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

JONATHAN (JOCK) DAYTON STODDART

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is an interview with Jonathan Dayton Stoddart which is being done on behave of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Jock let's start with when and where were you born?

STODDART: I was born outside Eldorado, population 75, in Dorchester County, Eastern Shore of Maryland February 2, 1922.

Q: Could you tell me a little about your family and their backgrounds?

STODDART: Both of my parents were from Philadelphia. My mother came from a

relatively affluent family. She was born, as was my father, in 1896. She was a very bright, gregarious, and attractive young woman. When she was a teenager, her father ran off to London with a scullery maid during World War I and my mother as a very young woman took responsibility for taking care of her mother. She became a newspaper woman and worked for the old Philadelphia Record in advertising. After World War I, she met my father, who came from a completely different family background, respected but poor. He was orphaned by the time he was five years old and was brought up by a wonderful woman, his grandmother, who worked at the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia until her early 80s. He spent ages six through ten in an orphanage outside of Philadelphia. He graduated on an accelerated curriculum at the age of 16 from Central High School in Philadelphia, which was considered a very elite, good school. In pursuing his ambition to be a writer, he started out as a copy boy and then became a sports writer by the age of 19, for the old Philadelphia Inquirer. He became close to a number of players at that time, particularly Ty Cobb and Roger Hornsby. When the U.S. entered World War I in 1917, his poor eyesight precluded service in the U.S. military, so he volunteered and became a mechanic in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Following the war, he moved to New York and worked for the old New York Sun and was a contemporary of H. L. Mencken. He became music critic and then drama critic. Around the mid-twenties he became a theatrical press agent and traveled around the country extensively with Walter Hampton, who was a great Shakespearian actor. He also worked with Helen Hayes, Clifton Webb, Fred Allen, and Humphrey Bogart. In the meantime, he had married my mother in 1921 and I was born in 1922. He was on the road with a show when I was born. I was born in my grandfather's home in Dorchester county, outside a little town called Eldorado, during the great blizzard of February 1922, which prevented my mother access to a hospital. I was delivered by a local midwife.

The marriage fell apart and my mother subsequently remarried in 1932 to another theatrical press agent, a man named Richard Maney, who became probably the most famous of the press agents between 1925 to the time he died in 1969. He wrote Tallulah Bankhead's autobiography and he wrote his own memoire called Fanfare. Both of them were reasonably successful.

In the meantime, my father gave up theatrical life and decided he was going to be a writer full time, which he did with mixed results. He did publish two books and many magazine articles in his lifetime. I now spend my spare time pouring through a lot of his many manuscripts. My father died in 1964 and my mother died in 1979.

Q: Where did you go to school?

STODDART: For my first four years I went to Eldorado elementary school, a building with four rooms, no electricity and no plumbing. Then I went from Eldorado, Maryland, population 75, to New York City in the 1930s.

Q: Was Eldorado a farming community?

STODDART: Yes, essentially. Farming and there were numerous canneries in those days

on the Eastern Shore. There were a lot of transient workers who followed the season starting off in Florida and ending up in New Jersey. Tomatoes, green beans, watermelons, and cantaloupes were the staples in those days. Corn, rye, and wheat were also important crops. It was an agricultural area but very, very poor.

Q: Was there a race problem there at that time?

STODDART: Oh, very much so. In fact, in 1933, my grandfather took me with him to look over some old guns at a farm east of Salisbury, Maryland. He was a great gun collector with one of the largest private collections in the U.S. On the return trip to Salisbury, he took an alternate route around town because they were in the process of lynching two black men accused of raping a white woman. This gives an insight into the social mores of the Eastern Shore at that time, same as the Deep South.

At the age of 10, when I went through somewhat of a traumatic culture shock, I moved to New York City to live with my mother and her new husband, Richard Maney. I went to public school for two years and then to Trinity School, a private school, under the auspices of Trinity Church between Amsterdam and Columbus avenues, on 89th street. So, I had six years at Trinity School.

Q: What were your main interests?

STODDART: Believe it or not, I enjoyed Latin and did reasonably well at it, and history. I had a wonderful history teacher for four years at Trinity. I also liked English very much. I think that might have been reflective of my father's influence, my stepfather's influence and my mother's. She was a very intelligent, widely read person.

Q: Do you recall any of the books that you read?

STODDART: In retrospect, I think I did the most serious reading in my life between the ages of 14 and 18. I read many of the classics, which was my father's influence more than anything else. He would recommend books. I read all of Thackeray, Vanity Fair and the Book of Snobs stick out. I read all of Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson, a good hunk of [James] Fenimore Cooper, which I gather nobody reads anymore, Balzac and DeMaupassant, War and Peace, Anna Karenina, etc. We didn't have TV in those days. I had a radio but don't remember listening to it much. I enjoyed reading. It was a great release and comfort. They used to serialize novels in "The Saturday Evening Post" by Kenneth Roberts, Nordhoff and Hall, and others. Wonderful stuff like Mutiny on the Bounty, Men Against the Sea, With Roger's Rangers, Arundel, etc.

Q: I found Oliver Wiswell's book by Roberts absorbing because it showed there was another side to the revolution. And of course, I read everyone of his. There were some very good historical novelists.

STODDART: I also was an amateur poetry buff and was particularly fond of Byron, Keats, Kipling, now passé, and of course Shakespeare.

Q: Oh, yes. The Saturday Evening Post had these wonderful stories and also the fishing, crunch and death stories, etc. A lot of fun. How about at home at the dinner table? With your stepfather involved, this was one of the great periods of American theater and there is much written about it. Were you at all plugged in as an eavesdropper into the theater world?

STODDART: Oh, very much so. I went frequently to the theater for free and had choice seats. People like Tallulah Bankhead, Lillian Hellman, Helen Hayes, Ben Hecht, John Gardner, John Chapman, a long-time theater critic for the Daily News, were always around the house. My stepfather was a very gregarious Irishman who loved to socialize. I wasn't drawn into very many discussions with these people but they were around.

Q: Were you attracted to the theater as a profession?

STODDART: Not as a profession, no, but I enjoyed it and still do. Reluctantly I don't go much anymore. I was spoiled with all those free tickets. My stepfather also had an annual pass to the Polo Grounds so I could go up and see the New York baseball Giants and root against them.

Q: What was your team?

STODDART: The Boston Red Sox. As you can tell I am obviously a masochist. I was also a big Dodger fan because I hated New York when I first moved there. I identified the Yankees and Giants with New York but not Brooklyn because I considered that sort of alien territory across the East River.

Q: When you were getting out of Trinity whither? Where were you going to go for higher education?

STODDART: My mother took me on a trip the end of August, early September, 1939. We went to Cornell, Middlebury, Williams, Dartmouth and Wesleyan. We were going down to Williamstown from Middlebury on Route 7 and were coming into Bennington on September 1, 1939, when we heard on our car radio that war was declared. My mother had a very solemn moment about that. But anyway, I decided that I liked Cornell because every summer I would go back to Eldorado and work. Starting at the age of 12, I would work out in the field picking tomatoes, beans, wheat thrashing, or working in a cantaloupe packing shed. When I was 16, I got my social security card and worked in Neal's Cannery in Hurlock, Maryland, as an assistant canning machine operator for 10 cents an hour. At ages 17 and 18 I was an assistant truck driver taking cantaloupes and watermelons to market in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

Q: This was the depression and I don't know if that was a good wage or not.

STODDART: Well, that was the prevailing wage in the mid to latter '30s. You would start at 10 cents an hour and then go up to 12 ½ cents. My step uncle, a wonderful guy,

who graduated from high school got a job with the Maryland state road authority at $30 a month. To have a job was the number one priority and that was actually a living wage. He and his new wife paid $5 a month for a very nice bungalow in Eldorado, with indoor plumbing, an oddity.

Q: You were at Cornell from 1939?

STODDART: No, from 1940. I started out as an agriculture major, believe it or not. I had this screwed up romantic idea that I could become an estate manager or run a farm and became a veg [vegetable] crop major at Cornell. When I got a 59 in agricultural engineering, the teacher marked it up to a 60 and gave me a D. I already had misgivings. I worked on a dairy farm in the summer of 1941, outside of Morvia, New York, up in the Finger Lake region, gratis. That was supposed to be sort of on-the-job character building training for a good ag [agriculture] student. By then I had already made up my mind that I was switching to liberal arts and take a major in government, which I did. Beginning my sophomore year my mother had to reimburse Cornell $200 for two terms, $400 in all, for my pre-run as an ag student. Cornell was schizophrenic, half state and half private. Home Economics, Agriculture, Veterinarian were all run under the aegis of the state of New York.
Q: As a government major were there any particular elements of government that you were particularly interested in? Were you looking at it as a career?

STODDART: I had two superlative professors. Herbert Briggs was an international lawyer and considered one of the best in the country, so I enjoyed that very much. And there was a guy named Cushman who taught constitutional law and I enjoyed that equally. At that time, I focused basically on pre-law courses, but I also took one course in international relations which until after World War II, was not widely taught in this country. I enjoyed history and English literature, a carryover from my prep school days at Trinity.

Q: Obviously there was a little thing like World War II. How did that effect what you were doing?

