas, truly, deeply, profoundly, bred in the bone; they want to know. Moreover, even ideologues, could look around and see that things were changing, that it was no longer the Congress Party in Delhi giving out licenses to their pets to manufacture whatever product they wanted; it was changing. Their view had been that whatever Bengalis think today the rest of India thinks tomorrow. But they found it was the opposite, and they were interested in catching up intellectually, no matter what they had thought or felt, they wanted to address the issues.

Q: By the time you'd reached there had India made adjustments? Gotten away from protectionism and the idea that everything had to be done by the Indians themselves?

COLE: What they called Nehruvian socialism very much reflected Gandhi's principles, and was very much a post-colonial fixation. But, I got to India 50 years after that and members of the generation coming up just weren't interested, they didn't have to fight that battle anymore.

Q: But had the political powers in New Delhi changed the rules?

COLE: Yes, they had. Back when I was serving in Nepal they had had a terrible gold crisis and they had had to change the rules right then and there. And slowly but surely they were opening up. The symbolic way of talking about this is Coca-Cola. At one point Coca-Cola was well-established in India. It's a ready market when you think about people buying affordable luxuries like a cold Coke. But then they were kicked out because they refused to give the government of India their formula; at least that was the ostensible reason. When I was in Calcutta they were back in and it was very nice to be able to cite the example because everyone said, our local Colas are going to be run off the market. But that didn't happen. Coca-Cola was smart and they bought up some of these

and kept on producing them. So the camel's nose was under the tent and the Indian economy was beginning to open up.

Q: Could you use American entrepreneurs, the Coca-Cola executives and others, as part of your program?

COLE: Yes. There were some people introducing a good American mattress, making it someplace down in the south of India and I got one of their executives to come on down and talk about how if you get an American company in your neighborhood, it will make a contribution to the local dancing school and the music academy and hire people. But there wasn't much of that. American businesspeople are interested in business, not in going about giving talks. So occasionally we could get somebody, but it wasn't so easy.

Q: How about the Department of Commerce? Were they a partner of yours or not?

COLE: We had a little Department of Commerce office run by FSNs in Calcutta and that was about it. But we did work closely with them and we did consult back and forth with them and they would often send people to us. The Department of Commerce's business is to sell U.S. products; it's not to help host country nationals market their products in the U.S. So whenever somebody wandered into their little library and said, I make industrial gloves and I want to know how I can find a distributor in the U.S., they would say, go to USIS, see Ms. Cole. And we'd get on the Internet and find a distributor in the U.S. for industrial gloves. This distributor mainly didn't sell them in the U.S. but to other countries where they were a very viable product.

Q: You mentioned the Internet. Had the Internet become a real tool by the time you arrived there or while you were there?

COLE: Yes, there were some wonderful entrepreneurial people in Calcutta working on the Internet, including one Bengali. We had access in our library and it was one of the reasons why we got large contributions from Indian firms doing business in Calcutta. They found our access to the Internet and our researchers useful. They also liked to present themselves as patrons of culture, and we put up plaques behind the library check-out desk with the names of these great business firms on them. The fact that they made significant donations helped us save the library when others were being closed.

Q: With Bengalis taking their culture very seriously, were you able to provide them with examples of American culture?

COLE: This was the last gasp of cultural programs for a long, long time. We had pretty much stopped doing them. The last big exhibit we had was of the works of an African America artist, Lawrence Jacob. The West Bengal government's minister of culture came, the first time he had ever been in a USIS or U.S. government facility. He happened to take an interest in African American art and he had an uncle who had been a translated Langston Hughes. Our most successful program was Ambassador Wisner's idea to bring the Paul Taylor Dance Company to India during the celebration of its 50th anniversary.

He raised almost all the money from, or had us raise almost all the money, from private sector U.S. companies. Since there weren't any in Calcutta, I raised our share from Indian companies.

Q: Did you find Indians had much rapport with African Americans?

COLE: Yes, there was a great deal of romanticization of the African American experience. We sent a lot of Fulbright students to Howard University to study African American literature and we did this in Bangladesh also. But, one of my deputies, Terry White, had pointed out that this interest was declining among the younger generation. They were less interested in the literature of victimization and struggle and they wanted something different. So we started to work with Asian American literature.

