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

RICHARD J. DOLS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

[Note: This transcript was not edited by Mr. Dols.]

Q: Today is January 20, 1992. This is an interview with Richard J. Dols on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Dick could you give me a little about your background...where you were born and educated, etc.?

DOLS: I was born in a small town in Minnesota and went to school in St. Paul and to college at St. Thomas College there as well. Later I graduated from law school from the University of Minnesota.

Q: What was your major?

DOLS: Political Science, with a history minor.

Q: When were you born?

DOLS: I was born in 1932.

Q: So you were a Depression baby.

DOLS: Indeed.

Q: What attracted you towards law?

DOLS: Actually I was attracted to the Foreign Service early on. But when I was a senior at the University of Minnesota I had a professor who had recently returned from service in the Department of State, it was the McCarthy era, and his advise was to stay as far away from it as you can. So I decided I had to put bread in my mouth and that is why I ended up going to law school.

Q: What had attracted you towards the Foreign Service?

DOLS: An interest mainly in history and politics.
Q: You were in law for how long?

DOLS: I had a little detour in law school. I had gotten an Air Force commission out of ROTC when I graduated from the University of Minnesota. My flight school was put off for a year so I got a year of law school in before I went off and flew in the Air Force for three years. I came back; finished law school; worked about 6 months as prosecutor for one of Minneapolis' suburbs and then entered the Foreign Service.

Q: Did you get overseas at all with the Air Force?

DOLS: Oh, yes. I was in Korea.

Q: This was in what period?

DOLS: This was in 1956-57. What we were doing was flying electronic intelligence along the coast...the Yellow Sea and towards Vladivostok.

Q: That was rather a scary job during the war wasn't it?

DOLS: It was. There were shootdowns and attempted shootdowns. So it was a question of watching your own radar and scurrying away when the other side put up receptors.

Q: A couple were shot down?

DOLS: An RB-66.

Q: I was listening to Soviet broadcasts in the Air Force as an enlisted man in Russia a little earlier on.

DOLS: Yes, we were doing a lot of that. Mainly ELENT which involved electronic intelligence from radars, etc.

Q: Did you take the exam to get into the Foreign Service?

DOLS: Yes.

Q: Did you feel your warning about the McCarthyism had sort of purged itself?

DOLS: That and also you may recall during the McCarthy period the Department continued to take the exam and put people on the eligible register but didn't hire anybody because the security apparatus was focused inward and they couldn't even spend time on outside security checks. Just because of that there was such a huge register of eligibles it made the chances of late comers very, very poor. That backlog of eligibles had started to go down and things were more normal, politically as well. So that opened the door.

Q: You came in at the end of 1961. Did you have a regular training course?

DOLS: The usual A100 course for new officers.

Q: Could you give me a little feel for who these people were? Can you characterize them at all?

DOLS: You mean my classmates?

Q: Yes, your classmates.

DOLS: There was and had been over the years an attempt to diversify representation in the Foreign Service. We were kind of in the transition time. One of the USIA classmates in the A100 course was an example of that. He was from North Dakota and was the only person that year in that state who had taken the written exam. So nobody was presenting themselves from out in the hinterland. I think the move towards diversity helped him and me as well. I was out in Minnesota at the time and just recently out of the Air Force and into law school. I think those factors all weighed in my favor.

The other classmates I had varied a great deal. A funny story...One of my best friends was from a small upstate New York town. He said the first member of our class he met had a

very British accent, etc. and was obviously Establishment. He said to himself, "Oh, no, it is true. What am I getting into?" But I think he found that he was beginning to enter a group of people that were more representative of a cross section of America than in the past.

Q: I think World War II and the Korean War made quite a dent in what was the old Foreign Service as it did in many other aspects of life. It mixed things up much more.

DOLS: It was a mixed blessing. We had some really excellent people who were highly qualified, etc. We leveled that out a bit in the process by getting representativeness. It is one of those choices you make in a democracy.

Q: Your first post was Bordeaux where you served from 1962-3. What were you doing there?

DOLS: Consular work. Remember that was the time when we had a big military establishment in France. We had military bases everywhere. So most of our business was concerned with citizenship problems of one sort of other. Lots of them.

Q: These were American soldiers marrying French women?

DOLS: French women, reports of birth, dual national problems. The soldier who comes in and says, "The French are trying to draft me." "Why are they trying to draft you?" "Oh, my mother is French." "Were you born in France?" "Yes, I was born in France." "How did you get US nationality?" "Oh, my father was an American soldier." "When were you born?" "Nineteen forty three." "Where were you born?" "Lille, northern France." "Nineteen forty three and your father was an American soldier in Lille? Are you sure about that? The invasion didn't take place until 1944, was he a downed flier?" "No, he was an infantry man." A light goes on. "Well, maybe he wasn't my father."

There were many cases like that. What happened is that he wasn't the father, the American soldier who arrived later on and married the French woman with the child and they went to the States and he was derivatively naturalized when his mother became naturalized. So what do you do with the French government? They want him for service. Well the solution was send them to Germany on a quick transfer.

There were constant problems of that sort. A lot of dual national problems.

Q: I was going to ask. This is a little slice of life that we forget about. This was when France was still fully in NATO. What was your impression and those who worked with you on this of dealing with the French authorities on this? Was it difficult?

DOLS: They were cooperative. The Alliance greased the skids for cooperation on everything. Chaban, later the Prime Minister, was the mayor of Bordeaux in those days. He was very friendly. He was an influential politician even at that time. So we got good

cooperation on the local level. The police intelligence types helped us with criminal problems.

Q: So you weren't feeling the strains that de Gaulle brought?

DOLS: That really all happened after my time.

Q: One last thing, this was sort of the height of the Kennedy period and all that. Kennedy had made an extra effort on France. Was this reflected even in Bordeaux?

DOLS: It was indeed. John Kennedy was the topic of conversation among all the Bordelais elite, at least. They loved him. They thought he was absolutely the greatest.

Q: You then came back and they grabbed you for legal work.

DOLS: Yes. We had just completed negotiations on the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. What they needed was somebody to draft the final report of the delegation because these reports provided almost the only behind the scenes documentation of what happened during the negotiations and was, of course, an aid in interpreting in future years the Convention. The Legal Adviser's Office was naive about this. They realized that if you write the report, you have the only background on negotiations and you can fashion things appropriately to the national interest. So that was the project I worked on. In fact, I did it solely by myself.

Q: This consular convention, which is still basically the governing consular convention...

DOLS: The universal one.

Q: What was the American attitude about this? Did it go the way we wanted? Were there disappointing things in it? Were there compromises in it that we felt weakened it?

DOLS: It was a long, long negotiation on an agreement with hundreds and hundreds of provisions. We were involved with up to 50 other countries in the negotiations. We didn't get our way on everything. I would say this that our position was surprisingly enlightened, it wasn't a narrow national interest position at all. The Legal Adviser's Office realized that on consular law questions you find yourself on one side one day and the other side of the issue the next day. So what you really ought to do is try to fashion an agreement that serves the best interest in the purest sense. Don't let it be driven by current issues, in other words.

Q: Well, it is quite true. There are problems in every category and are constantly changing. For example, like your Frenchman being drafted. We have the same problem in the United States. We get very hot if somebody tries to draft an American citizen, but we draft foreigners ourselves.

DOLS: Indeed.

Q: Then you moved to INR from 1964-66. What were you doing there?

DOLS: Two things there. I did Soviet-Vietnamese relations during the Vietnam War.

Q: That was a very interesting period, wasn't it?

DOLS: It was indeed.

Q: That was when we were really beginning to get engaged.

DOLS: It was. We were, for example, busy watching the building of the SA3 (surface to air missile) site in the Hanoi area. We knew who was involved in building them. The problem was that one of the unwritten rules of the Cold War was that Americans and Soviets don't kill each other. You only kill surrogates. What do you do? Do you hit those sites now before they are operational or do you wait? If you wait or even if you hit them now you are going to kill Soviets. What do you do? The intelligence community and other military planners were in a quandary. How far do we go? We were very hesitant after being burned in Korea with the Chinese intervention. We didn't want to push anything too hard, too far.

Well, one Saturday in the summer I recall getting a call to come in. There had been a shootdown. Two F-4s were flying over the valley and the pilot had seen a flashing pole of light come up and hit the wing. Of course it was an SA3. That was the first time the North Vietnamese and their friends fired. So now it was a real question of what we should do. We pondered about 24 hours and then came to a very common sensible solution. We just pretend we don't know there are any Soviets there. We just say we are hitting the North Vietnamese positions in retaliation for the strike on our aircraft. And that was what we did. Thereafter, of course, things escalated considerably.

Q: What was the feeling that you got at that time about our involvement in Vietnam?

DOLS: My own personal feeling?

Q: Yes, but at the time.

DOLS: At the time, our rhetoric on the subject was basically that we were stemming the tide of aggression, etc. The other side can call it a civil war, but we had the right to intervene even if it was. We, of course, had our own strategic interests in that part of the world which would be adversely affected if the South fell. So, at least in the early days it seemed a very worthy cause. I think upon reflection we very quickly realized that the cost of it was not going to be commensurate with the rewards of any kind of happy outcome. In fact, the military which earlier had argued before the Johnson decision to intervene and

go beyond the 15,000 Kennedy advisers, had staunchly held to the old axiom that you can't win a war on the Asian mainland.