STODDART: We all knew we were going to get nabbed after Pearl Harbor, so like many of my colleagues at Cornell we all took accelerated summer school courses. I enlisted November 2, 1942 in something called the Enlisted Reserve Corps of the U.S. Army. Once you did that you were subject to call up at any time but it gave me about five months extra of school. So, I was at Cornell until the end of March, 1943. I went into the army from Westport, Connecticut where my mother was living at the time and went to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, going through the standard indoctrination and doing reasonably well on the Army aptitude tests that they gave us. This buck sergeant told me that theoretically I could indicate a preference where I would like to go but indicated the Army does what it wants, not what a raw recruit prefers. I wanted to stay as close as I could to the east coast because I was deeply in love with a young girl that I had met at Cornell. I found out that the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland was a good bet and told the sergeant that Aberdeen was an okay option. And I got it, which was unusual. So,

off I went to Aberdeen to the Ordnance School and basic training, which I found deadly in all respects. How to repair artillery pieces, move ammunitions, repair tanks, or change a flat tire, disciplines which I was not very good at or interested in.

Somebody told me that there was a brand new school that had just started which was all volunteer - very hush, hush - and being run by a British cadre. This was the Ordnance Bomb Disposal school. So, I went over with a friend and talked to some of the guys and we volunteered. Subsequently, after about five weeks time I was a tech corporal. One of my officers said I should apply for officer's candidate school (OCS), which I did. I was admitted as of September 1. By then I had married the same lovely girl at Sage Chapel, Cornell, in Ithaca, New York, August 11, 1943. After a short honeymoon I went back to Aberdeen and spent four months in OCS and was commissioned a second lieutenant at the end of December, 1943. Then I volunteered to go back to Bomb Disposal School as an officer, which I did in mid-January 1944. The officers course was a tough regimen as, per British practice, only officers could defuse bombs, booby traps, mines, and ammo [ammunition].

I went overseas in April, 1943 stationed in Dorset, southern England where I trained with a British Bomb Disposal unit. We had a very unique setup, organized with an officer and six enlisted men. I had a tech sergeant, a buck sergeant and four model T corporals. The intelligence aptitude was very high with these guys because they had all volunteered. My tech sergeant was a member of the state legislature in South Carolina for instance. He was in his mid thirties and had volunteered. My unit was the 76th Bomb Disposal Squad (separate). In a bit of inspiration, we dubbed our 2 ½ ton truck "The Spirit of '76."

Q: What was the attraction to bomb disposal? It is probably the most dangerous job in the military. Was there something other than flirting with death all the time?

STODDART: You didn't think about that. If you calculated the risk, I guess none of us would have done it. It was always the other guy that was going to pack it in. The appeal was that you had a sense of independence. You were of the U.S. Army, but you were really outside of it in many respects. I can say now, Stuart, looking back over a period of 57 years, it was the only job I have ever had where I didn't have some SOB looking over my shoulder while I did my work. People left you alone. We had our own administration but we were dependent on a larger unit for logistic, medical support, rations, pay, etc. That sense of quasi independence was a very compelling thing to all the young guys.

Q: Did you end up disposing bombs?

STODDART: Oh, sure.

Q: Where and how did that work out?

STODDART: Well, it worked out pretty well. I was in England until D+15 when I went to Normandy. I was assigned to an Aviation Engineer Battalion that put down aluminum matting strips in developing forward airstrips for our C-47, P-47, and P-51 aircraft. My

job was to go around and make sure before the engineers started to level a strip to put planking down that there wasn't any dangerous ordnance around. Actually when we were in Normandy most of our job was getting rid of mines, booby traps and unexploded artillery pieces. I stayed with the Aviation Engineers across France, up into Belgium, did a little work in the Dutch panhandle and finally into Germany. So, I was in four campaigns in Europe.

Q: What army or army group were you with?

STODDART: With all of them actually at one point or another. In the breakout from Normandy that took place through St Lo I was with 3rd Army following Patton across Normandy down to Chateaudun on the Loire and then up to Etampes and into Paris two days after liberation. That was a great experience.

Then when I got to Belgium, we spent time with the 1st Army and the 9th Army. During the Battle of the Bulge we were assigned to Montgomery and the 21st Army group. The fate of all Allied forces north of Rundstedt's drive into the Ardennes, induced a nervous period as we were billeted between Brussels and Liege. And in mid-March, we crossed the Rhine with the British and Canadians and went up to Bremen with the Brits because under the terms of the Four Power agreement to subdivide Germany, that part of Germany was to become the British zone but the U.S. was to have access to Bremen as a port of entry and use of its airfield. So, I went up to make sure the airfield was secure in terms of possible booby traps or mines. The North German Lloyd Line ship the Bremen was still along side the dock, and although we had virtually obliterated Bremen and Hamburg in bombing raids, this 55,000 ton ship had some shrapnel marks along its side but was basically intact. I was ordered to make sure that it was secure. It was going to be six men and myself going through this monstrous ship, an unappealing assignment. I got a bunch of Germans to do it. They could pull the handles on the flush toilets. The Germans liked to booby trap flush toilets. So we bounced around depending on what particular unit my superiors wanted to assign my squad in disposing high explosives.

Q: The war was over in May of 1945. What happened then?

STODDART: I went down to the American zone, Nurnberg, and it is hard to believe that I was the senior operational Bomb Disposal officer in central Europe at that time. I was a captain. Fast promotion was another great attraction to Bomb Disposal. We used to say that you went up fast, literally and figuratively. It was my job to collect all the Bomb Disposal squads in Central Europe in a central location, which we did in the small town of Burgfarnbach about 10 miles west of Fuerth, which in turn was an outlying village of Nurnberg. So, I requisitioned a castle and 17 young women who were in a displaced persons camp in Nurnberg to serve as cooks and cleaning women, etc. They were Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, two Russians and several Poles, an eclectic group. My basic job was bringing all of our Bomb Disposal prima donnas together and sorting out personnel to decide who was going out to the Pacific.

Q: I would have thought that right after the war Germany must have been loaded with

unexploded ordnance. Was this pretty much turned over to Germans to take care of?

STODDART: No. We actually had a couple of officers killed while I was running my little castle in Burgfarnbach. I told our 9th Air Force headquarters that they were going to have a mutiny on their hands. The guys had survived the war and now they were blowing themselves up by defusing German munitions. I said that this was a job we could supervise but the Germans were going to have to do it. We were on the verge of a real serious problem with the great thinkers at headquarters. Somebody finally saw the light and that is what happened. We organized Germans to do the job and we supervised from a relatively safe distance.

But, after that, it was basically an administrative problem sorting people out because the Army had this convoluted point system. Of course, we were all greatly relieved when the war in the Pacific terminated. I ran the Burgfarnbach operation and sort of phased it out by the end of November. I came home in early 1946. I came to Washington because one of my great friends, who I had recruited out of OCS to go to Bomb Disposal, a guy named Al Engel, [whose] father was a very well known Republican congressman from Muskegon, Michigan. He was also a great friend of Harry Truman's – they played poker together. Truman was in the Senate and Engel was in the House and they were both activists against war profiteers at that time. I told Al Engel that I really didn't know what I wanted to do but thought I would like to switch from the possibility of law school to going to graduate school and study international affairs. Congressman Engel said that he knew somebody in the State Department who could give me some advice. A guy by the name of Robert Taylor, who was an ARA (South American) type.

So, I went down and talked to him and he mentioned SAIS (School for Advanced International Studies) and the Fletcher School. He knew the dean of the Fletcher School, Bobbie Stewart, and he said he would write a letter to Stewart. He also gave me Stewart's phone number and I called the Fletcher School and the dean's secretary made an appointment to see him. This was early April. I went up to Medford, Massachusetts, and had a good talk with the dean and a couple of the other faculty members. We didn't have any civilian clothes in those days and I was on terminal leave from the army and was wearing my uniform, hopefully for a good first impression. They wrote me a letter saying they would accept me if I got my degree from Cornell. I had about 20 credits to finish my B.A. [bachelor of arts degree]. I took a double summer school and graduated in early September from Cornell and immediately went off to Boston.

Q: Was your wife following you?

STODDART: Oh, yes. In fact, we had a son who was born in the spring of 1944 shortly before I was off to England. She was a wonderful woman. She died in 1969 of cancer at the age of 44.

Q: That's sad. You went to Fletcher from?

STODDART: From September 1946 to September 1948. I got my MA [master's degree]

in 1947 and stayed the additional year because I was working on my doctoral dissertation. Those were two great years. It was a very small school in those days. We had 40 in our class plus 10 graduate students who were working on their doctorals. And a pretty distinguished class. Several went into the Foreign Service staff or CIA. Notables included Bill Sullivan, Bill Brewer, Ed Mulcahy, Haydn Williams, who became president of the Asia Foundation, George Springsteen, Bill Dale, and Nat Davis. Some of our classmates went into teaching or commerce. We also had an impressive foreign nucleus. Jean François-Poncet, later Foreign Secretary of France, a couple of very distinguished Chinese students, and a Norwegian, Per Vennemoe, who ultimately became Permanent Under Secretary in the Norwegian foreign office, the ultimate job for a career officer.

Q: I would imagine that particularly at this time, 1946-48, there must have been a lot of emphasis on remaking the world, the role of the United Nations and all that.

STODDART: Right, and with the exception of two or three male students, we were all veterans. There were six women in our class, including Marie, who married Bill Sullivan. One of the non-vets was this very bright guy from Brown who irritated the old veterans on occasion, Nat Davis.

Q: Who later was Director General of the Foreign Service and ambassador to Chile and elsewhere. Did you find that there was a big emphasis on a new post world, international world?

STODDART: Very much so. In our own arrogance we thought we had won the war that was to end all war. Cynicism didn't start affecting us until around 1948 when the Cold War began to heat up.

Q: There was the coup in Czechoslovakia and the Berlin airlift which sort of changed the entire map of Europe. What were you thinking of doing? I know you said you stayed an extra year to work on your Ph.D. Were you thinking of teaching?