One of the most interesting cultural events I did there was a seminar on American literature and we also did a WorldNet conversation about African American literature. And as I said, my district, in addition to heavily Bengali also included Bihar, Orissa and what was called the Seven Sisters of the Northeast, which were largely tribal areas. We had somebody talking about, Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou and all my good Hindu participants were shocked at the fact that women were having babies without having fathers. But this lovely tribal woman with a Fulbright PhD got up and said, that exactly describes how my tribe works. And there was this stunned silence. She was standing there, very pretty in her little sari, explaining her tribe's matriarchal, matrilocal institutions. It was great.

Our other important policy emphasis was on disarmament issues. This, of course, was the period of Indian nuclear testing. The Bengalis had always been peaceniks and were always against any country being nuclear including us and themselves. So there were a lot of demonstrations against Indian policy. I was always writing cables and calling up New Delhi and saying, you have to include a little paragraph pointing out that not all Indians were out in the streets clapping their hands and celebrating the nuclear program. That in Bengal there was a huge demonstration against the nuclear policy. At one point I was invited to speak at a conference and the person on the other side was a retired Indian brigadier general and I thought, what can I say? So I said, I can't discuss strategic issues the way my friend the general can and I'm also constrained by the fact that, as a foreign diplomat, I can't be critical of Indian policy; that's not my business, that's your business. But I can tell you about growing up under the shadow of the mushroom-shaped cloud. In New York City in the 1950s, we had dog tags with our blood types on them and at school we had take cover drills, where you would get under your desk or we'd go down to the basement and stand with our hands on the wall. And, of course, we were smart children; we knew that if somebody dropped an atomic bomb on us it would generate a gigantic tsunami that would totally cover Brooklyn. Later on we had speakers come to our student assembly to explain that we didn't have to be afraid, that we had minuteman rockets that would shoot these evil things down because it was felt that our fears were causing us great psychological damage. And so everyone was really quite taken by this tale. And I said, now that India is nuclear, my question to you is, are you having your children take cover drills? Do your children know their blood types? And then I went into some

statistics provided by an academic, Steven Cohen who had done research on this, to point out that if there is a nuclear exchange it will probably be in the north of India where the bases are. And everyone went, whew. That would mean total nuclear contamination of the Punjab. Where would the food come from? Millions and millions of people, many of them very sick with radiation poisoning, will flood into the city. Where are your hospitals where people are trained to treat radiation poisoning? This was treated by the press as a very effective counter to the brigadier's presentation, and indeed provided talking points that activists used against this policy.

Q: You mentioned the decline of cultural diplomacy. When did this start happening, why, and what were the effects?

COLE: The principal proponent of the decline was Jesse Helms during the Clinton administration. The main factors were economic. Our budgets were being cut and cut and cultural programs are very expensive. There was also the argument, I think a legitimate one, that in many countries as in Europe and Japan, cultural activities were adequately available on a commercial basis. However, in large parts of the world this was not the case. So we had to become very entrepreneurial spending our own money to hire artists. We discovered there was a whole culture of elite and upper middle class children studying piano in Calcutta. In the tribal areas also were a lot of children in missionary supported schools who were studying piano. So, if we could get a good pianist who was also a good teacher we could do master classes in some remarkable places and talk to people, some of whom were very hard for us to reach otherwise, about something they cared about, which was their children's education. And it was great at opening doors and keeping channels of communication open.

Q: Did you find that the growing spread of international television, CNN but other programs, make things easier or harder for you all?

COLE: There was less of that penetration in Calcutta in my day. There were lots and lots of little TV stations that serviced neighborhoods or districts. We were working with them and you could really make friends forever if you did such things as inviting them to come in with their cameras for a press conference with the ambassador. Ambassador Celeste was great at this and had the politician's genius for remembering people's names. So you could get the U.S. ambassador on a channel that reached a couple of million people who would turn it on because they were flattered by the attention. So, in that respect the spread of TV was good for us.

Q: Did you feel there was particular tough competition from outside? I mean, it always used to be the Soviets but that was way passed by this point.