They were right. They were especially right in this situation where the enemy had a protected line of supply practically down to the south part of South Vietnam. It was an unwinnable war and the military was right, but once they got gung-hoed in they went the other way.

We had a lot of problems with the gung-honess because they then got carried away in the other direction. For instance, for the Christmas peace negotiations, about '65 or '66, we put on a big campaign to get some peace negotiations going. We had delegations going all over the world to various capitals. What does the military PR apparatus do but announce on the 24th of December some horrible atrocities by the VCs. We said, "Guys you knew those things happened a long time back, but you held them until December 24 in the midst of our attempts to get talks going, can't you be a little more helpful than that?"

So we had a swing first seeing it in our strategic national interest and then having the internal problems that goes from "you can't win there, stay out" to "let's go all the way." We were moderators in the process.

Q: There wasn't any strong dissident group within...just the people like yourselves thinking this was a controllable problem...

DOLS: It wasn't until about two years later and then, you remember, we had the demonstrations about the time of the Cambodian bombing by a number of FSOs outside the Department. One from my class, in fact.

Q: This would be around '70 or something like that.

DOLS: Well, I think it was '68 when we started Cambodia. It was after my time at INR.

There were no dissents really among the officers working on it. Our only problems were excessive gung-honess by the military or whatever.

Q: Then you moved from dealing with this problem to dealing with a more passive area...you went to Toronto from 1966-68.

DOLS: What happened was that Congress passed the 1965 Immigration Act Amendment. They were radical amendments as far as the system was concerned. Suddenly the Canadian posts were overwhelmed because they were given jurisdiction over large hunks of the United States for immigration purposes. Western Hemisphere applicants could not change their status while within the US. They had to go abroad to get immigrant visas. There were loads of Cubans, in particular, in the northeast part of the country. Toronto was overwhelmed by the law change. The Personnel people said, "We know you don't

want to go back to it but you are going to have to because we have to deal with this new problem." So off we went to Toronto which we found a great post.

Q: Basically we did away with many aspects of the quota system. What type of people were you dealing with and how did you find this was working?

DOLS: We were dealing with basically the usual category of Latino refugee. Many of them, Cuban, Haitians, etc., had been recruited in the islands from New York. Remember we had a World's Fair in 1966, or somewhere in there, in New York. The typical fix by the visa fixer was to have a letter from old aunt so-and-so or old uncle so-and-so to nephew in Haiti, etc. to come up and see the World's Fair. We will pay the fare. Actually this had been put together by runners on the islands who had recruited these potential immigrants. These people were given NIV, non-immigrant visas, and they came up and got lost immediately. They took dishwashing jobs, etc. Then they began the process of trying to get their status adjusted.

For the first six months it was easy. You floated for six months because you had that much time. Then the visa lawyer would have a secretary go down to the INS office and get another automatic extension for another six months. Of course that cost a few hundred bucks and this poor guy who is laboring in a hot kitchen in Manhattan somewhere in a restaurant had to pay.

At the year point, INS would breath a little harder on the necks of these people. The visa fixer would say that it would cost a little more. Does uncle have a house? Oh, yes, he has a house out in the Bronx. Well, it is going to cost you x number of thousands of dollars for me to take this case and I want a mortgage on that house. I want money up front in some way. So they would, of course, buy in. Each time there was a problem it would cost a little more. It was always family members or whoever who had to come up to finance the thing.

Eventually we would get the case. We would have to go through the process of deciding. In most cases these people were eligible but they had been ripped off in the process.

Q: Speaking as a professional consular officer of many years, one developed a deep contempt of immigration lawyers. Some, of course, were obviously above board, but many were ambulance chasers who could no longer keep up with the ambulances and began to do immigration work.

DOLS: Exactly. When I was a prosecutor I saw the equivalent cut defending drunk drivers.

Q: In your Foreign Service experience, what do you think you gained from this hot house?

DOLS: I gained a lot. I gained mostly management experience. We were in terrible condition. The Consulate was receiving mail by the huge mailbag full. They could not even open the bags. They would simply put a date tag on the bag. They had thousands and thousands of pieces of unprocessed mail. They were receiving 15,000 phone inquiries a month because, of course, everything was delayed. We had five people working the phones because of that. We were getting 20 some Congressionals a month because of all these delays. When someone called to request the status of their application, the person on the phone would ask when they had sent in the last piece to process and with that date the women in my section would go searching the mailbags to see if they could unearth the missing letter, etc. It was chaos. The card file had about 125,000 cards in it. To file a card correctly you had to go down to about the fourth letter in the alphabet before you got it into the right slot. You can imagine the errors.
They had a kind of assembly line immigration processing system where one person handled one little part of it and then passed it on to another, etc. This was chaos because you had no accountability at all. You couldn't figure out who was making errors and why things happened.

We had to do something. We culled that card file down from 125,000 to less than 25,000, the active cases. That was an obvious start so we knew where we really were. We retooled the assembly line so that one visa clerk handled the case all the way through right up to the final appointment. That way you knew who to blame if things went wrong. You knew how fast they were working. You knew a lot of things.

We put together the first teach-in which was basically a re-do of the consular course given at FSI. The locals had never had any kind of really good formal training. So we put on a training program for them. I did huge charts and put them all over our offices showing the flow of applications, etc. We eventually had great success. In fact, it went very quickly. Within 2 or 3 months we were current on the mail. We were able to cut the telephone people from five to two. Our calls went from 8,000 a month or so down to 1,500 or so. Congressionals dropped from 20 some a month to less than five. We had a lot happier crew in the process. Everybody felt so much better about it. So it was really a neat management experience.

Q: Within the Foreign Service often the consular business, especially the visa business, is something to be avoided. But there are great lessons to be learned here. It is one place where you can get management experience at a relatively junior grade.

Then you moved to what was to become one of your two areas of specialization...the first being Southern Africa and then Micronesia. Your next assignment was in Swaziland from 1969-71. How did that assignment come about?

DOLS: I was supposed to go to Dakar but that assignment was cut because of the first BALPA which was a personnel cut across the board. Then I was assigned to Gaborone. In each case I was about two books into my preparation when it got changed again suddenly. My predecessor in Swaziland was about to get PNGed.

Q: Persona non grata. In other words, kicked out by the host government.

DOLS: Right. He was pulled out overnight and I was suddenly in his slot.

Q: What was his problem?

DOLS: He was very young, very idealistic. He went over to the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in Maseru over in the Lesotho and addressed a group of Swazi students in a Q & A session. One of the Swazi students asked what they should do about the confiscation of a passport of one of the opposition people in Swaziland...a young opposition type who is a friend of my predecessor. He made some injudicious remarks including things like "You know what to do" with a kind of meaningful tone to it. He obviously said or was reported to have said more than that by an informant of the special branch of the Swazi police who was in the group.

When I arrived at the post I found that the informant had been hired by my predecessor as an Embassy local employee. I knew his status, but there was a little problem getting rid of him, so we isolated him.

Q: What were you doing there? What was our post like? Was it a Consulate?

DOLS: It was recently upgraded to an Embassy. Swaziland became independent in September, 1968 and I arrived in early 1969. So the government was just getting itself sorted out after independence. The old British district commissioners and the like were all headed home. Things were in transit.

We were just getting started. We had a Peace Corps program but we didn't even have a Peace Corps agreement. That was one of my first duties.

Q: What was your job there?

DOLS: Everything. We had a Chargé there. He had a heart attack and was in a Pretoria hospital when I arrived in Swaziland. So I was there four or five months on my own as the Chargé then.

Then, you remember, all the Europe posts got closed in the 1967 war and there were Arabists everywhere. Well, what did we do but get an Arabist as a new Chargé.

Q: Who was that?

DOLS: Bob Chase. Bob came and was there about two weeks and left for home leave. So he was gone for six. This was all right with me because I was getting chargé pay. He came back and decided that I had things well in hand so he went about his personal business and that is about the last we saw of him.

Q: Could you describe the situation in Swaziland while you were there?

DOLS: Swaziland had a beloved old king, Sobhuza, who had been on the throne since the '20s. He and Sir Haile Selassie were about the same vintage. In fact, a funny story about them...When Chase came back from his home leave we arranged to call on the King. He had presented his credentials to the Prime Minister not the King. We went down to call on the King. What he had been doing was reading before we arrived. What was he reading? A book about kingship. He was very concerned about it. He was sort of like the Hapsburgs when faced with the collapse of the kingship in Europe. He was worried about the king in Lesotho, who at the time had gotten into political hot water and was likely to eventually find himself on the way out. In fact, the king of Lesotho was then exiled to Holland for a while. But he was concerned about that and tried to play a mediation role. He saw Haile Selassie as his model. And with the King of Morocco that was about all their was left of African kingship at the time. But it was so interesting to see him reading a book about kingship of all things.

He managed to hold the lid on everything. There were no opposition members of parliament until after the left. The opposition did finally win three seats and then the government suspended parliament and things went downhill. You could have democracy only as long as there was unanimous support for those, the Swazi traditional hierarchy. That hierarchy was very, very strong in every way. One really interesting example of that was our Peace Corps volunteers had helped build an irrigation scheme along a river in the northeast part of the country. People who benefitted from the scheme really profited. It was kind of semi-desert country. Suddenly they were really growing marvelous crops. People across the river saw this and decided if they could do it we could do it. So they began to build a similar irrigation system. But once they had it finished they had to get a water permit from the Swazi National Council, which was the traditional ruling body. There was quite a debate in the ruling body over this. The winning argument on the traditionalists side was: If they get money they won't be loyal to their chiefs. So they didn't get their water permit and their irrigation scheme and all the work went for nought.