STODDART: Yes, I was. In fact, in 1948 I had a very attractive offer to go to Newcombe College, which is part of Tulane. That's a women's college. But, I got an offer from George Washington here and I took it because of access to the Library of Congress to complete my thesis. I was convinced I had a very good thesis, as [were] my professors at Fletcher. The topic was the influence of Zionism on U.S. foreign policy.

I came down here and during the first year I was keeping not one chapter but one page ahead of my students. I had a very, very tough teaching load. I took over a couple of courses that Fred Hadsel, then an active Foreign Service officer, had been teaching at night. I don't know if you knew Fred. I had 700 students. So, the first year I had [no] spare time to do anything with my thesis. We also had our second child that fall, having been in Washington for all of two months. By the middle of my second year at GW, I got a cubicle in the Library of Congress and arranged my schedule in the spring of 1950 so I could have about a day there every week. So, I was doing pretty well until the Korean War came along and I was recalled as a Reserve captain in the U.S. Army.

Q: June 25, 1950.

STODDART: Right. I got nabbed again having stayed in the reserves and never thought of or managed to change my military occupational speciality as a Bomb Disposal officer. In early 1951 I ended up in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and was assigned to V Corps. While I was less than enchanted with my recall, things could be worse. V Corps was to be the first deployment in support of the NATO buildup under General Eisenhower, who went to Paris in February 1951 and activated Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe [SHAPE]. Then I found out that I was being detached from V Corps and was going to be sent to Korea as a casual replacement in Bomb Disposal. I fought that like hell and ultimately was able to get to Washington in old Army G2 (intelligence) in the Pentagon, where I served out my term until mid-1952. In the meantime, I left all of my thesis notes in the Library of Congress and I never went back, a great mistake. So, my thesis was another one of the casualties of the Korean War.

Q: The topic was just getting hot in 1948 because we recognized Israel at that point and the Zionist influence was the ultimate factor in that.

STODDART: Well, my faculty adviser who was one of our great diplomatic historians. Ruhl Bartlett, who died three years ago at the age of 95, would admonish me every time he saw me over the years for never having finished my thesis. He said that it would have made a very, very valuable contribution to the study of American foreign policy.

Q: While you were working on the thesis, were you getting a feel for the influence of Zionism within the foreign policy apparatus?

STODDART: Very much so. When Truman made the decision to recognize Israel, completely dismissing the views of George Marshall and Dean Acheson, it was politics to the fore.

Q: Also, I suppose it was very much his former haberdashery partner who was Jewish who came and pleaded with him.

STODDART: Oh, Jacobson.

Q: Yes. You were finally let go by the military in 1952.

STODDART: Right and I was less than enthused with the prospect of returning to George Washington. My wife was working as a teacher in a private progressive day school, Burgundy Farm, in Alexandria that had integrated in 1948, which was unusual for that time and place. This was six years before the Supreme Court decision on Brown and the Board of Education. After my first year at George Washington, I asked for an audience with the president, Floyd Heck Marvin, because I felt that I was entitled to a raise. I was making a lot of money for them teaching 700 students. My base pay in 1948 was $3,200 a year plus the privilege of teaching a full summer school for $810. So, that

was $4,010. I felt I was entitled to a boost and my department head supported me and set up an audience with President Marvin. I told Marvin quite candidly that I had a family to support and thought on the basis of my record I was entitled to a salary increase. He fiddled around and pulled out a piece of paper and said, "Well, Mr. Stoddart, I have talked to your department head and several other people and your point is well taken. We are going to give you a substantial raise." I was diplomatic enough not to ask him what that meant. I ran from his office to talk to my department head who wanted to know how it went. I said, "Well, I think very well. President Marvin has offered me a substantial raise. Just what does that mean?" My department head said, "A hundred dollars." I said, "That's pretty good. A month?" He said, "No, a year." So, I am going from $3,200 to $3,300 a year. And that was a substantial raise. A fifty dollar raise with an intermediate raise and a token raise, $25 dollars.

So, my decision was very easy when I was due to get out of the army in July, 1952. I had done a pretty good job apparently in G-2 because I was asked to stay on as a civilian at the exalted rank of, I think, GS-9 at the time, which was something like $6,500, doubling what I made at GW. So, I stayed on as what was referred to as a civilian consultant in the Western European/Near East area of army intelligence. I held the job for seven years with one year off as the recipient of the first Secretary of the Army Fellowship program that was offered in 1957. I wrote up a prospectus of what I intended to study which entailed a year in Europe being headquartered in Paris. My study title was the military institutions of NATO. So, I spent three months traveling around Europe with my wife and two children in a most confining way, a Hillman Minx convertible.

Q: A very small car.

STODDART: Yes, not very roomy. But, we made it. We went from Paris to Naples all the way up to Oslo and everything in between during the three month period from June to September, 1957. It was very enjoyable.

Q: I would like to take you back to your 1952-57 period when you were a civilian working for the Department of the Army. What type of intelligence work were you doing?

STODDART: Basically current analysis. They had something called the Daily Intelligence Briefing and a Weekly Intelligence Report and a much more voluminous analytical monthly. These publications were distributed all around the senior level of the Pentagon, not only the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Army, and senior officers but copies went to the Secretary of Defense and key assistant secretaries, etc. The Daily Intelligence Briefings would be based on intelligence we would receive from Defense Department assets in the field. We also would see some State Department message traffic, but most of our information was based on messages from the Army attaché system and material from NSA.

Q: The National Security Agency which monitored codes and communications.

STODDART: I had a clearance to deal with NSA traffic and some of the reports from

CIA, but this analysis went to a very confined audience because of the security restrictions.

I would write analysis from this material as well as conducting a lot of oral briefings. The G-2 hierarchy considered me a good briefing officer. During the Suez 1956 crisis, I worked extensively for three months in briefing the Secretary of the Army. This served me well when I applied for his fellowship. So, there is nothing like being in the right place at the right time. A little visibility did not hurt.

Q: What was your impression of the reports you were getting from the military attachés?

STODDART: Pretty uneven. To be honest with you I would say 50 percent of it was worthless, not of good quality at all. We had a very good Army attaché in London during the Suez crisis. He had good ins with the Brits so he knew precisely when the British might deploy their major army units in the Salisbury Plain area to the Mediterranean. It took a long time to get their forces started, and the initial buildup was in their two operational bases in Cyprus. We were getting very accurate reports on the British and French movements starting in early October until their invasion in the Port Said area in the first week in November. That was a memorable and traumatic period. I was at a meeting at CIA headquarters on 23rd street on election day 1956 presided over by Allen Dulles and all the intelligence chiefs and I was directed by the G-2 to attend. I sat in a chair along the wall. Dulles said that he had word from his brother, John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, that the President was not only agitated but was pissing mad at the Brits in general and Anthony Eden, then Prime Minister, in particular. That was at the same time of the Hungarian uprising. It was a very interesting meeting in retrospect. I must say Allen Dulles impressed me in the way he handled himself in that meeting, measured and calm with his pipe emitting smoke. I can't remember who the INR (intelligence research bureau in the State Department) guy was at that time. Parenthetically, the British-French-Israeli intervention and the U.S. condemnation of same sealed Anthony Eden's fate as prime minister and any future in British politics. So Ike won this one.

Q: I would have thought that in your job getting military attaché reports are pretty good for building up orders of battle and things like this, but for real what's going on, with the exception of somebody maybe having an in with a foreign military, the CIA and State Department reports would give far more information to anybody who wanted to be aware of the situation and would be more important to Joint Chiefs of Staff because the military looks through a small keyhole rather than the broad picture.

STODDART: Well, you are absolutely correct. And when they did make an effort to try and analyze some politico-military event, usually it reflected a very conservative bias, which was built into the system. It was part of our job to try to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Anyway, I had that very good year in Europe, 1957-58 and when I came back I had some friends who were working in the Office of International Security Affairs (ISA) in the

Office of the Secretary of Defense. I was recruited by ISA and moved there in early 1959. I became the desk officer in the European Region Office of ISA for Iceland, Scandinavia, and the UK. We had a lot of very challenging issues and problems in that area, particularly involving Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and the UK.

Q: The cod wars?

STODDART: We didn't get involved in that one except at the margin but it certainly didn't contribute to good relations between the Brits and the Icelanders. We had serious problems with our base in Keflavik in Iceland and we had an Air Force general up there who was straight out of Dr. Strangelove. A guy named Prichard whom when I first got on the job, early in 1959, had made some really dumb remarks that had infuriated the Icelanders. So, I was directed to go up there and talk to the ambassador. That was when I first met Tommy Thompson, who I found a most congenial host and a wonderful person. In fact, I stayed with him. It was a delicate diplomatic problem and one that worked out very well between the ambassador, State Department, ISA, and the Air Force. We got Prichard yanked. But other problems persisted. When U.S. forces originally went into Iceland during World War II, there was a "gentlemen's agreement" that we wouldn't deploy black troops to Iceland. Over the years this became a very difficult problem to contend with, as was the appeal to our forces of many of the Icelandic women, but on balance the U.S. Air Force and Navy have done well in minimizing problems.