COLE: Most of the western powers who had had a diplomatic presence in Calcutta had withdrawn. So we were left with the British Council, the Alliance Française, a small Italian presence, and the Goethe Institute, which was very impressive. The Japanese and the Thais had only a diplomatic presence there. We were more inclined to work with these folks than against them. The Russians still had a large presence there and had

apartments in their compound they rented to Indians. We had quite a nice relationship with them and we tried to complement one another in our activities.

Q: How was the Monica Lewinsky scandal received there?

COLE: Indians know very well that their political leaders have their scandals too but it would be unthinkable to dredge those up or dwell on them; it would simply be bad manners. They were both amused and horrified by the fact that we were giving all this attention to this relatively trifling affair. And mainly I was lucky. It was unlike my case in Venezuela where, you know, we had to deal with the fact that the president of the republic had a mistress. I was kind of protected in this but I can remember any number of private conversations in gatherings with Indian women, and they'd want to know what exactly had Clinton done? I found ways to tip toe around this and I remember saying, most of you went to convent schools and were educated by nuns. Weren't you required to read the bible? And they said, oh yes. And I said, well, you know, our president says that it wasn't sex; think about the bible; it was an abomination, not sex. That indeed was our president's defense.

Q: Well, to my mind, you know, I mean, this whole thing, the way I was brought up sex meant one thing. It was heavy petting or- didn't have the abomination but I could have very easily sworn I didn't have sex. It was a very peculiar time in American politics. It was blown way out of proportion.

COLE: Well, so I had to learn to tip toe, as I say, around this. And the ladies, often at the end of the gathering, somebody would suddenly say, an abomination. I know what he did. I said yes, and some of it involved a cigar. And they'd say, "Wait until I tell my husband." Later on at the club I would run into their suited, booted, and felt-hatted, very correct husbands and they'd look at me and chuckle and say, yes, my wife has explained it all to me.

Then India Today, I believe it was, came out with a very frank article which explained exactly what it is that these two people had been doing and that was helpful. And if men ever asked me about it I said, oh, have your wife ask me. I'm just too embarrassed to talk to you about it.

Q: You've talked mostly about Calcutta and the Bengalis, were you able to do much in the tribal areas?

COLE: I managed to get to two tribal areas, Nagaland and Assam, both in northeastern India which, next to Kashmir is the bloodiest place in India. Many of the people there were in unadministered territories in the British era and felt they should not have been incorporated into independent India in 1947. The Nagas particularly with their warrior history had gone into immediate rebellion. However, when I was in Calcutta, a truce was in effect. So I became the first USIS officer since 1968 to go to Nagaland to do programs although my predecessor had visited there with a group of British veterans of the Imphal

campaign and our Consul General had gone in under army escort – not exactly the most appropriate way to visit the university.

Getting into Nagaland required my FSN to get permission from the state capital. We also had to negotiate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get the stamped permission which we had to show at innumerable military road blocks. In the five days we were permitted to stay, I was able to visit the university (which we had not known existed) and revive some much earlier USIS contacts that had been long forgotten.

In Assam, the fighting was not against the Indian government but against the state government or tribe against tribe. Because of the violence we had stopped programming there in 1980. But I was able to get the cooperation of the local tea planters and we were able to put on our first cultural program in many years. It included a cowboy singer who was a great hit.

Q: Well then, in '99, what did you do?

COLE: I had been assigned to go to Islamabad, Pakistan, as the Cultural Affairs Officer. I had already had all my farewell parties in Calcutta. My apartment was scheduled for major renovation. They were redoing each apartment as it emptied out because it had sort of 1950s, '60s wiring and we all knew very well the walls were going to start to smoke from the stuff we were plugging in. I also had one entire wall in my bedroom that was weeping. I was ready to move to Islamabad with my mother, who had Alzheimers, and my cat. The packers had arrived.

And low and behold the Clinton administration lobbed a bunch of Tomahawk missiles at Osama Bin Laden's camp in Afghanistan. Our embassy in Pakistan was drawn down; and the rest of us were frozen in place. After about two months I ended up in New Delhi for another three months where I worked on nuclear disarmament issues. We put on a big conference between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Eventually they started letting people back into Islamabad and permission came for me to go. We couldn't bring our families with us and I said, no, I can't go, my mother has Alzheimer's, what am I going to do with her? They also started cutting CAO positions. Fortunately, the PAO did protect that position and I was able to go to Pakistan.