Q: How did you deal with the government there?

DOLS: There was a kind of European overlay if you will. The real power rested with the traditionalists. You had Ministers of whatever _____ with Permanent Secretaries of each ministry, etc. but that was just an overlay for a much stronger traditional power system.

Q: What were American interests in Swaziland at the time?

DOLS: We had a number of interests there. We, of course, wanted a peaceful solution to the South African racial question. We saw the possibility of building up our relationships with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in such a way that they became kind of

prosperous, peaceful, models for change and also a possible neutral ground for talks not only on South Africa but Rhodesia, which was still alive in those days.

We certainly had in Botswana an outstanding example of a functioning democratic system in Africa. The one in Swaziland at least had the appearance thereof. Less so in Lesotho where there were more problems. We did see it as a vehicle for that kind of movement, pressure for change in a positive way.

A meeting ground it was indeed already because of a flow of South African tourists to Swaziland. They began to see on a very practical level that apartheid was not the only way. They would come over in droves on weekends to the spa and casino which is a fabulous place there. They didn't die because they sat at a table that was adjacent to a table of black people or an Indian from Natal. It was curious that when they were all heading back to Johannesburg on a Sunday evening, there were two lines at the border, of course, the black line and the white line. The white line would have 70 cars in a row lined up to get through. Of course, the blacks could return to South Africa through a much shorter line.

There were a number of leaders of high standing in Swaziland. There was a doctor in _____, who was the Minister of Health. I remember taking one of our Deputy Assistant Secretaries who was on a visit down to have a chat with him. Dr. _____ had been educated at _____ University in South Africa during the period before blacks were pushed out of white universities. He was a very educated type. He and people of his generation have an idea of confederation of states for Southern Africa. All in happy, harmonious union. And, of course, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland would be in that orbit. There were others like that. Unfortunately they tended to be the last of the last because it wasn't very long before they got older and left politics. They weren't able to exert the kind of influence that comparable people in West Africa do. Like Leopold Senghor, etc. They missed the timing on that. But there was a category of people like that who were possible assets in promoting a peaceful resolution and unfortunately time just zipped too fast.

Q: What was the attitude towards Americans?

DOLS: It was interesting. We, of course, had already an established Peace Corps program, so there were quite a few volunteers. They had a major impact and were generally a well-selected group. At the lowest level of Swazi society they really went over like gangbusters.

Our problems mainly came with the expatriates, Brits and South Africans. Of course the British felt we were muscling into one of their spheres. Generally they were really tough and sometimes rather devious, I thought. For instance, maybe I am accusing the man of something he really wasn't doing, but here is an example of what I think shows the length they would go to. Perhaps I am being a little paranoid now. A customs agreement had been reached among South Africa and the BLS countries.

Q: BLS being?

DOLS: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. It was a major agreement and largely supplanted the need for a British post independence subsidy to the Swazi budget. So naturally I was reporting on it. I went to see the Attorney General who was a Brit with kind of South African ties. We talked quite a while and he did tell me quite a bit about the agreement. Then he indicated there was a secret protocol to it. About that stage he excused himself saying he had to do something somewhere else in the building. He left me sitting like this, and I am next to a desk right now, with the secret protocol lying right there. I sat there a few moments. Of course I wanted to know what was in the secret protocol, but I thought, "Hey, am I being set up?" Later on I had some other run ins where he was very distinctly hostile to us. It kind of reinforced my judgment not to even cast an eye at things. But I must say I was very tempted.

Q: This was in the period when the African Bureau was still in the euphoria of independence, and the spirit of G. Mennen Williams, did you find that you had an activist bureau which was prodding you to do things?

DOLS: I don't think they were prodding us to do things, but they certainly were more supportive than in any bureau I had been in. Whatever you seemed to need they seemed to give you. And that isn't the usual way with the Department. So that was very good.

You remember in the time of G. Mennen Williams we had announced a policy of encouraging these new African states by opening a mission in each one as they became independent. That was how we got into places initially like Botswana, Swaziland. Only after the fact did we rationalize what we might do. For instance, promote them as models for peaceful change, as neutral meeting places, as avenues of intelligence of what was going on in that part of the world.
Remember the Portuguese were just across the border in Mozambique, so there was that interest as well.

Q: Did you have any feeling at that time that the Soviets were messing around in your area?

DOLS: Only very lightly. Some of the students had been solicited by Soviet agents over the years. Mainly when they were away at school in England, etc....offered scholarships and that sort of thing. But it was pretty light. The opposition while labeled often communist was clearly just a modernist opposition. They didn't really have any Marxist/Leninist ideology behind them.

Q: From there you went out of the former British orbit to the former French orbit. You went to Niamey, Niger where you served from...?

DOLS: Just a very short period. I was only there for about 3 months. We were medevaced because of my wife's illness. She died at that time.

Then I was reassigned to the Board of Examiners serving about a year with them. Then the African Bureau wanted me back and I went to the BLS Desk.

Q: So you were serving on the BLS Desk from 1972-73. Did you have any feelings about any changes after the Nixon Administration had come in? Was there less interest in the area?

DOLS: Toward my three countries things went the same. It was only after I took over the South African Desk that I realized there were other forces in the picture. As far as third world Africa there were no real changes. What I did mainly on the BLS Desk was to coordinate and push a lot of AID programs.

Q: What type of aid were we doing?

DOLS: All kinds really. We were still into some infrastructure, a lot of vocational training and that kind of thing. I got the AFL-CIO's African program involved in vocational training. Building a huge dam in Lesotho. We were still building big things like that. A road in Botswana which was a most interesting one.

The South Africans mightily objected to us building a road from Zambia to Botswana and down the east side of the Botswana border towards South Africa. They claimed it was going to be an avenue of terrorism. You have to know a little about the geography...There are four countries that meet at a point on the Zambezi on the south, Namibia on the west, Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) on the east and Zambia on the north. As usual the colonial area maps were very poor and it was uncertain whether these four borders met at a quadri-point or whether there was a little gap of territory, water, in the middle of the Zambezi that connected directly Zambia and Botswana. That is where we wanted to build the bridge.
We didn't have a legal problem if we had a little gap, but if there was a quadri-point it would be impossible without putting it over a little bit of Rhodesia and a little bit of Namibian territory, which was old Southwest Africa in those days. So we went round and round and studied colonial era documents on it and did everything else to figure out what had happened. It is like old surveys, none of the documents matched.

Again we came to a common sense solution. Maybe we can't build a bridge, but nobody can object to our prescriptive right, that is the right of ancient usage, to operate a ferry across there. There had been a ferry going across there for 50 years between Zambia and Botswana. So we will build a road up to both sides and run a ferry. We took a few shots from South African and Rhodesian territory and some other harassment, but the road was built and the ferry runs to this day. I didn't see hordes of terrorists marching along the road.

Q: Then you moved from this healthy relationship to become the South African Desk Officer from 1973-75. Obviously this had problems.

DOLS: Yes, indeed. Significant problems. I was selected, and I was told this, because the powers to be in the Department thought I would be very moderate on the question. They had troubles with previous Desk Officers who felt a little too strongly on the apartheid issue.

Q: We were opposed to the South African method of separating the blacks from the whites and very strict segregation.

DOLS: Having served in Swaziland I knew problems of both sides. What a horrible dilemma people in that area have, particularly the white population. On the one side, many of the enlightened whites in that period recognized the need for change, on the other hand, how do you bring it about in a peaceful, orderly fashion. Most of them saw disaster if you went down that road, even though they would have liked to have gone down that road.

So there I was. After a few months I went off to my first orientation trip as Desk Officer. The Embassy very deliberately and again admittedly after a while, set up a program for me that would indeed in their eyes radicalize me. It was very effective. I had great access to all kinds of leaders on both sides. It was a million dollar experience because that is such an interesting country. Talented people of all stripes, color and whatnot and with a real dilemma before them. I came away dully appalled with what I saw. The Embassy had achieved its goal.

The environment I came back to was pretty much this. South African people bragged to us that they had x number of members of Congress who were "their friends" and quote numbers all the times, and friends in the White House. You remember we were doing those annual foreign policy reports all the time? Each year we kind of reiterated our policy on every country in the world. They were very useful, but the powers to be in the Department and particularly Henry Kissinger decided that this really stuck our necks out on the line too often. We at the African Bureau level saw it as a way to keep the policy the same until the political winds changed. Instead of reinforcing apartheid, as a lot of the White House minions wanted to do, and a lot of people in Congress, we wanted to at least keep the rhetoric up. So each year we would write that up...abhorrence of apartheid line into the annual report. We would write similar stuff almost every day going up to the White House for this reason or for that reason. And every time we got a kickback from NSC on that we would point to the annual report, this is our policy. It has been approved before and can not be considered a change of policy.

Q: This was the NSC when Henry Kissinger was Adviser?

DOLS: Right. You can't be seen as changing that, can you? So we would very ingenuously keep going. Sort of boiler plating, boiler plating, boiler plating.