But, our big business was with the Brits because it was the period that we had a range of ongoing arms deals with them. They were buying C-130s and F-4 aircraft from us, plus an array of other material. But their prime target was Polaris submarines. This all culminated in high level talks in the Pentagon in June 1960 between the U.S. and the UK. Secretary of Defense Tom Gates, an extremely able and profane investment banker of faultless social pedigree, led for the U.S. The British negotiating was headed by their minister of defense, Watkinson (later Lord), a not overly impressive Conservative Party member of Prime Minister MacMillan's cabinet. But he had an array of supporting talent, including Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, then Chief of the Defense Staff, Sir Solly Zuckerman, Chief Scientific Advisor, one of the technological heroes of World War II, the Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign Office, Sir Richard Powell, etc. So this was not a nickel and dime negotiation. I was numero [number] one action officer and note taker for the 4-5 days involved. What the British wanted was our sale of the blueprints and technology of the Polaris submarine. Secondly, they wanted the U.S. Air Force to fulfill its commitment to the Royal Air Force in the development of the Skybolt air to ground standoff missile to ensure the long-term viability of the RAF"V" Strategic Bomber Force. On the U.S. side, with CNO Admiral Arleigh Burke pressing the case, the U.S. Navy wanted full access for the first overseas deployment of the Polaris at Holy Loch, Scotland, west of Glasgow off the River Clyde. After much negotiation, the deal was struck, although Gates restrained himself on several occasions from erupting at Mountbatten's preening and overbearing aristocratic attitude. As backdrop, we should remember the mutual U.S.-UK equities of the time. The Brits were our closest allies. We had strategic and tactical airfields throughout the UK, vital communications links, the closest collaboration in intelligence, and above all the THOR Intermediate Ballistic

Missile, which gave the MacMillan government a lot of static from the public, the press, and the Labour Party. So the negotiation was amicable and with the full support of EUR in the Department. Russ Fessenden and his staff were helpful throughout.

Q: Were Sweden and Finland on your beat?

STODDART: I had Sweden and Finland but we didn't have much defense oriented business with either one of them. I did take one trip to Finland in July 1960 and Roy Melbourne was the DCM (deputy chief of mission). In fact, Roy and his lovely wife, Virginia, put me up at their residence. The junior officer who took care of me while I was in Helsinki and introduced me to the pleasure of crayfish and aquavit, Ted Sellin, remains a valued friend to this day, as do the Melbournes.

Q: At the time that you had this particular area, was Sweden sort of let in in a quasi way to what we were doing and we wanted to know what they were doing? Was Sweden seen as a potential ally?

STODDART: We did pay much attention to Sweden. We had our military attachés there but State at that time did not want the Defense Department to get overly engaged with the Swedes. It was a question of respecting their neutrality. I know for years that senior officers, admirals and generals, were enjoined from going to Sweden.

Q: You stayed with the Department of the army for how long?

STODDART: Seven years with that one year off for good behavior.

Q: So, you were there until 1962?

STODDART: From 1952-59, about 6 and a half years actually. Then for two and a half years I was with ISA in the European region after which I was designated the Department of Defense's nominee to go to the National War College, 1961-62, which was a great year.

Q: At that time what was your impression of how the War College worked?

STODDART: I thought it worked very well. I understand that the curriculum has been revised. We had small working groups of 12 people or so plus a faculty member and would be assigned a particular subject. For example, what should our strategy be towards Eastern Europe and the Warsaw Pact. We would work on that for a week and then move on to another group and another subject. I thought it was a good educational process. Each of us was required to do a term paper. I would say that the quality of the guest speakers at the War College was very, very good. We would get people who were not widely known like the relatively unknown professor from Harvard named Henry Kissinger. You could say it was a gentleman's year, but one which profited me greatly through the contacts I made there and later used in my subsequent career. I recruited two of my Navy classmates to go to ISA and one of them was Bud Zumwalt, who just died a

couple of weeks ago (January 2000). I introduced Bud to Paul Nitze, then Assistant Secretary, ISA, and that certainly didn't hurt Bud's career, although Bud was an extraordinarily gifted person in his own right. The other one was Ralph Weymouth, who ended up as a vice admiral and one of his sons married Katherine Graham's daughter, Lally. I can't overemphasize how important the contacts made during the War College became over the years.

Q: You left the War College in 1962. Did you go back to ISA?

STODDART: Yes. I went back to ISA and was promoted to a GS-16 and made Deputy Director of the Near East, South Asia and African [NESA] Region which covered a lot of territory with a multitude of problems at that time. The so-called nominal director was a brigadier general and a very nice officer, but also not very effective. It turned out that he had petite mal. You would go in to brief him and he would suddenly conk out. So, I really became the de facto director of the region. We were covering problems and/or crises involving Greece/Turkey/Cyprus, Arab/Israel, Egypt/Yemen, India/Pakistan, India/China, Iran, the Congo, Ethiopia, and Morocco, to cite some of the pressure points. As the Brits would say it was a dog's breakfast.

Q: You were doing this from 1962 to when?

STODDART: To mid-1966. It was a tough four years. Those four years professionally were the most demanding of my career. My family life was much diminished.
For example, our usual array of problems was magnified by Chinese Army incursions in November 1962 into Indian territory in the northeast frontier area and Ladakh in the high Himalayas. In the latter, engagements were being fought at 22,000 feet. Indian resupply of men and material was a logistic nightmare.

Anyway, the panic buttons went off in Delhi, Washington, and London. The Indians asserted publicly that the border fighting was prelude to a massive Chinese attack on India proper. In retrospect, this judgment was greatly overdrawn, probably by design. Historical evidence suggests the Chinese had only limited tactical objectives in mind and not a grand strategic design against India.

It is well to remember that prior to November 1962, India under Nehru had a strong animus toward the U.S. We were the Cold War bad guys while India had very close ties to the Kremlin, including large arms supply deals for the Indian military. Nehru, along with Tito, Nasser, and Sukarno, were activist proponents of professed neutrality in a Third World version of international politics. This, plus the close U.S.-Pakistan relationship, did not make for congenial U.S.-India dialogue.

What a change the Chinese wrought. India sought immediate help from us and the Brits. They requested transport aircraft (C-130s), mobile radars, communication equipment, light pack artillery, machine tools for ordnance production, Navy A-4 attack aircraft for their one aircraft carrier, The Vikrant, plus a laundry list of other items. We and the UK did provide some modest aid from the start but the details of our - and the UK's -

emerging relationship with the Indians awaited the spring of 1963. It was then that Defense Minister Chavan brought a large negotiating team to Washington. Meanwhile, a spirited debate was underway in our government on the dimension of our engagement with India. State, supported by Ambassador Bowles and later his successor, John K. Galbraith, favored pressing our new opportunity to the maximum, as did the NSC and White House. Defense was more ambivalent. McNamara and Bill Bundy, then Deputy Assistant Secretary. ISA basically supported State and the White House, with caveats. The JCS were more guarded, mindful of the equities of the U.S. Army and USAF in Pakistan.

It was all sorted out in the negotiations with Chavan and his entourage in April 1963. Combat aircraft were rejected. One of the USAF consultants was Colonel Chuck Yeager, the legendary test pilot who broke the sound barrier. He was most persuasive in arguing against the Indian case. In close consultation with the Brits, we provided much of Chavan's wish list minus major lethal equipment. They agreed in turn to the establishment of the U.S. Military Supply Mission, India, in our embassy. It was headed by a U.S. Army major general. His deputy, of all people, was Brigadier General Tibbets, pilot of "Enola Gay" fame.

The so-called "mountain war" petered out in 1963-64. But this was a daunting, challenging, and exhausting experience. It marked a watershed in our South Asia policy. It ushered in a slow but steady erosion of our influence with the Pakistanis. Whether we got offsetting compensation from our new influence in Delhi is for the historians. I think not.

Q: What was the spirit of the times as far as sending troops in? Was the whole idea how to keep our politicians from putting troops in to the Congo, the Near East, etc?

STODDART: We provided substantial logistic support in the Congo but the bulk of the UN forces came from India and Pakistan who amazingly enough occupied the same golf course outside what was then Elizabethville. There were also contingents of Irish, Italians, some Scandinavians, and Canadians. The Pakistanis and Indians with full brigades were the heavy hitters and were the ones who were the cutting edge in knocking Moishe Tshombe and his mercenaries out of Katanga.

Q: I had a long interview with Terry McNamara and he talks about how the Indians operated there, very effectively. The Irish weren't real players.

STODDART: Well, the poor Italians had an air force detachment in a little town in the eastern Congo and they were overrun and actually cannibalized. I spent a month in the Congo in January/February 1963 with the Harlan Cleveland mission to the Congo. President Kennedy concluded in late 1962 that things were going badly in the Congo and he apparently lost faith that Soapy Williams, then the Assistant Secretary for AF, could resolve the problems. That was when Harlan Cleveland, then Assistant Secretary of IO, was designated to form a small mission to go to the Congo and find out what the central issues were and, if possible, how to resolve them. There were four of us in support of

Cleveland. Dick Cashin from AID (Agency for International Development), Bill Buffum, who came from IO (International Organizations, State Department), and Mac Godley from AF (African Bureau, State Department). I represented the Defense Department. This was just after the Indians and Pakistanis in December 1962 had liberated Elizabethville and then gone on to take Jadotville and Kolwezi. That was the beginning of the end for Tshombe. It was a fascinating, if not back breaking, experience. Harlan Cleveland was a fair minded but tough taskmaster. As the DOD representative to his mission, I was particularly under the gun, as so much of our mandate revolved around the security situation, or lack of it, in the Congo, particularly when we all reached consensus that the Congo was rich in all forms of natural resources but virtually devoid of human ones, a legacy of Belgian neglect going back to King Leopold II.

Q: I've had a long interview with him. He lives out past Dulles Airport now in a place called Falcon's Nest or something like that., an air force retirement place.

STODDART: Oh, yes.

Q: How was the military responding to these events? Was there a feeling of lets keep these politicians from getting us into these international disputes such as the Congo, Cyprus, etc?