Q: Well, one last thing on this sort of Calcutta-New Delhi thing. I noticed you kind of rolled your eyes at one point about Ambassador Wisner. Why?

COLE: When he came down to Calcutta he was wonderful. He was like a highly charged naked wire. He had wonderful energy, wonderful creativity. I was very glad that I was somewhat removed from daily contact with him because I think he would have burned. He was a real professional; he had a million ideas. One of these was a big conference in Calcutta on developing the economy in the eastern side of the subcontinent. It was attended by representatives from industry, from Bangladesh, eastern India, Nepal, as well as by U.S. speakers. This was his idea. He's a real extrovert and he was great fun. He was

wonderful with the press and he loved a press feeding frenzy. And my FSN press chief was great at setting these up. So as he was walking out of Ryder's Building, the state capital where he'd been meeting with the top politicians in West Bengal we would get all the press snapping photos and standing on desks and screaming and carrying on and he just thought that was enormously amusing.

Q: Well then, you were in Pakistan from when to when?

COLE: I went over in '99 and was evacuated right after President Clinton visited in 2000.

Q: Well, in this relatively short period what were you doing?

COLE: One of the things I did was reform the IV program. There were two problems similar to those that had existed in India and had been addressed in reforms made by Ann O'Leary which I took as my model. The first problem arose from the fact that all elements of the embassy had a hand in making the nominations and this could result in a good deal of blood on the table. The second was that the nominations were made less with US policy objectives in mind than as rewards for people who had been useful in one way or another. We took the Mission Program Plan (MPP) and broke it down into goals in priority order and asked the participants to select a goal and list their IV nominees under that goal in priority order. We had 30 grants altogether and we were able to use ten of those for the first of each of the participants. This kept the participants happy. However, we did eliminate DEA's (Drug Enforcement Administration) first choice because he had been to the U.S. two years earlier and so selected DEA's second choice. Then we would proceed to start going down, going down the remaining list.

Q: The Clinton visit, how did that work out from your perspective?

COLE: Oh, it worked out wonderfully. But in the end it was a waste. Clinton displayed a great deal of courage, he gave a great speech directly to the Pakistani people explaining, thought not in so many words, that the Cold War was over and that we no longer had to put up with their political nonsense; their military dictatorships, their brutality to one another, their inter-communal violence. That continued good relations would require changes in behavior. The Pakistanis really got it; they understood what he was saying. But, unfortunately the war on terrorism changed all that and now we're back to needing them and have to put up with their political practices.

Q: Who was the ambassador while you were there? What part did he play in public diplomacy?

COLE: That was Ambassador Milam. I felt the front office saw us as wayward children in need of discipline. There was not much understanding of what public diplomacy was and what it could do for us. There was one occasion we wanted to give an IV grant to a member of a Muslim, but not a fundamentalist group but as far as the DCM was concerned this was pandering. But I argued that we didn't have a choice. People like this

are representative of Pakistan and if we don't nominate some of them it will look bad. That was the argument I used that worked. But it required steady ongoing pounding.

Q: Well, did you find Pakistani society was difficult to work with?

COLE: Yes, it was. First of all, you're posted in Islamabad, which is a sort of Brasilia-like invented city. It's a beautiful city, but it is not in South Asia. It isn't until you go 20 minutes away to Pindi that you actually enter South Asia. In Islamabad you're talking to an extremely small group of extremely westernized people. In Karachi and Lahore, to the extent that we still have them there, our people are talking to people with real power and real authority. In Islamabad we were just talking to an extremely small set of political opportunists and military officers. They viewed using guile as necessary for a small country to survive. I don't think I've ever been lied to so much. Indians didn't tell you lies; they were proud of what they'd achieved and they would step up to it. Pakistanis were in a different situation and so they would stick to their guns and tell you that, no, no, no, no, this was an indigenous uprising in Kashmir.

Q: Well, was there anything cultural that you could do in the short time you were there?

COLE: Yes. One program in particular involved an American dance group led by a Korean-American named Dana Tai Soon. His group had a Kennedy Center grant to do a dance based on Alexander the Great. He applied to us for a grant that would take him to the site of Alexander's campaigns. We were ale to fund the trip with support from Air Pakistan, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Religion.