Q: But using this as a way of responding to every bit of correspondence and question.
DOLS: Writing press guidance for the morning press briefing, whatever. Statements when some notable was banned or whatever. That kind of thing. But our main objective was to at least keep the policy where it was. The South Africans in particular were targeted into the military embargo. They wanted high tech military trade. That was a particular battle.

Well, what happened next was that a man named Connie Molder, Minister of Information, had great ambitions. He was going to be Prime Minister. He had two brothers, one was the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Information and the other was an Assistant Secretary. They were the brains behind Connie Molder. They decided to use the assets of the Information Service abroad for clandestine activities cutting a page out of the CIA's manual. They had a lot of money to work with. They cooked up all kinds of schemes. The most relevant was an attempt to buy the "Washington Star" as a front newspaper here. They had a certain _____ who was in the publishing business who attempted to buy the "Star" by using funds provided by the South Africans. When Joe Allbriton finally outbid him, this gentleman was left with about 9 and 11 million dollars of South African money which was intended to be used in that purchase, and they had a little trouble getting it back. Connie Molder fell when part of this leaked out.

There were all kinds of activities like that. They began to solicit visits of Congressional staff members and finally Members themselves. They were kind of naive about it in the beginning and actually published in their annual report an account of a visit by five members of the Congressional staff to South Africa in 1973. Right after that the ethics committee ruled that no staff member, Member of Congress or wife could accept these visits without approval from the House.

Of course, none of them wanted to go before the House and ask permission. So the Information people in South Africa cooked up a meeting at a local foundation to discuss how to overcome this problem. They decided to use a whole lot of funds to spent on the business. With that we began to see a lot of Congressional visits. A typical Congressional visit would be a particular Member hosted by the University of South Africa, or the Farmers' Union. Of course the money, programming and everything was the South African Information Service behind it.

This, of course, was in violation of our Constitution. Article II says you can not take "emollients from foreign countries without permission."

Q: Well, what would the Desk do? Were you letting the Congressman know how they were being used? Did they care?

DOLS: That was very interesting. We pondered that a bit and then decided what we would have to do is not be seen as not calling attention to obvious violations of law. On

the other hand, it is not comfortable for the Department to confront a Congressman and tell him he is violating a rule. So what do you do? Well, we would get word of one of these upcoming visits and we would call the Congressman's office or the Senator, and say, "We understand the Senator is going to South Africa. As you know it is our custom to offer to provide briefings in advance if a Member is going to a foreign country. If the Senator is interested we will be happy to call one." Of course we would get a call because they knew we were on to them.

So we would go up and a typical round was three Members, one who had a lot of interest in the Rhodesian chrome exception to the embargo on Rhodesia. He would be the main spokesman. We would talk about our policy towards the area and answer questions. Then we would drop into the pot, "You realize that the sponsor of this visit is not who they seem to be. The money behind it is South African money, in particular the Information Service money." And, of course, they would challenge us as to how we know this. Because that was from classified information and they would reveal the sources if we told them, we would say we were sorry and there was no way we could reveal that. Well, it would always turn into a nasty encounter at about that stage. This one particular encounter with three of them ended with one of them saying to me as I was departing the office, "I used to run a union and if any word of this gets out I know what to do." That kind of thing went on. It was a hardball kind of game. I can think of only one Member who was dissuaded.

Q: What was their motivation in going?

DOLS: The whole variety of human motivations from the silly to the sublime. Silly was on the part of a very well known senior Senator who had just remarried and his wife wanted to take the offer to take a trip to South Africa. He, I could see was very troubled by the whole thing, but she wanted to go. And that was the makeup within his circumstances. They all were ideologically and racially racist related. Interested, one way or another. It was kind of disheartening to see how racist people still were.

Q: These were basically people who were sympathetic to apartheid. It wasn't people from the other side who wanted to take a look and would take the devil's money to do so?

DOLS: No, there was none of that. There were a few with economic interests like the gentleman who threatened me. He was a Democrat. Remember old Charlie Diggs was the Chairman of the African Subcommittee in the House.

Q: He is also black, himself.

DOLS: Right. I used to have to go up every Monday morning and brief him. We got on very friendly relations. After a particular round like this, the one who was threatening me, I related this to Charlie. He said, "Oh, he and I came into Congress together. We were freshman together. He has his problems and I have mine." He had missed the whole problem. Normally he was incensed with anything like that. But you can see how the

game is played in that club. So I was learning all kinds of lessons. It was an interesting era. It went on and on like that.

Q: Did you have the feeling that the African Bureau was no longer the same place as it was when you were first there?

DOLS: It was changing. Don Easum became Assistant Secretary. They thought Don was not going to push too hard on any change in South Africa. Well, he was a very bright, activist sort. He was finally pushed out of that job because of our bucking of NSC, and our other fun and games, if you will. I use "fun and games" with some forethought. The South African Information Service was playing their own game. They were not coordinating, in fact they were pitted against the then Foreign Minister, who is a rival of Molder for the PMship.

When we found out things that the South African Information Service were doing, we would tell the South African foreign affairs people at the Embassy what was going on. By throwing the cat among the pigeons we could have feathers flying everywhere in their house.

It was the most effective means of dealing with it.

Q: So this was not a united policy on the part of the South Africans?

DOLS: No, no. It was one Ministry versus the other, or heads of Ministries.

Q: One of the great political stories was the Nixon/ Kissinger/Rogers relationship where Kissinger was the National Security Advisor with very close ties with Nixon, yet Nixon had a great deal of respect for Rogers, who was Secretary of State. Did you have the feeling that Kissinger had a different policy than our stated policy towards South Africa?

DOLS: Yes, I think I would have to say yes. There are a couple of aspects to it. The Embassy crew noticed the signs of some kind of relationship there and asked me to probe it. I never did learn very much, so I _____.

There was another aspect though of Mr. Kissinger's policies and leadership, etc., and that is he was accused, maybe rightly or wrongly, I don't know which, [I think rightly] of focusing too much on certain issues. US-Soviet relationship. US-Arab-Israel relationship. And sacrificing every other consideration to movement in those areas.

One example of that was the question of suspending the South Africans for not paying their dues in the UN. We got approval through all the bureaus in the Department for a vote in the UN which would suspend them for a period of time. He, of course, nixed that. What was his rationale? It had nothing to do with the arguments that we were making about Southern Africa, but the winner for him was that if you could do that to South Africa, they will do it to Israel and we will have set a precedent that we don't want.

It was kind of an archetypical example of a thing that Latin American Bureau people were talking about, the Asian Bureau people were talking about, etc., that he will sacrifice everything to some relationship that he could either to the Arab-Israel situation or the Soviet Union.
There is something to debate there. Do you keep your eye on the ball or what do you do? Do you argue slippery slope and set bad precedent or do we say we can always distinguish precedent too...we are good lawyers? Those arguments go on forever and I don't think there is any clear cut solutions to them.

But his solution was certainly a favorable one to South Africa and we always figured there were reasons for that other than just the given reason.

Q: Well, there was a close tie and there remains a close tie, which sort of surprises me, between Israel and the white rulers in South Africa. Was this quite apparent at that time?

DOLS: Very apparent, especially in a military way. They were sharing military technology. And we suspected that the Israelis were involved in that seeming space event which nobody quite knows about. Whether it was nuclear explosion in space or not.

Q: There was this flash that was picked up and no body...

DOLS: That seemed to have a South African/Israeli ring to it. That was a peculiar one that I picked up much later in my career.

Q: I hope we can pick that up later when we discuss your later years. I am always interested in the Israeli connection in American foreign policy because of the very strong domestic political influence. Here we had a policy which was basically anti-apartheid. We had one of our allies who we were touting as being the one democracy and all in the Middle East, Israel. At the same time here they are with a close relationship that our policy was opposed to. Was it a matter of treading very carefully about this as Desk officer?

DOLS: It was a matter of treading very carefully, but somehow or other keep the policy where it was. An example of that was, I told you earlier the South Africans were trying to break our arms embargo which had been put on about 1966 or so. It had been in effect some years. There were a few exceptions to it, but in general it was a pretty thorough embargo. The South Africans by bringing these Congressmen and staffers to South Africa, one of the obligatory stops there was the big command center the South Africans had dug into the silver mine behind King Town. They would make a big pitch to them about how strategic the Cape route was. They would tell all the World War II stories about how all the Nazi submarines sank tons of shipping going on around the Cape, etc.

The State representative at the NSC came over to me one day and said, "You have to give me some help with this Cape route thing." I said, "Well, you realize the Cape route

strategy is kind of a misnomer just because of the title it has. Basically the South Africans were saying you have to run all tankers from the Persian Gulf around the Cape for instance, and the West is interested in that, obviously." The Suez Canal was closed part of that period, so it was really the route. I said I would write him a paper that would demonstrate that that was only one of six major choke points on that route and in fact it is the furthest choke point from any area of Soviet operations.

In other words the least desirable if you are really going to pick a choke point and squeeze. I mean, you start off with the Straits of Hormuz, and then off Somalia, and then between Madagascar and the African Continent and finally the Cape, then off West Africa and then off the Iberian Peninsula. Well you can see how the Cape is not the most desirable location if you are going to put the squeeze on. You don't pick a place like that to send ships or submarines out to. You pick a place a little closer and more operationally defensible.

So I wrote a Cape role on those lines. It wasn't very long at all before the word came to NSC staffers that they were not to solicit papers from the Department of this sort. All the papers must come up through the system. None of these other little support papers. And, of course, that command had an obvious origin.