STODDART: Well you must put this in the political, social, and military environment of the times. The military chiefs were looking at the growing involvement in Vietnam in the context of their overall resources and their ability to deal with trouble spots around the world. That is why they were not very interested in volunteering to commit any forces in a place like the Congo. The Pentagon didn't think we had that great or vital interest in the Congo. I would say the Pentagon interest was much, much less than the Department of State's at that time or that of other agencies. CIA had a very big operation in the Congo. I knew Larry Devlin, who was their station chief, and I spent a lot of time with him. As we got further into the '60s, Vietnam increasingly dominated the priorities as far as the military was concerned to the exclusion of other very important interests that we had around the world. Defense would support some things at the very edge of the margin like sending some forces for peacekeeping in the Sinai or places like that but no major commitments.

Q: You were working at ISA until?

STODDART: Until mid-1966 and then I was seconded to Embassy London because in the early '60s, ISA had made an arrangement with EUR in the Department to arrange assignment of a civilian political/military officer from ISA to the embassy because of the growing volume of defense activities involving the British. We had some very big arms deals with the British that were ongoing. Besides the acquisition of the Polaris, the British wanted to buy the new F-111 swing wing fighter aircraft and in turn our Defense Department, the Air Force and Navy, in particular, eyed base right potential in the British Indian Ocean territories (BIOT) and two of its obscure islands, Diego Garcia and Aldabra. We also had some very important policy equities in the Defense reviews going

on in the UK under Denis Healey, the Minister of Defense. ISA apparently made a persuasive case to State in the form of Bill Bundy, then Assistant Secretary of ISA before he went over and took Roger Hilsman's job as Assistant Secretary in East Asia in the Department. As a result, Phil Barringer was the first person in the job in London in 1963.

I was nominated as the second ISA officer to work in the Political/Military Section of the embassy. Ron Spiers was the political/military counselor designate. He interviewed me in the spring of 1966 and accepted my assignment and we both appeared about the same time in mid summer, 1966 in London. It was the beginning of a long professional and personal relationship that lasts to this day. I must say that Ron Spiers is the best boss I have worked for in the government in any capacity. He was an extremely competent officer with a style of management that served very well. He assumed that he had competent people working for him and he let them do their thing, so there was a minimum of peering over your shoulder. My three years in London were among the most enjoyable I have had in my professional life.

Q: This was from when to when?

STODDART: From mid 1966 to July 1969. I came home a little early because my wife was in the process of dying from cancer which she succumbed to in October 1969. Returning to my London period, I found it a magnificent assignment. It was stimulating and rewarding from the sort of issues we worked on. It was a very congenial embassy beginning at the top. David Bruce was a remarkable person and a wonderful man to work for and had an outstanding supporting staff. We equally had some very fine and competent people we worked with on the British side. Denis Healey is an extraordinary personality and very accessible. There were first rate people in the foreign office and what was then known as the Commonwealth and Colonial office. The latter two designations were phased out in the early seventies. So, as I say, it was a splendid time.

Q: What were some of the issues? Earlier on there had been the Skybolt business. Was that still operating?

STODDART: I was exposed to the Skybolt issue early on as it was tied into the Royal Navy's quest for Polaris submarines. As noted earlier, in June 1960, Defense Minister Watkinson and a horde of people from the Defense Ministry, including Lord Louis Mountbatten, and a couple of representatives from the foreign office came to the Pentagon to negotiate the Polaris arrangements. Skybolt was a secondary but important part of that because the RAF very much wanted Skybolt which at that time was only under development by the U.S. Air Force. The RAF Skybolt priority was credible as their aging "V" Bomber Force was on its last obsolescent legs and could not credibly penetrate Soviet air space. Skybolt, an air to ground launched missile, could do so from "V" bombers outside Soviet air space. The USAF-RAF cooperation was a cozy arrangement because the USAF felt if the RAF went through their contractual commitment to buy Skybolt that would mean the U.S. Air Force would have easier passage for deflecting Skybolt skeptics, of which there were many. It was a classical case of the RAF and the U.S. Air Force buttering each other up. That was very much part of the Gates-Watkinson

June 1960 memorandum of understanding on our sale of Polaris to the Brits, our access to Holy Loch, Scotland, for our own Polaris and the continuation of the British commitment to Skybolt, which meant the USAF, with no reluctance, would have to continue the program by budgeting research and development funds.

All went well until January 21, 1961 when I was in my office and I got a direct call from the White House. JFK's inaugural balls were the night before and I had gone to one at the Mayflower because my wife was a prominent Democrat in Falls Church and got invited to the inaugural ball as a hostess. She carried me along as an invitee, spouse. Anyway, I had to go to work the next day and my secretary told me that the National Security Council's office in the White House was calling. I thought somebody was pulling a gag on me and I got on the phone and it was Kennedy's new National Security Advisor.
Q: Who was that?

STODDART: McGeorge Bundy. He said, "I understand you are the UK desk officer." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "You must then have the file on Skybolt." I fessed up that I had a considerable file and was the reporting officer on the Watkinson-Gates memorandum of understanding which included Skybolt." He said, "I want you to bring that file over to me in the White House." I said, "I am going to have to check it out with the front office." And, he said, "I would like you over here at 2:30. You tell you front office that you should be here with the file." So, I immediately ran across the hall and talked to Bob Knight, who was the acting Assistant Secretary. He could care less, being on the way out as an Eisenhower appointee. So, off I went with my Skybolt file. The upshot was I left the file with Bundy after an intense but civil hour of questions and answers. He sent it back to me about a week later. Kennedy was to see Macmillan, as I recall, in Bermuda in early February 1961. The White House made the decision that it was going to cancel Skybolt, which was the proper decision. Looking back on it, it was strictly a stratagem on the part of the USAF to use the RAF in a support role to secure the USAF end game.

Macmillan blew his top when he found out that Skybolt was going to be canceled. When he heard about it he sent Kennedy a very, very nasty and well documented personal cable. This didn't get the Bermuda session off to a very good start.

Q: Was it considered not a very practical use of our money?

STODDART: It was not considered a very credible weapons system and except for some fly boys in the Air Force nobody else in the Pentagon had any regrets about it.

Q: The British had put an awful lot of prestige on to this particular item.

STODDART: Yes, they did and the RAF's contention was that it was the only way that they could maintain their own aging strategic air command because they needed a standoff weapon. If they got near Soviet air space they would be minced meat. I think there was a consensus in both the Ministry of Defense and our Department of Defense that except for the air force guys that had an equity in it, that scrubbing was a very sagacious decision.

Q: This is more with Canada. Was Bluestreak something you dealt with? I can't remember exactly what it was.

STODDART: I think it did involve the Canadians, but I don't have any background on that.

Q: While you were in London, were there any major issues that you were dealing with?

STODDART: A wide range of issues. We had an interesting tripartite operation going between the political/military section of the embassy and the New Zealand and Australian High Commission offices. It all dealt on a succession of British defense reviews. We were concerned because they were talking about complete withdrawal east of Suez. And, the Australians and New Zealanders were equally concerned about maintaining a British military commitment to Hong Kong and Malaysia. And, of course, the Vietnamese thing was really heating up at this time. So, it was a tripartite interest group trying to pressure the British government to go slow on their decision making process to yank everything out east of Suez. We accepted the fact that a withdrawal was ultimately going to take place but we wanted to attenuate the rate of withdrawal. That was a lot of fun with good results. I met some very fine Australians and New Zealanders in the process. The Australian Deputy High Commissioner at that time was Roy Fernandez, who is still a very, very close friend of ours and who subsequently became ambassador to Yugoslavia and then Belgium, the European Community, the European Assembly in Strasbourg, and the Arms Control negotiations in Geneva. He wore all those hats.
Q: Was this British withdrawal pretty much a political decision or was it economics saying they had to do it? I would have imagined the British military would have been rather unhappy about it.

STODDART: They were unhappy. So was Denis Healey. The problem was Prime Minister Harold Wilson's schizoid Cabinet. He had the extreme leftists in the Labour Party occupying several key domestic Cabinet positions and then there was George Brown, who was Foreign Secretary and a real hard nose and Denis Healey. They were the stalwarts in the Cabinet and were always trying to fend off the left winger "wets" in the Cabinet who for economic reasons wanted to cut back and invest the savings in domestic social programs. As Denis Healey told Ron Spiers and myself once, "It is not a question of having a presence east of Suez, but more than 50 percent of the cabinet doesn't was a presence east of Dover." It was a very, very sensitive and emotional issue. So, the pragmatist Wilson was trying to placate everybody. Denis Healey, and the Ministry of Defense, were joined by George Brown trying to ward off the leftists in the cabinet. They succeeded. The U.S., New Zealanders and Australians were doing just what Denis Healey and George Brown enlisted us to do - in most discreet fashion - to make the case that British continued presence was necessary and that an abrupt withdrawal would be a disaster.

Q: Underlining it was if the British pulled out we would almost certainly have to replace them.

STODDART: Yes. The Australians were willing to pick up some of the slack, but they just didn't have the resources and, of course, New Zealand could do virtually nothing except apply political pressure to the extent that they were capable of doing. I think our efforts of supporting Denis Healey and George Brown, and presumably Wilson himself, was reasonably successful, although Wilson was sort a chameleon on this sort of stuff, a mark of his political personality.
The British were going through a very difficult time.