Q: Well, did you have the feeling that, particularly in Pakistan, this very strong fundamentalist force within Islamic society made it almost impenetrable?

COLE: No, nothing is impenetrable, nothing. You can always get a book translation program going and send people a book in Urdu. Everybody likes a book. And everybody especially likes a book when it's followed up by a visit from a young lady of quality. In your community you don't see women other than your wife, but you'd certainly like to get a glimpse of that American girl, you know, and you really like your book, and you may come to the presentation in your party headquarters, or mosques. There's always a pathway; we just have to spend the time and the energy to find it. And we also have to respect the whole concept of keeping the channels of communication open. We're not necessarily promoting a specific program; we're not targeting what we're doing that specifically. We're just finding out who is friendly in this essentially hostile environment. We're finding out who can be seen in public with us. We're letting somebody over there with a child who wants to go to school in the U.S. know who it is they can call We're building bridges that other people may walk across at a later point. That was something that would seem particularly difficult to get across in Pakistan. Of course, people were scared to death and for good reason. It was a very dangerous environment. And there was also an argument that had some validity that public opinion did not matter in Pakistan. And I argued it depends on how you define public. We need to find lots of ways to be seen in public with the Pakistani military that won't embarrass us or that won't imply that

we approve of what they're doing but will keep them friendly, keep them open, let them know who we are, whom they can talk to and who does what over here. But since it wasn't political or economic reporting it didn't seem as worthwhile.

Q: Why were you evacuated?

COLE: I was evacuated because I had became very ill, increasingly so. I returned only briefly to pack out and collect my mother, my cat, and my effects and bring them back to the U.S.

Q: What happened after you returned to the U.S.?

COLE: Well, for a long time while I was undergoing medical treatment they found me a make work job in a personnel office where I was able to do very little. But when I was feeling better one of the things that I did for this office was to staff a promotion panel, the one that took people from FS-2 to FS-1. And that was fascinating because I really got to see how promotion panels worked. Wow.

Q: It's something. I've done this; it's an interesting process but really, it works.

COLE: Yes. Yes, you know, we didn't do too badly in ours. The whole low ranking requirement is, I think unnecessary and counterproductive and produces some falseness. But on the whole we did, I think, alright with ours.

Then I put a bid in and got a posting in WHA/PDA, Western Hemisphere Affairs Public Diplomacy, where I was the policy and program coordinator. I did that for two years and then I retired.

Q: When you say policy and program officer, what do you mean?

COLE: That was a combination that WHA/PDA really liked. It was a combination of the old policy officers who dealt with media and the program officers who negotiated with the offices involved in the IV (international visitors) program: how many visitors did a country get; how many private sector grants; what about the ambassador's fund. All of this has to be negotiated out and there's usually an officer that did this sort of thing.

Q: This is your first real taste of the new Foreign Service, wasn't it? From your perspective, how did the amalgamation of USIA into the State Department work?

COLE: Well, I was very fortunate in being in WHA/PDA where it worked better than I think it worked elsewhere. I think that was a product of the people involved: Betsy Whittaker, who was WHA/PDA's director and the various deputy assistant secretaries in Western Hemisphere Affairs. One of them was Otto Reich. He had been ambassador in Venezuela and he understood what public diplomacy could do and respected it. And indeed public diplomacy worked much better in Western Hemisphere Affairs; in many ways it's an easier environment. Folks in the Western Hemisphere are more like us than

they aren't. They're more like us, certainly than the Chinese or the Iraqis. So it was a somewhat easier environment for amalgamation. On the whole, though, I think it's too bad; as an independent agency we had more clout in many ways.

Q: You've had a very interesting, fine career. How did you feel about it? Did you enjoy it?

COLE: Oh, I felt wonderful about it and I was extremely sad to retire, especially since I'd got promoted to an OC, so I was finally in a position to be able to affect policy or to use my authority for some purpose. Unfortunately, though, my health wouldn't allow me to continue; I simply couldn't work that hard anymore and remember that much and care that much. So I retired.

Q: Okay then, Janey, this has been a lot of fun.

COLE: It has, thank you.

End of interview