So one more example that the public policy wasn't what it seemed.

Q: I might add because the history keeps changing. In this period during the Cold War often a policy of last resort, like patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel, well military significance was often an argument used again for support of regimes with which we were having problems. With the Franco regime we had bases, South Africa, Israel was put up as an area of strategic importance for our forces, etc. I wasn't, but anyone who wanted to get anything would always use that argument.
DOLS: That was very much the case with South Africa. Clearly that. They argued again and again strategic minerals. Our counter argument was basically, "Look those strategic minerals are going to have to be sold to somebody and if you want to make sure you have an interruption just keep supporting a situation that eventually is going to blow up and you will have more problems with those things."

Q: Did you get the feeling while you were there where Secretary of State Rogers and his immediate staff stood on this?

DOLS: During Rogers time things were pretty quiet. The action was over in the NSC. Do you remember the old joke about the space craft lands in front of the Department and the Martians get out and they say the usual Martian thing, "Take us to your leader." Department employees were cranking their necks out of the windows and when they heard that they just laughed. Everybody knew the scene of the action was the NSC and not within the Department at all.

Q: As you went about your business did you find this rather disheartening?

DOLS: I think it is something that Foreign Service officers have learned. We have a certain obligation to keep things on some kind of even keel. Not irrigating to ourselves the decision making powers that are given others, but assuring to the degree they can that irreparable things aren't done along the way. So we took a kind of middle road trying to hold things together. After all, that was stated public policy and that was our justification even if we knew in our hearts it wasn't the private policy. If we are going to have political accountability in a democracy, you either get the real policy out in the open or if they are going to continue to mouth something else then lets make sure they mouth something else. We saw at least that kind of holding the finger in the dike as a legitimate kind of activity. Not again irrigating to ourselves democratic choices.

Q: While you were there the Ambassador in South Africa for most of the time was John Hurd, a political appointee from Texas. What was your impression of him and how he ran things?

DOLS: John was a very nice sociable man. He had originally been nominated to be Ambassador to Venezuela but because of some of his oil dealings with Venezuela they refused to have him. So he was named for South Africa. He had no great interest in South Africa, per se, it was just a second choice. He was from southern Texas and felt very comfortable with the racial situation in South Africa. This presented a lot of problems because between the Ambassador's Office and the rest of the Embassy there was a great gap.
One day when the political staff was up in Pretoria, they got the word that the Ambassador had gone to Robben Island. This was the year that no one got to Robben Island and I mean nobody. Nelson Mandela had been stashed away there for years.

Q: This was a prison island?

DOLS: Yes, off Cape Town. All they had was the _____ word that the Ambassador had gone to Robben Island. They rejoiced. They thought he had done something, he had got in. This should really be interesting. Wait until he comes back.

What he had done was to go bird hunting...I don't know what kind of birds...on Robben Island with the Minister of the Police and Interior and they used the prisoners to shag the down birds. They were worried it would get out to the press and eventually it did showing up in a Jack Anderson-type column.

There was that kind of problem during Hurd's time.

Q: Was there a sort of two-track Embassy with the Ambassador up there sort of benign and an activist Embassy working below him?

DOLS: It created great problems. They were always sparring. Then Hurd would do things that were indelicate, like having prisoners shag birds on Robben Island. That was never resolved. Like so many situations it was only resolved by transfer.

Q: You then moved from the South African Desk to a completely different environment. You went to the Foreign Service Institute from 1975-77 doing junior officer training. I am trying to capture the spirit of how things work with these interviews. This must have been an interesting period because there still must have been a residue that junior officers are very important. Could you describe how we treated junior officers at that time?

DOLS: Remember we had very low intake into the Service in the early ‘70s due to money problems. Then suddenly, the first class that I had when I first took over had 118 in one class.

Q: A normal class is around 30.

DOLS: So we were inundated with new people. That was the major problem. The junior officer was changing. No longer were they committed to a full career in the Service like we were earlier in the ‘60s and ‘50s. They were far more assertive. The program had been basically the one that you and I knew which was a bunch of talking heads telling you about our relationship with the Department of Agriculture or something. It was a prescription for good sound sleep.

We had to do something because we were faced with a group of people who wouldn't sit there and quietly take it like we did. So it involved a whole retooling of that program to experiential mode, etc. This caused problems with the agencies because they felt they always had old so-and-so who talked to the A100 and gave them all this good advise they didn't want anyway. So we had to smooth over a lot of those relationships and try to show them that new ways had to be used. We just couldn't deal with this assertive crew in the same old way. They weren't going to sit still.

We had quite a few minority entrants by that time and some problems that would go to melding them together. But on the whole those were manageable at least.

Q: What was your impression of the minority candidates that were coming in? We are talking mostly about blacks...

DOLS: Others too. A lot of Hispanic.

Q: Was there the impression that they weren't of the same caliber as what had been the standard applicant?

DOLS: What we got on the Hispanic side was interesting. Those people who had established themselves in this country after fleeing Cuba were mainly the Cuban elite and by virtue of a Spanish surname they qualified for the minority program. So we tended to

get not the poor, disadvantaged, Chicano guy or woman from west Texas, but the Harvard educated, Ph.D., from Miami who was from a Cuban refugee family.

Q: It was the equivalent to the 1930s getting the Jewish immigrants...Albert Einstein's kids or something like that.

DOLS: Right. We got a very different category of people than the legislation contemplated. There were advantages and disadvantages to the Service that way...you got highly educated people but on the other hand you always got a lot of Latino elite attitudes that went with this.

Q: Did you tell the people who were giving the orientation, etc. that this problem existed and try to break it down a bit?

DOLS: We had a lot of problems with things like that. One of the things I realized after I had been there a couple of months was that this wasn't what it seemed to be. We are not really trying to give these people information about the Foreign Service. What we are trying to do was to shape a group of attitudes towards this job, to make them feel comfortable because they know the system and can operate within it. It is all effective, not cognitive goals that we are seeking. The cognitive stuff will come, but you really should be shooting at the effective goals. How these people feel about this job situation, what kind of commitment they are going to give, etc. But the whole program was oriented towards the cognitive...tell them how to issue a visa. And they all came with the expectation that we were going to tell them how to be Foreign Service officers.

They didn't react very well when you told them that we had done surveys of the selection process and they hadn't had some kind of imprimatur stamped on their heads. In fact the reason they were there was largely because lightning struck and that is it. It could have been any other person who got rejected who sits there too because we were skimming off the top of a scale using a very invalid screen...the oral panel. The written was to screen large numbers down to interviewable numbers. The oral, a ten year study on that showed that it did what you would expect. You got mirror image selection. The panels saw as good their own values and personalities in a candidates or as bad if they didn't have those things. But you knew that they were highly competent people.

We told them about their luck deliberately to make them realize that: I really have to develop a new set of attitudes towards this job. I can not see myself as baptized into the faith and therefore saved forever and assured tenure and promotion and all the rest. It is just not going to go on that way. This is a very different kind of thing and is going to ask for a lot of commitment.

Q: What about with the blacks? You said you were getting this Cuban elite group. Were we also getting an elite group with the blacks?

DOLS: I had a friend named Sam Pickney who ran the minority program at the time. Sam complained to me. He said, "I go to job fairs and I set up camp next to IBM or some other large cooperation's booth. The young people come in to me and say they are interested in the Foreign Service. I tell them all about this lengthy process to get in." You know they still had to take some kind of exam and they had to pass security clearance, medical, etc. "And when might this happen?" "Oh, 18 months, 2 years from now, etc." He said, "They just laughed at me and went next door to IBM who gave them an airline ticket to come to a plant next week and talk about a job. I get second and third cut. That is all I get because the corporations skim the best."

Q: This was apparent was it?

DOLS: This was apparent. The best black candidates were lost to us because we couldn't respond like a private employer.

Q: It hasn't changed much. Were you feeling the effects of post Vietnam? Much more suspicion, etc.

DOLS: Yes. In fact, in my little introductory thing I always asked how many were approached by their friends and told, "You sold out." I would get a lot of hands. Almost everybody was being accused of a sell out by going to work for the government.

Q: What did you feel about the group that went through you? Did you feel that it was a good solid group, was it a mixed bag, were you apprehensive?

DOLS: There were some very good ones. I mean unusually good candidates. Then a considerable mixed bag.

Q: You went to Wellington where you served from 1977-81. How did you end up there and what were you doing?

DOLS: I took the junior officer program job because I was widowed and I had just recently remarried. That was a way to stay in the States two more years. As I was just finishing that program up they had a sudden vacancy because of a medical in Wellington. It looked like a nice place to take a family and I had inherited a new wife with four of her children in addition to my three. So you can see why I wanted Wellington. I had the impression that I was going off to England in the South Pacific, but that wasn't it. It is a fascinating country though.

It wasn't just New Zealand, it was all of Polynesia and Antarctica because we had the main operating base program at Christchurch, New Zealand. So we had two almost equator to pole activities in addition to New Zealand politics. That was great.

Q: What were our interests in that area including the whole business?

DOLS: We were, of course, ANZUS allies at the time. We wanted on the ANZUS front to open as many ports...well we had a worldwide port access problem with nuclear powered and armed ships and we wanted to make sure that we opened as many ports as we could worldwide, but particularly in that region. We saw possibilities there.