One of the other interesting things that became practically an annuity for me was the British Indian Ocean Territories [BIOT]. When I arrived in London in the summer of 1966, the groundwork had been laid for a joint agreement between the U.S. and the UK for the development of unspecified islands in the British Indian Ocean territory by the U.S. military. But, there were lots of loose ends and I inherited this when I arrived. Ron Spiers basically gave that particular issue to me and a very bright officer I had working for me named David Passage, who years later was ambassador to Botswana. We negotiated that agreement through the fall and at the British request we signed the agreement on New Year's Eve, 1966, as they didn't want any publicity. I remember we signed about 6 o'clock in the evening. There was a secret annex to the agreement which was interesting because it provided that the British would allow use of the island of Aldabra, off the east coast of Africa, for the USAF to develop a very large airfield complex. In exchange we would defray the research and development costs of the Royal Navy Polaris submarine which amounted, as I recall, to about $50 million. They were supposed to pay part of R&D cost as a result of the Gates Watkinson agreement in June 1960. In due course this secret annex seeped out because we couldn't hide the fact that the USAF was going to build a large installation on Aldabra, although it was supposed to be an unoccupied island.

Aldabra and the BIOT were issues that generated much energy over the three years that I was in the embassy. On Aldabra, the Royal Society and our National Academy of Science pooled resources and concluded that any development on Aldabra would spoil one of the unique ecosystems in the Indian Ocean and would affect not only the breeding ground of the giant tortoise, but it would also put to risk an ornithologist's list of endangered flightless rails, frigate birds, and the red headed booby.

Q: These names are engraved on your heart, I see.
STODDART: They certainly are. Over the years, the Aldabra issue was painful because the Royal Society started a letter writing campaign, mostly to the Times, and did we take the heat on that. And we were taking it back home too with our National Academy of Science. They were working in tandem and it was amusing. It turned out that the key adversary in the Royal Academy was Dr. George Stoddart, same Scots spelling, a namesake who provided much ribaldry in the embassy at my expense. I had lunch with him a couple of times and he was a real zealot. "You turn one spade of ground on Aldabra and..." Well, it turned out mercifully in November 1967, when the British were going through a very stressful economic period and decided to devalue the pound and engage in all sorts of governmental economies including the Ministry of Defense. That

accelerated again a new review east of Suez and also meant the British, because they had to put up some seed money, were going to forsake their interest in Aldabra. They pulled the plug in Aldabra in effect because they were getting so much heat from the environmentalists and their own left wing, in and out of Parliament. They also canceled the F-111 deal and a couple of other arms arrangements they had with us.

My namesake won that one, but the U.S. Navy was poised and ready to move right in on the USAF's failure in Aldabra having already done a site survey on Diego Garcia, which was 2,000 miles further east, off the southwest coast of India and the Maldives. Little specks of coral islands. So, we started a new go around on Diego Garcia beginning in 1967. When I came back to work in the Department for Ron Spiers in September, 1969, we were still negotiating with the Brits about Diego Garcia.

We had less static on Diego Garcia than we did on Aldabra, but we did have problems. For instance, we and the British official public relations line was that it was an unpopulated island but it turned out that there were about 300 copra workers on the island. We said there wasn't anything of interest that would alert the environmentalists, but it turned out there were wild ponies on the island. We persuaded the Defense Department and the Seabees to build a fence across the island to keep the ponies on one side.

We had some problems when the Seabees initiated work on the island. In their off hours, they had nurtured a little marijuana farm. Under our agreement with the British, they exercised nominal control through a Royal Navy commander and his discovery of the pot farm, not unusual in such a small space, was embarrassing but papered over. Some of the environmentalists got a little upset because the navy had to blow up a lot of coral heads in the harbor, the navy was developing. But the ensuing fish kill was nothing like Aldabra with giant tortoises, flightless rails and goony birds, etc.

Q: This might be a good place to stop. We can put at the end any other issues that you were dealing with in London that you can think of right now.

STODDART: We can reserve that for the next session, if you like.

Q: All right, we will stop here.

STODDART: Fine.

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Q: Today is February 7, 2000. What were some of the other issues in this 1966-69 period? We talked about Skybolt.

STODDART: Right.

Q: Had Britain pretty much withdrawn its military forces east of Suez by this time?

STODDART: No, that came later when Harold Wilson was elected and the Labour Party came into office in 1964. They went through this agony of withdrawal. The big issue was the pace of the withdrawal east of Suez. That consumed a lot of our time. I arrived in the embassy in August, 1966 and from 1966 up to 1968 we went through this constant review and I told you how we were in cahoots with the Australians and New Zealanders and the British Ministry of Defense and foreign office in trying to slow the British decision makers in doing something that we all felt would affect our own separate national interests. The Australians and New Zealanders very much wanted the British to stay in Malaysia which they thought was a key piece of real estate in southeast Asia which had just gone through the very difficult insurrection that the British finally put down in the '50s. They were concerned with the rise of Sukarno in Indonesia. So, we had overlapping and at times competitive interests, but all of them were aiming to slow the British down, and we succeeded to a reasonable extent.

Q: What was your evaluation of the British military establishment at this time?

STODDART: Oh, very good. My experience with the British goes back to World War II when I had great admiration for the British military. When George Brown, our Air Force four star general, who was a delightful character, became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during the Carter years in the late '70s, he was quoted from a speech he made at Duke University, when he was asked the same question. He said that it is pitiful that the great British military legacy has been reduced to a surfeit of generals and admirals and very good bands. But, that was a little too much. The British were very well trained and still are. They had a very substantial presence in Germany, the British Army of the Rhine, about 50,000 men.

Q: How about the British navy at this point?

STODDART: Also very good, very professional.

Q: There is a difference between being very professional and being large enough to carry on tasks.

STODDART: Well, that is one of the reasons that the Royal Air Force wanted the Skybolt missile because they thought it would keep their air force sustainable for another 15 or 20 years because their strategic bombing force was aging and growing obsolescent and they didn't have any replacement for the bomber because it was just too expensive a proposition. They also wanted to maintain, you have heard this story over and over again in this country, at least a competitive edge with the Royal Navy which was getting the Polaris from us. That is in effect the military mind set that you will find any place in the world, that each service wants what it considers to be their fair share of the action.

Q: Were there any other issues that we haven't covered during this 1966-69 period?

STODDART: I was going to get into that. I think we were going to cover the three years

I spent in the embassy. I should say that from a professional and personal standpoint they were three of the most pleasant years that I have had in my undistinguished career. We had a superlative embassy beginning with one of the finest men I have ever worked for, David Bruce. The DCM (deputy chief of mission) was Phil Kaiser, a first rate person. He had gone to Oxford and knew everybody - Denis, George Thompson, etc. He had incredible access. The economics minister was Willis Armstrong my first year who was succeeded by Harlan Cleveland's younger brother, Stanley. There were top people right across the board. Bill Brubeck was political counselor, Bill Galloway was his deputy, and Ron Spiers ran political/military as pol/mil counselor and I was his deputy. We had a very able officer named Dick Hennes and then the young newly minted Foreign Service officer, David Passage. David has just recently retired. He was ambassador in Botswana. There was a first rate administrative operation run by Pete Skoufis, who had some very good young people working with him - Sheldon Krys was one of them. Harvey Buffalo was another. And all the regional officers in the political section were first rate, the positions being considered one of the plum assignments in the Foreign Service. We had some very unusual people who came out there - Bill Eagleton, who later became an ambassador, and is still active working for the UN in the Western Sahara, the Polisario dispute. Steve Palmer. Wendell [Wen] Coote, who was an African specialist. Bill Chapin was the East Asia officer. It was just a first rate professional embassy.

Q: Going back to you and what you were doing. You were working on this British withdrawal and you got involved in Skybolt. Were there any other issues that particularly engaged you?

STODDART: A wide number. We had constant basing issues with the British, including sites in the United Kingdom. Part of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS), one of the three anchors, was at a place called Fylingdales Moor on the Yorkshire coast and the other two sites were in Greenland and Alaska. Our Defense Department wanted to upgrade the system and provide some needed redundancy and more sophistication, so our experts recommended that this massive installation be developed at a place called Orfordness, which is south of the Wash in eastern England. This created a problem similar to the one I was telling you about with Aldabra where the British environmentalists got up in arms. One of the ugliest birds, equal in ugliness only to a turkey buzzard or vulture, called the avocet would be threatened. Where we wanted to build was on a marshy island actually right off the coast and it was a refugee for avocets. Plus, access to the island was through the small town of Aldeburgh and its June music festival. So, we got into the same problem we had with the Royal Society, Re Aldabra, that we were going to devastate the local ecology. That was a backbreaking task but we finally got that one through, although we took an awful lot of heat from, amongst others, my old antagonist from the Royal Society, George Stoddart.

Q: Were there concessions made to save the bird?

STODDART: Oh, yes. We made all sorts of concessions. None of the British environmentalists believed it. They said the electronic magnetic pulse (emp) would end up electrocuting or sterilizing all the birds, but we gave them assurance that the Avocet

was eternal. Then there was the town of Aldeburgh, which hosted an annual summer music festival, so we agreed that large trucks would not transit town during the building phase. We had to build a ring road around the town to compensate. We also had to build a causeway to the island. All in all, enrichment of political/military officer's experience in ecology.

Throughout the 1960-69 period we spent an inordinate amount of time on arms sales issues with the British because McNamara, as Secretary of Defense, was a great enthusiast of trying to redress our balance of payment problem by dumping as much hardware as we could all around the world. He started something called off-set agreements which started with the Germans. McNamara had a very skillful, energetic arms merchant named Henry Kuss. We had multimillion dollar arms deals with the Germans. But, the Germans decided that for their own political and economic purposes that they wanted some sort of off-set arrangement. In other words, if we were going to sell them F-104 aircraft, which we sold them an abundance of, they wanted some of the pieces of the airframe made in Germany or assembled in Germany, whatever. Once that started with the Germans, the Brits quickly picked up on it and concluded that offset arrangements, more for political and economic appeal than military, were a necessity. So, we had about $300 million worth of arms business with the British per year during that period. We are talking about a billion dollars equivalent now, which was big money in those days.