We had problems even with the new National Party government that took over there in 1975 getting renewal of warship visits, but we did it. It was an acrimonious kind of thing with sort of annual battles of the straits going into Auckland...small boats trying to interfere with passage of huge submarines, etc. We have had port access problems in Micronesia or in Polynesia and generally through even Melanesia where we had 26 island claims from the previous century that we had to resolve.

We had declarations of 200 mile zones by the new island states. We had on the other hand the Magnuson Act which had established a 200 mile fishing zone for the US but excepted from our claim any jurisdiction over highly migratory species which turned out was true by definition. We had an injunction from Congress to go out and negotiate regional fishing agreements that would deal with this tuna problem, but not bilaterals. We couldn't do bilateral agreement because the theory was that the fish are highly migratory and go through everybody's waters and you can't biologically control stock unless you have everybody in the agreement.

The islanders thought very much in the terms of just extending their national territory seaward and they saw bucks. They weren't going to give an inch on that one. So we were at logger heads on that. But we did decide that we had to clear away as many of the obstacles to our relations as we can. So that is why we went to work on the island treaties.

We had quite a few problems after the first three. One on the Cook Islands and one on Tokelau. The Tokelau group tended to hang up. The New Zealanders were very conscious of their kind of their tutelage role for those two areas and they didn't want to do anything that the islanders didn't want to do. In fact they were holier than the Pope on the subject.

On the other hand we were anxious to settle them all. Finally I decided to push really hard on the Tokelau thing by putting a little pressure on and finally got the agreement. When I went to sign the agreement, I was kind of appalled at myself. These poor people, did I rob them in the process? I felt a little bit sheepish for having been so hard-nosed. They were so appalling poor.

Q: What sort of support were you getting from Washington when you were negotiating these things?

DOLS: We would constantly get negotiating teams that would come out representing the Bureau of Oceans, Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Legal Adviser's Office, Department of Commerce, National Marine Fishing Agency, etc. We would have tons of them. Worse still though...that wasn't bad, we could corral them and get them all working as one...but what was really bad about it was when the fishery industry people insisted on

somehow being involved with the delegations. They were so heavy handed and threatening and insulting to the islanders and everybody else that they goofed up more than one negotiating session. It was very difficult. Of course they saw us as the enemy. They thought we were going to give away the store. We weren't. In fact what we were trying to do was (1) to protect our overall political relationship, (2) protect our economic relationships in a workable way.

They wanted us to hang in with claims to these 26 islands which would have given around any one island, just a rock really, if you drove a 200 mile circle you get 125,000 square miles of sea to exploit for tuna, for instance. That is what they wanted. We had absolutely only paper thin claims. We had never done anything about these claims. They were mainly Guano Act claims from 1856 Guano Act. That Act said that if you are actively mining guano on an uninhabited island somewhere out there you may file a claim with the Secretary of State and for the time being you will get protection of the United States. It was never intended to take sovereignty.

But in the ‘30s when the British and the New Zealanders were contesting with us over seaplane landing places, somebody in the Legal Adviser's Office revived these claims and started making arguments in terms of sovereignty. That gummed up the situation. We argued to the industry people and to their Congressional supporters that we never intended to claim sovereignty over those islands, never did anything in the way of establishing administrations or anything else. While on the other hand the other side set up colonial administrations and actively governed those places for 80, 90, 100 years. They had a claim and we had paper.

We had to clear away the paper because you could see the first seizure losing one of those zones and the industry stomping up to the Hill and demanding the US Coast Guard get out there and protect those American fishing boats. We didn't want to get into another Latin American shootout. So we had to get these treaties out of the way and we eventually did. They went through the Senate like 98-2. But only after much foot dragging by ultra conservatives and a few Senators who supported the fishing industry.

Q: Who was negotiating for the islanders?

DOLS: The islanders were negotiating mainly as a group under the umbrella of the South Pacific Forum. That would be kind of a South Pacific equivalent of the Organization for African Unity (OAU). The Forum is the kind of political equivalent in that region. They negotiated under those auspices. They have a lot of advisers provided by the UN, Australia and New Zealand. They weren't without expertise.

Q: As you went through this was there a consideration of keeping the Soviets out? Was the Soviet threat, etc. a factor?

DOLS: It was a factor but a very small one. Some of our New Zealand and Australian critics claimed it was the biggest thing going. In fact it was the smallest thing going in our

calculation. We wanted to establish a firm, harmonious relationship with these islands. We saw these things of fishery and island claims as obstacles. We wanted to get them out of the way and get on with the task. We could see that if we didn't do that kind of thing we would only acerbate our relationships and maybe make a welcome to the Soviets a little more realizable. The Soviets were after 1976 approaching them all trying to get in. The New Zealanders and the Australians, of course, were urging the island governments to keep them out. But we didn't see it as a big threat. In fact when the Cook Islanders in the negotiations invited the Soviet delegation out there to look at the possibility of building an airfield on one of the islands and a fishery restocking point, etc. we said, "Hey guys, that kind of thing is passe. You are not going to _____ us into an agreement using that kind of tactic. Just forget it, we don't care." Now added to that calculation is that we knew that New Zealand would really put the screws to them. So we could afford to make that comment.

Q: Back to the New Zealand side of things. I have never served there. I have the impression that the New Zealand Laborites are the type of people who got together in circles and sang the Red Flag Forever...the British leftist got transported there.

DOLS: There were a lot of those people, sort of extant, British trade unionists who lead New Zealand unions. The New Zealand Communist Party, The Socialist Unity it was called, was a real minion of Moscow. It took funding directly and it's marching orders, etc. Their principal objective was to break the ANZUS Alliance if they could. Their vehicle was the post access thing. The Labor Party in New Zealand operates like the Labor Party in Britain. One week in May the Federation of Labor meets for its annual conference and they pass a whole lot of resolutions on international affairs and of course it is bar nuclear power and armed warships and that kind of thing.

Were these Auckland stevedores, the Indians and that kind of stuff, in those days directly SUP controlled (Soviet Communist Party)? The labor movement itself was largely kind of apathetic really. The only really activists were these Liverpool expatriate, trade unionists who came to Auckland to form a longshoreman's union, whatever. So the FOL (Federation of Labor) would pass these resolutions. Then the following week the party would meet for its annual meeting. These things get boilerplated into the party policy platform. So there it is, a very small activist group makes party policy and that is what we were dealing with.

We argued to Washington that things are find now. The National Party have opened the ports again, but one day they are not going to be in office. We have to do something about this because one day the ports are going to close. Well, we tried a number of different acts to deal with the problem. We could get absolutely no support in the Department at all. It was not important.

Q: The Department is dealing with a lot of things and this is the sort of thing that could have been dealt with at the Desk level anyway.

DOLS: Well, we needed the Department's support in a couple of ways. We had been told in effect to stand down and not be too activist. So we used a basic change that way. We needed support by bringing out visitors who said the right things. We needed not to play into the hands of the then National Party Prime Minister, Robert Muldoon, who tended to use our port visits as his own political vehicles to stir up problems with the Labor Party. For example, during the school holiday period, the New Zealanders all flood to the South Island. But the only way that you get to the South Island is by ferries from Wellington. They have to get their cars on the ferry, etc. They book six months ahead. The ferries are jammed and operating 24 hours a day. They are huge ships really. Muldoon would want a nuclear armed warship visit right during school holidays. Why did he want it? Because he knew that the port unions would shut down the ports and then there would be chaos. Then he could come to the rescue, calling in New Zealand's C-130s to fly these poor stranded tourists in their cars across the strait and beat down the trade unionists, the Labor Party people. Unfortunately we had Ambassadors who let him get away with that tactic.

Q: We had two political ambassadors there. The first one was Armistead Selden. What was his background?

DOLS: He had been a Congressman for 17 years and lost in a race for the Senate. Then he went over to ISA as Assistant Secretary at the Pentagon and eventually to New Zealand.

Q: Did he pay much attention to what was going on or was this more of a social appointment?

DOLS: He saw the relationship with Muldoon and the National Party people as being very comfortable. He was a southern Democrat but ideologically on the right side of the spectrum. So he found common ground with Muldoon. Muldoon was a tremendously shrewd politician. He could con the shoes off anybody and he certainly did con the shoes off Ambassador Selden.

Q: Then you had Ann Martinville who was from New Jersey.

DOLS: From Princeton. A very nice woman, a loveable woman really, but not exactly cut out for this kind of work. She gained some kind of local fame by being elected to the New Jersey Assembly as an anti-Vietnam candidate. She was a large contributor to the Democratic Party and became the head of the Emergency Preparedness Organization within AID. Then she came to New Zealand. She then made the usual mistake and fell into the arms of political alikes. The alikes being the Labor Party people.

Q: Perhaps the anti-Vietnam things struck a responsive cord?

DOLS: Oh, it did. Also they simply saw her as being on the liberal side of the spectrum and she felt comfortable with them. So to both of them we would preach, "Look we can not afford to become too cozy with any government in power because it is going to change tomorrow."

Poor Anne Martinville never even got within speaking distance of the government. Before she left Washington she was invited to the New Zealand Embassy for a dinner at which Muldoon was present. They sat next to each other. Muldoon liked to tipple a little heavily. Somewhere in the conversation he told Anne, who was somewhat of a feminist, "I don't like lady politicians." She was highly offended. What did she do but tell some stringer for some newspaper in New Jersey who then wrote to the "New York Times" that little episode. Muldoon reacted, of course, vehemently because Labor than began castigating him in parliament by saying, "Here you are ruining our relationship with our closest ally by your imprudent kind of remark, etc."