So, the British wanted offsets and we had to agree to them, with painful reluctance. I spent a lot of time as the political/military attaché looking at all sorts of things with people from the Pentagon that the Pentagon could presumably buy. Anything from electronics made by Marconi to DeHaviland aircraft and Short aircraft that were made in Belfast. The British were very interested in doing the latter to aid the depressed economy of Northern Ireland. And, the British also had something called the Harrier Jet, which was a vertical short takeoff and landing (VSTOL) aircraft. It had revolving jets that the pilot could turn down to lift off like a helicopter and then turn up for regular flight. This was in the early development stage but our Marine Corps was very interested and spent a lot of time over there looking at it. Just at the end of my period in 1969, the Marine Corps put in an initial order and they are still using the Harrier. This goes back 30 years.

Every year the Farnborough air show would attract a horde of commercial aviation representatives from the United States and senior people from the Pentagon plus a lot of congressmen. I must say that one of the parts of the job that I didn't like was the monstrous number of CODELs (congressional delegations) that came through London. Some of them were more interesting than others, but for most of them you had to have very good local contacts in terms of theater, shopping, sightseeing. Fortunately, we had a local employee woman named Joan Auten who was a legend and an incredible, energetic, and clued in on every aspect of London life, the sublime to the sleazy. She had been with the embassy since shortly after World War II. My first wife, Irene, got along with her very well, a great gift to me with all our visitors. Anything you wanted she could get for you if she liked you. When people like Senator Jake Javits came to town or Ted Kennedy, and they came solo quite frequently, Joan would always take care of them personally. She

was a large woman weighing at least 200 pounds. She was great on the care and feeding of the super VIPs like Henry Kissinger.

When I was in Naples, Carol and I came up and spent some time in London and we would always take Joan out for dinner and a pub crawl. She told us some wonderful stories that I shall keep to myself about some of these high power celebrities. Although, she did tell us that every time Henry Kissinger came to town he always stayed at the Claridges [Hotel] and Joan or one of her assistants would man the desk in the corridor to his quarters. One Sunday, after attending a meeting in Brussels, he was flying into London and she got word from the airport in Brussels that the Secretary had left his special silk pajamas in Brussels and he would be very, very disgruntled if they didn't appear when his luggage was deposited at Claridges. The first thing that went through my mind was, "My God, don't tell me the Secretary of State travels with only one pair of pajamas." Anyway, Joan got the message and she called the manager of Harrods (this was a Sunday), had him open up the place, and got a pair of special pajamas and had them laid out on the bed in Henry's room when he arrived. A good story and, I think, rather credible.

Q: Oh, yes, this is the sort of thing one does.

STODDART: I remember Bob Skiff's story about being assigned to Vice President Lyndon Johnson's office. Johnson took a trip to Turkey in early 1963 and everywhere he traveled so did a monstrous double bed to be set up in his bedroom on arrival as well as a case of Cutty Sark. Well, Johnson arrived in Ankara and the bed was in place but no Cutty Sark. He threw a temper tantrum and Skiff got the short end of it. The Cutty Sark was flown down from Germany in a special air mission plane. When I first met Bob in London in 1966, he had just come up from Nairobi where he had been in semi-exile. I guess David Bruce might have heard about the LBJ affair, as he made Bob one of his personal assistants. But, such is the way the wheel turns at times in the Foreign Service.

Q: Any other issues?

STODDART: One of the most intriguing things that happened to me was in November 1967 when Richard Nixon was coming through London on his way to Bonn and then Moscow. He was dusting off his foreign policy credentials preparing for the run up to the 1968 campaign. He was coming to London with only one advisor, Bob Elsworth. Elsworth had been a one or two term congressman from Nebraska. He and Nixon hit it off very well so they traveled together. Nixon was coming to London for two days and he wanted appointments set up in the foreign office, Ministry of Defense, etc., plus briefings at the embassy. Well, what happened was pretty funny. David Bruce was in the States. Phil Kaiser decided it would be a good time to be out of town in view of his close ties to the Kennedies. So, this gets down to Ron Spiers, because Nixon wanted to cover a lot of politico-military issues. But Ron was in absentia at an important conference near Oxford. So, by default, I had to host Nixon and Elsworth. I should add parenthetically, that I was not an admirer of Nixon at all going back many, many years to his first run for public office against Jerry Vorhees in the House in 1946 and then Helen Gahagan Douglas in

the Senate in California in 1948. So, I did not have a very high opinion of Nixon. But, the job was thrown at me and I entertained them at the embassy in the ambassador's conference room - just the three of us. This went on for two and a half hours and then I took them to lunch and had somebody else escort them for their downtown schedule.

It, was absolutely absorbing. I must say that although I disliked the character of Nixon and had prejudged him, he was an extraordinary able man and asked all the right questions. He was a very good listener. We went through the gamut of British defense and security polices. I found Elsworth was an extremely competent man and got to know him over the years very well as he went on to many key positions. He was Assistant Secretary of Defense for ISA, a prominent leader in the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and ambassador to NATO. He headed for a while the Center for Strategic and International Studies here. Elsworth is a very able, solid person with good political instincts. And, of course, Nixon went on from this session in London to that famous kitchen scene in Moscow and his confrontation with Khrushchev, me thinks by design, where he got great press. He got very little public relations out of his visit to London.

We had some weird visiting personalities. Mendel Rivers, who was chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, would not accept embassy responsibility for his CODELs because he didn't think much of the foreign policy establishment. So the Navy always took care of him when he arrived. He was their bread and butter.

Q: He loaded Charleston with naval facilities and the place practically sank.

STODDART: Yes, between Dick Russell in the Senate and Mendel Rivers in the House, Georgia and South Carolina fared very well. But, Rivers was a fearsome alcoholic. He would make a courtesy call on the ambassador and that would be it.

We maintained very close contact with all of our military people in the UK and I was closely involved with them. There was the 3rd Air Force in nearby Ruislip, Holy Loch, and the whole Polaris operation in Scotland, which I visited several times, and, of course, the U.S. Navy Europe under Admiral Jack McCain, father of John McCain, which was headquartered across the street from the embassy. Did I tell you the story about John McCain being shot down?

Q: I don't think so.

STODDART: It was October, 1967 and I was in a very small meeting over in Admiral McCain's office and his executive, Captain Frank Shaw, came in with a piece of paper and handed it to McCain. With no change of expression he got up and said, "Excuse me gentlemen, I will be back in a few minutes" and he left. He came back and we continued with the meeting. It turned out that I had a squash game that day with Captain Shaw down at the Bath Club next to Claridges. I asked him what the message was about and he said, "We just got word that his son, John McCain, had been shot down over North Vietnam." That was interesting example of stoicism and grace under extreme pressure.

Q: Oh, yes.

STODDART: John McCain's father was a splendid man. He died several years ago, but his wife, Roberta, is still alive. She is 87. I saw her last year at the Willard Hotel and my wife, Carol, was intrigued talking to her. Carol said she was very impressed with her son and Roberta McCain said, "Oh, yes, John is a delightful boy but he tends to talk too much." She had an identical twin sister and when McCain was in London, the twins spent much time with the McCains. People would ask the admiral how he kept them apart and he would get a twinkle in his eye and say, "That is the interesting part, son." He was splendid. When I ended up in PM (Political/Military Bureau) in May 1970 he invited me out for a 15 day active duty tour as an Army Reserve colonel when he was commander-in-chief Pacific in Honolulu.

So, it was a lot of fun. There were so many different problems. We had very good contact with selected elements of the British press. Ron was very adept at this. We also had some very able American based correspondents. Joe Fromm, who represented U.S. News & World Report, Bill Beecher of the New York Times, Bob Toth from the Los Angeles Times. They were very responsible news people so you could talk candidly to them and they would honor anything off the record. I'm not so sure that that is prevalent these days.

Q: You were dealing with American military in Great Britain and there has always been a rather strong leftist intellectual chattering class, or whatever you want to call it, in the British establishment which just basically is sort of anti-American and anti-military. Did you find that you had to deal with that or was it just a given?

STODDART: We had to deal with it every week of our lives because on a daily basis you would have half a dozen or a dozen people picketing the embassy, primarily because of Vietnam. Then you would have the monster demonstrations led by people like Vanessa Redgrave and Michael Foote, who later became a short-term labor minister. They would fill up all of Grosvenor Square and the bobbies would be out in force, many on horseback. The only time we got a good press in my memory during the three years I was there was when some of the demonstrators rolled ball bearings in the street to spook the horses and a couple of them prodded horse with needles. Any form of cruelty to an animal offended the British very much, more so than a comparable offense against humans.

When the Greek military junta seized power in 1967, the Greek embassy was right around the corner from ours so the demonstrators would get two for the price of one. They would demonstrate against the junta in front of the Greek embassy - Melina Mercouri was there - and then she would join forces with Vanessa Redgrave and shout "Americans Go Home" in front of our embassy. But, we put up with it all. They only had one demonstration - the ball bearings and prodded horses - that got out of hand. Otherwise they were pretty harmless with a lot of shouting and yammering. We never felt bodily threatened at all.

Q: Anything else you want to mention covering this period?

STODDART: There is one last thing that I feel you might find interesting. I mentioned the third country contacts with the New Zealanders and Australians. There was another one that was very, very important at the time and again it followed me through most of my career, and that was with the Israelis and, to a secondary extent, the Jordanians. When I was still in ISA in the Pentagon, I forget to mention this, we got very much involved in revising U.S. arms policy to the Middle East. Up until 1964 our basic position on arms sales to the Middle East was to leave it to the tripartite countries, the UK, France and Italy.