So Muldoon in effect let it be known that he was going to have nothing to do with her, period. And he kept that promise.

Q: What did that do with you all at the working level?

DOLS: That made us, in effect, surrogate ambassadors, because the political and economic counselors had to pick up the slack, if you will. That was good because we had unusual access.

Q: Because business had to go on.

DOLS: Right. One of the most telling disasters in the Martinville/Muldoon relationship was...you remember we had the boycott on the Moscow Olympics in 1980, and it wasn't going very well. One day we got a circular message from the Department instructing us to go in to see our local head of government and make these arguments. Ann came in to me and said, "I am going to see him this morning and tell him what I think. I am going to tell him that Carter is going to win the nomination and the election, Ted Kennedy is not going to succeed, and he has a long memory." I said, "Ann you had better smile if you are going to say something like that." I didn't think she would do it. Well, she had been so insulted by his unwillingness to even see her, invite her or do anything. The only time he would see her was on an instructed demarche.

She had a terrible time remembering her lines so I would prepare an Aide Memoire in advanced and say, "Ann all you have to do is in effect read it like a speech and give it to him in the end. Don't worry about it you don't have to learn lines." I took a younger officer as a notetaker and Ann and I went up to see Muldoon. She delivered the spiel from the Aide Memoire and then without an ah, yes or no, she switches to the domestic political situation in the United States saying Carter was going to get the nomination over Ted Kennedy and Carter was going to win and he has a long memory. I thought, "Oh, no!" I could just see this junior officer who had been taking notes seriously up to that point and his pencil was just posed in the air looking wide eyed.

Muldoon just leaped down her throat and said, "I won't be threatened," and then proceeded to take her apart. You can imagine what kind of relationship we had. It was disaster. We just couldn't penetrate with him at all.

Q: Did we try to moderate our ship visits to New Zealand?

DOLS: The Navy wanted as many as possible. Muldoon wanted them at opportune political times. I wanted them on a cool wintry day with a gale blowing across the harbor that would keep every small boat out. Finally I got one of those. But it took a lot of fighting to get them at the right time.

Q: You left just about at the change of Administrations, didn't you?

DOLS: Yes.

Q: Then you went back to the Inspection Corps for about two years?

DOLS: Nothing very eventful there.

Q: Okay. Then you dealt with something that is going to keep you quite busy for a while and that was Pacific Island Affairs from 1983-85.

DOLS: Before we get into that I mentioned earlier one thing, the mysterious flash. I said it would come back.

Q: Yes, this is in South Africa.

DOLS: And one other thing, the Constitutional illegal visits and fun and games that certain members of Congress were playing with regard to South Africa.

I had provided sort of background information to a variety of press people through the years. Whenever we thought it was advantageous to us we would tell them a bit about this on a non-attributed basis. They would do stories, etc. In about 1978 I started getting calls from one of the researchers on the Cronkite show, evening news. I had been pointed out to people as one who knew all about these skeletons. I told him things that I had told others. Then he began a tact (not only a tact but it became an attack) like, "What was the State Department doing not calling attention to all this illegal activity, etc.?" I was put on the defensive and told him a bit more, some of the things that I told you about how we would really play the game.

Five or six phone calls after that he calls me and says, "The Moldergate thing had broken in South Africa. All the misdeeds of the Information Service, funneling money to all clandestine operations without government authority and all the rest had come to light. There was a debate in parliament. They wanted to do an exposé on CBS which would detail all the background of Moldergate." He said that they had interviews from a whole

lot of people and that it was absolutely crucial that they get some kind of interview on this. I said that the only way I would give it would be on a nonattributive basis. He went back to, "Well, what was the State Department doing all these days?"

I was influenced very much at this time by the ethics pronouncements by the Carter Administration. I was very naive about this. I felt all those days were long gone. Here we have an Administration that is sane...blow the whistle and all of that. Here I am doing my duty. I struggled over it a lot and finally decided that if ever there is a time this can be done it is now. The timing was absolutely right because of the debate in the parliament in South Africa.

Finally (I should never had done this) I said, "Okay, I will tell you." He had a local stringer come over to the house and filmed an interview. He assured me that it would be in the context of this hour long exposé which I had been told what was in it otherwise. Well, as things usually go in New Zealand, the film missed the flight out of Auckland and arrived there too late so they scrubbed the program on Monday night. Tuesday or Wednesday they got the film and they looked at it and went back to the Department and asked if it was all true. The Department said it was true. So they went ahead and ran portions of it on the evening news.

Then I got a call at 4 am, waken out of a sound sleep by the then Assistant Secretary of Congressional Relations. In effect he said they were going to pull the rug out from under my feet if I didn't disavow what I had said. I said, "Hey you don't sound like you are much of a member of this Administration. I am not going to be left dangling in the wind for a defamation suit. I will not retract what I said. You confirmed it and it is true." In a big huff he hung up.

The next day the Department put out a press release saying that they could find no documentary evidence to show that what I had said was either true or untrue. So that is the way they calmed down some of the Congressional types that were putting pressure on them.

I used to teach an ethics course to the junior officers and one of the things we used to talk a lot about was this kind of bind. When do you speak up and do you speak up at a cost? Is there ever any winning in that game or do you always lose? If I ever taught that again I would have to say you always lose. You cannot go beyond the deep throat level.

Q: Deep throat level means telling things undercover and nobody can attribute it to you.

DOLS: Right. That is the only way to do it no matter how justified you might be or even called upon, in this case by a joint resolution of both Houses to blow the whistle.

I then got a call from the Director saying that one of the Deputy Assistant Secretaries was very upset over this. I said, "Look, if he puts any pressure on you I will stuff the Joint Resolution 175 down his throat.

Q: Joint Resolution 175 was the whistle blowing?

DOLS: It's the old whistle blowing resolution. It has changed over the years but that is the one that was in affect then.

So I am afraid my advise to future generations is don't get burned. Do your best, but unless you want to leave the organization...

Q: How did this play out? Were they out to get you when you came back?

DOLS: Oh yes. I was threatened with defamation suits and all that kind of thing.

Q: So this was one reason you were put into the Inspection Corps?

DOLS: Actually I...remember we had...what was his name, the Inspector General...he had one of his people call me and recruit me for that job.

Q: Brewster?

DOLS: Brewster, right. A very bright man. So I agreed to take the job because he was asking. What happened? A week or so later Reagan fired all 17 IGs in 17 organizations and put in his junkyard dogs. So it turned into not a very happy job.

Q: You were talking about the flash in the sky.

DOLS: That is interesting. Maybe we will know some day. I had developed a good relation with a New Zealand journalist who was a stringer for AP among other things. About 1:30 am in the morning the phone rang and he said, "I am just writing a story about a nuclear explosion in space that has been found by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (the organization in New Zealand that does all the scientific stuff)." My ears really perked up. I asked him what he had and he told me. What he wanted was certain background things to understand what he had heard better.

It just happened that the Permanent Secretary of that Department was also a fellow I knew very well. So as soon as I got off the phone I got on the phone with the Permanent Secretary and asked him about it. He said, "Yes, it is true, we have detected some kind of radiation fall off and we are not quite sure what we got, but it looked pretty strong." I decided to pick up the phone as I felt there was no time to send telegrams as it would be on the morning news programs and in the papers. I called the Operations Center and said, "Heads up you got a nuclear high explosion in space story coming. Get ready. Alert people. Here is basically the story."

It set off then a whole series of investigations. We had all kinds of military and scientific types trying to figure out was going on. The Agency got involved. And of course they

looked at tapes and whatnot and saw that there was some kind of phenomenon. That bounced around for years. It is still kind of an open subject. But the theory was that it was some kind of South African/Israeli explosion. Who knows. Maybe it was just nature acting in funny ways. What happened with the New Zealand investigations was that eventually the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research put out a statement that they were mistaken, that their test tubes, or whatever, were contaminated. I always smelled a rat there, but there it was. I don't think we will be told the truth for some time as to just what that was.

Q: What were you doing in Pacific Island Affairs, and what was the situation at that time?

DOLS: We were trying to clear away those island treaty situations that we talked about before. We were trying to deal with the fishery problem. We had seizures and so on. The seizures were a major problem because the Fishermen's Protective Act which gave the fishermen compensation for lost fishing time, damage to gear, tackle, ship, etc. The bottom had dropped out of the tuna market. The fishermen had bought these expensive boats with all kinds of fancy gear in the early '70s. They bought designs that were fuel hogs. Fuel was still relatively cheap. Then you get two oil shocks, the bottom drops out of the tuna market. Many of them went into bankruptcy, or at least the boats were tied up. It became advantageous to go out and get seized if you could.

We had a perfect example of that in the seizure of the Janet Diana by the Solomon Islands...actually it was picked up by an Australian PT boat operating to the Solomons. We paid out two sets of $800,000 for lost fishing time. Other amounts for damaged gear, for loss of fish that were aboard at the time, etc. By the time we were finished we had paid out maybe $8 million before we got the boat back...for a boat which had depreciated in market value to $400,000. So we gave the owners in effect a real windfall all because of the Fishermen's Protective Act.

When you called Congressmen's attention to this, how it really worked out in practice, they were appalled. It was born back in the 1960s with the Ecuadorian and Chilean, Peruvian seizures. There we were, paying, paying, paying. So we had to deal with a lot of that.

The other big problem was the whole Micronesian status negotiation thing.

Q: These status negotiation things were done by special negotiators weren't they?

DOLS: What had been done organizationally was that a special negotiating office had been set up called the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations. It was an interagency office to be staffed by State, Interior, and Defense with a person with ambassadorial title as the head of the outfit. What happened is they located the office over in the Department of Interior building. Interior didn't actually contribute people to the staff since they

provided the office space, etc. and felt they were in immediate liaison with them anyway and didn't need anyone else on the staff.
So it was a State/Defense office located in Interior. These people were supposed to get their marching orders from an interagency group back here on the subject. So that is where the Asian Pacific Bureau got into the act.

We had Ambassador Zeder as the head of it at the time. I was Island director. Zeder was very much like so many non-professional negotiators going to get an agreement. Anything for the agreement. Or at least that is the way it appeared to us. So our problem was like it is with so many negotiating groups to keep them from giving away the farm in the process. He was very close to the current President, who was then Vice President.
Q: George Bush.

DOLS: He would invoke that kind of authority whenever he needed a little bit of political clout. Usually he would have his way because the Assistant Secretary for Asian and Pacific Affairs didn't want to tangle with the political ramifications of that. So we would have long battles in the interagency group and Zeder would go off and do what he pleased even thought he was counter to direct instructions which he was supposed to take. He did it anyway and knew he could get away with it.

He would come to the Asian Bureau staff meeting and would report that we had really tough negotiations this week. It was a knock down, drag out fight, and of course it appeared that this was all with the Micronesians. At the end he would drop the word that it was the Department people. We didn't win on any of that stuff. He simply used his political capital to run away with it.

Q: In American interests from your point of view while you were there, what did you feel came out of these negotiations that was to our detriment?

DOLS: Mainly, he totally misjudged how to get an agreement with Palau and we never have gotten an agreement with Palau. There were ways, but it would have taken some real toughness and he wasn't going to do that. The other thing is that it cost us far more than it should have. We could have settled this a lot earlier with the other two, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. We could have settled it much more cheaply if we had settled earlier on a number of issues.

The third problem was that Interior really wanted to maintain the colonial relationship somehow. They for instance wanted to continue to house the US Government's operation vis-a-vis these two countries in Interior. They wanted in effect to carve a piece off the Asian and Pacific Bureau's jurisdiction and they wanted whomever ran the office to have an ambassadorial title even though he was strangely floating around...just like this OAS head with a kind of interagency mandate and an ambassadorial title.

Well, the Soviets at the time were saying this was nothing but a sham annexation and we are not going to let it get through the Security Council. We, on the other hand, were

plotting how to deal with a veto in the Security Council. We kept telling Interior, "Look, guys, the colonial era is over and you certainly don't want to do things that reinforce the Soviet argument."

Q: And, of course, the Secretary of Interior sounds like the Ministry of Interior which is the police force in most totalitarian countries.

DOLS: Even a closer comparable organization would be the Colonial Office in the British System. They wanted to staff our Embassies partly with Interior people, etc. We didn't mind that provided it didn't become an Interior labeled organization that we put out there as an Embassy. We did not want to shore up Soviet claims.

Q: Has that been resolved?

DOLS: That was eventually resolved and eventually jurisdiction over the relationship was kept within the Asian and Pacific Bureau. So we won out on that. We won organizationally, we lost on about every other issue. Not that the solutions that were arrived at were wrong, they just cost too much.

Q: Looking at it bureaucratically, did Interior have enough clout to really get away with this politically within the Reagan Administration?

DOLS: They had some because the Secretary of Interior at the time had been involved early with Micronesia and knew and took an interest in it. They had several very active Assistant Secretaries who were politically appointed and who were interested in this particular problem and they allied with Defense all the time against State, because in the heart of hearts they really wanted to annex. This was about third choice down the line...this free association thing. They wanted to make free association not really an association between sovereign states but some lesser dependency situation.

Q: What about Congress? Was it in on this too?

DOLS: We had fights there too. We had two committees at loggerheads. The House Foreign Affairs vs House Interior committees. The Foreign Affairs people obviously didn't want kind of a strange domestic jurisdiction to be carved out of a portion of the world and housed elsewhere, especially when that organization would not be answerable to them. So they were our allies. The Interior committee people had for so many years had a really, lovely relationship with the islands. They doled out the money and played Great White Father on visits, etc. and they didn't want to give it up. Those Congressmen who played that game...one notable one from San Francisco particularly... loved it. They were lionized. The islanders knew how to squeeze money out. So they didn't want to give up jurisdiction.

Q: Was the Soviet card something that could be played...if we don't do this they will move in?

DOLS: Claims were made but nobody ever took that stuff seriously. Besides that we had the outcome so much within our own hands. There was a very important strategic decision made in how we finally configured our proposals. If you look at Micronesia and the islands going northward...Guam, Saipan, etc....it is kind of like an inverted T with the base of the T pointing up to Japan. The top of the T is really at the bottom and has got on the west Palau, in the middle the Federated States and on the east the Marshall Islands.

The strategic conclusion was that we had to above all learn the lesson of World War II when our line of communications to the Philippines and elsewhere was cut off on the first day of the war. In other words you had to make sure that you didn't have an adversary in place. The way we could do that is by maintaining some sort of defense rights in all of these places, but especially the Pentagon wanted the bottom of the T pointing up toward Japan in our secure hands. So that is why we offered commonwealth status to the Marianas. So we have now the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas which is an integral part of the United States. It can't get out. Whereas with the people on the bottom of the inverted T we have security rights which prevents them from allowing third country military forces into their territory without our permission. That was considered enough.

But we did want to keep our lines of communication to Korea, Japan and Formosa, Taiwan open in that sort of permanent way and that is why we wanted this closer relationship with the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

Q: From 1986-87, just about a year, you went back to the FSI. Is that right?

DOLS: Yes.

Q: You were dealing with political training. Could you give a word on how you train somebody to be a political officer?

DOLS: We decided the old kind of training was not reaping the right kind of results. So we redesigned from bottom up a whole knew training program. Basically an experiential methodology. A lot on reporting in particular. Reporting techniques, a lot of practice in reporting, quite a bit on negotiations...all the skills but in a very practical, sort of down to earth put your hands on it way. It was an interesting kind of experiment. Some aspects of it worked very well, others lesser so. We expected after the first, second or third run to have to do a lot of retooling. We were still in that process when I left. It was a total revamping. I would say we had very good success with the first two runs. I was gone after the second run.

Q: I have to say after 30 years in the Foreign Service unless I got something in the basic officer's course I didn't get anything.

DOLS: The attitude was that there was no way to train these people. They are either born that way or they are not. What made that true in part was that we had very talented

people. If we hadn't had such talented people, they wouldn't have learned on the job quite as well. But why waste years learning the gig.

Q: There are certain things that one can pass on. You retired about this time?

DOLS: I retired after the political training job.

Q: But then you have an interesting sort of post career thing. The training of Micronesian diplomats.

DOLS: While I was still in political training the then director of FSI said, after I had already told him I was planning to retire, "Would you take over the training program of Micronesians?" Under the compact of free association we were obliged to provide a diplomat training program. We had done that only once previously when the Filipinos became independent in 1946. We had done a little bit of training of several other countries' diplomats right around 1950 and that is all the experience we had with that kind of thing. The British and the French routinely did it every time they gave birth to a new state. That is why the Micronesians wanted it. They said the British and French do it all the time why not for us.

So money was put into the compact package for that. I was asked then to put the program together because I had both the island background and the training expertise.
Q: So it was a natural fit. What was your impression of the people who came in?

DOLS: We went out and did a needs assessment in all three of the island states and by the time I had finished that I had a very good idea of what kind of people we had. What it amounted to was that we had every kind of person. We had people who hadn't graduated from elementary school to university graduates. We had quite an age spread. We had mainly elitist types but we had a few others too. We took a look at the Foreign Office organizations in the three countries and made some recommendations there. We set up a program which addressed their most immediate needs. Then we were going to phase it into different categories of training as the years went on.

Because they were all very small Foreign Offices, anywhere from five to 25 people, they couldn't afford to have many people gone at one time. So we would put two training sessions on a year and we would keep bringing them back year after year after year, each time giving them a higher increment of training.

It is still going on and I don't know whether they have gotten off the bottom floor though because the one thing the managers of the program are doing which violates the rules we set up was you didn't get into the second program until you did the first one, etc. To take care of the problem of new hires in effect, we trained island trainers to train their own diplomats. We wanted to get out of this business. They haven't gotten very far along that line either because nobody has pushed that aspect. I hope they are not too comfortable just running this program forever.

Q: These things happen. Looking back on your career what gave you the greatest satisfaction would you say?

DOLS: I suppose just getting a grasp of the complexities of the cultures, societies, governments, etc. in these various places. Each time you turned a new leaf you got a little bit better at getting into the new situation. That was kind of satisfying. You could see that after about the fourth country you were much more prepared to understand what was going on in a kind of raw, conceptual way. In the beginning you only see trees.

Q: Well Dick, I thank you very much. I appreciate this.

DOLS: You are very welcome.

End of interview