In 1964, the U.S. started to get a lot of heat from both the Israelis and the Jordanians for the United States to become one of their major arms suppliers. We had an official visit first by a fascinating man named Amir Khammash. He was a general, semi-retired at that time, and a senior advisor to King Hussein. He came to the Pentagon and was interested in a wide variety of assistance, including aircraft. The Royal Jordanian Air Force consisted of 12 old Hawker Hunters, British aircraft. At the same time the Israelis were interested in upgrading their Air Force and armored units. To make a long story short, Phil Talbot was Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East/South Asia, Bill Bundy, the Assistant Secretary, ISA, and Bob Komer, NSC staff at the White House, decided that our arms policy should be restudied and, if necessary, revised in view of the Israeli and Jordanian arms overtures to the U.S.

In 1964-65, Rodger Davies was the director of the old office of Near Eastern affairs and Harry Symmes was his deputy. At that time, I was the deputy director in the comparable region in ISA. So, the powers to be, told Harry Symmes and myself to lock ourselves in a room and completely reevaluate existing policy and make appropriate recommendations for change. We spent several weeks on this tortured task that resulted in a drastic policy shift. As of early ‘65, we would selectively on a case-by-case basis, after a thorough review, be prepared to grant Middle East countries the right to buy military materiel.

Because of this, I had achieved a role of minor prominence with the Jordanians and Israelis. When I was in London, one of the first callers on me was an impressive officer named Zvi Zamir, who was the Israeli defense attaché [and later general, commanding Northern Israel and, on retirement, head of Mossad in Golda Meir’s government]. We became very close friends and, of course, with the onset of the Six Day War, the U.S. became very much involved. Our politico-military office played a backup role in support of our air attaché because the USAF had 707s flying from the United States to Israel with ammunition primarily, but not exclusively. At the same time General Khammash was spending a lot of time in London because we had agreed with the Jordanians to upgrade their old Sherman tanks from 75mm to 105mm guns.

We had the same problem with the Israelis because they were upgrading their tank force. That is when I met General Israel Tal, who was commander of the Israeli Armored Corps during the Six Day War. A brilliant man. His avocation were tanks and his profession

was as a philosopher at Hebrew University. Khammash, Zamir, and Tal remain good friends.

One of the more interesting things I remember goes back to David Bruce and the sort of person he was. Everybody thought Bruce was above the fray and did not involve himself in the more mundane operations of the embassy. He delegated very well, assuming he had competent people working for him. So the story was that General Tal called in late 1967 and asked if he could drop by my residence and talk with me after dinner. He came by about 9:00 at night after dinner and stayed all night talking. I reported by airgram that General Tal, commander of the Israeli Armored Corps, stopped by for an after dinner drink and stayed for coffee and an early breakfast, and then related the conversation about the Middle East, war, tanks, guns, and breech blocks. A couple of days later I received a note from Bruce in his minute handwriting saying, "Dear Mr. Stoddart, I cannot forego telling you what an absolutely magnificent piece of writing your airgram, A-118, was. DB," He had read the thing. I didn't know ambassadors ever read airgrams.

Q: No, I didn't either.

STODDART: So, that was one of the high water marks of my London days. I think on that note I have just about exhausted London.

The end of my tour was coming up and I think Ron Spiers had recommended that I be extended for a year, but my wife was very ill and I wanted to get back to the States. She had spent months bouncing around from military doctors to local Harley Street doctors in London and finally had a biopsy and discovered that she had cancer. That was in June, 1969. In the meantime, Ron Spiers had been named by Alex Johnson to head up the brand new Bureau of Political Military Affairs in the Department. Ron knew I had to go home and he was leaving in August and he asked me if I would be interested in working for him.

I had already accepted a job in the Office of Emergency Preparedness, the number three position there, under a venerable retired army colonel named Abe Lincoln, who was a very profound force on the West Point faculty for years. A very fine man. I was sort of at sixes and sevens, as the Brits would say, because of my wife's condition. She left with our daughter, who was then 20, and flew back to the States in mid-June 1969. I was trying to wrap up affairs in London as fast as I could and returned to Washington in early July. I took about a month off to take care of my wife as she was going through a difficult regimen of radiation treatment at the Washington Hospital Center.

In the meantime, Ron had come home and told me that he wanted me to take over from a distinguished officer who I thought very highly of, Joe Wolf, as the director of International Security Operations. I said that I would be interested but would have to clear it with Colonel Lincoln first because I felt I had an obligation to him. I talked to Colonel Lincoln and he said that I should go to the State Department, as it was better for me professionally. I went back and forth on this for about two months and finally the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs was activated in September 1969. Prior to that the

same functions were being performed by an adjunct under Alex Johnson called J/PM (Johnson/Political Military). Practically the whole cast of characters in J/PM moved over and made up the cadre of the new bureau. Joe Wolf had been one of the key figures there and I was concerned about displacing him because he had a great reputation and I had tremendous respect for him.

I joined PM around the end of September, 1969. That was a very interesting phase of my professional and personal life, too. Ron had absorbed first rate people from J/PM and brought in some new ones. He brought in as his chief deputy, Tom Pickering. The bureau was heavily pitched towards arms control because the SALT talks were starting to get cranked up, so he enlisted Ray Garthoff as deputy for arms control. That was the original organization - Ron and two deputies and six office directors. The director for International Strategy and Policy, Leon Sloss, was - and remains - a very impressive guy. Military Sales was run by Christian Chapman. Jack Shaw ran the Disarmament Office. And then there was a Munitions Control office that was over in Rosslyn. The final office was Atomic Energy Affairs headed up by Holsey Handyside. So, we were staffed by able and sound professionals.

Q: What was your particular slice of the pie?

STODDART: People would ask that and I would explain it thus. I would say, "Leon Sloss is the cerebral guy in PM and does strategy and policy. He is the guy you see selling a Mercedes through the plate glass window. My shop is the one in the rear that nobody can see and does the dirty work" We did base rights, intelligence, mundane things like overflights and ship visits that were important in their own context. General liaison with the Defense Department that covered a multitude of sins including taking over a senior ambassador or assistant secretary or deputy, whatever, weekly to a private meeting with the JCS (Joint Chiefs of Staff) every Friday at 2:00. I always enjoyed that part of the job, it was interesting.

We were involved in all of the base renewal problems like renegotiating our Spanish bases agreement and working with George Landau who ran the Iberian operation in the European Bureau; ditto the Philippine base negotiations. Micronesia status negotiations, etc. When Bud Zumwalt became chief of naval operations, he had this crazy idea of home-porting part of the navy in Piraeus...

Q: I was consul general in Athens at the time and we were practically on the dock screaming "Go Away! Go Away! This is not the place for this."

STODDART: I know, but we fell for it and endorsed Zumwalt on it. That is sort of a story of its own.

Q: Well, let's talk about your perception of this.

STODDART: I must have met you in Athens at that time.

Q: Yes. I didn't have much to do with it however.

STODDART: This all started with Bud Zumwalt getting McNamara to write a letter to Secretary of State Rogers. Bud sent a similar letter to Ron Spiers. In the meantime he had Ron Spiers and myself over for lunch. The original plan included home porting in Yokosuka, Japan, and Elefsis near Piraeus in Greece. The original concept was to put a couple of destroyers in Elefsis, but it grew by leaps and bounds. We kicked this around for a long time in the Department. We had three bureaus involved, PM plus EUR, because the navy was also talking about possibly home porting in Taranto, Italy, and Siracusa, Sicily, and NEA, which had responsibility for Greece in those days. We went out to the embassies in Rome, Athens, etc. There was a lot of carrying water on both shoulders in their responses. George Churchill, who was running the Greek desk, had strong reservations on the wisdom of the proposal.

Q: As I recall it, the logic behind this was that our ships, stationed overseas for long periods were having trouble retaining naval personnel and the idea was by moving naval families to Greece, Italy or Japan, they would be able to keep personnel on larger ships longer, because there wasn't so much time away from home.

STODDART: Yes. But it was originally put to us as a couple of destroyers, and a supply ship. You have it absolutely right, it was conceived to upgrade morale in the navy. Instead of six months deployments to the Med or longer, you would have the families close by. We went through an exhaustive survey of all the pros and cons. I remember George Churchill and I went out for ten days to Greece and talked to all the people at the air base and what effect it was going to have on schools and medical services. Those were the two major concerns. There was a very savvy Air Force colonel who ran the air base in Athens who was very candid and above board. So, originally, the embassy position was that home porting would be an irritant, but given the numbers, it would be manageable. It was going to involve some expansion of schools, commissary, etc.

Then, after being approved in Washington, we went through some extremely tough congressional testimony on the Hill. They really racked us over the coals. I had to testify with Rodger Davies and Russ Fessenden, who was then Deputy Assistant Secretary of EUR. I took the brunt of questioning because my office was the focal point of home porting. It was a character building exercise.

So, we went ahead. The two destroyers deployed to Elefsis along with a supply ship. But, then came the Zumwalt's second phase and that was going to involve an aircraft carrier. The navy was also talking about deploying a hospital ship. That is when we really took about six steps back on the whole proposition. George Churchill and I went out to Greece again and a wide consensus on the ground was against it. This included a gaggle of the navy people because of the prospect of having to keep the carrier's stack of airplanes in Crete while the carrier was homeported in Elefsis, a Godawful mess and operational nightmare.

Q: Plus the fact that you had a very unpopular Greek government.

STODDART: I was just going to say the political element became more and more critical at that point. There were a lot of rumbling of increasing opposition within Greece to the growing visibility of the U.S. Navy. So, to make a long story short, we finally cut the navy off on that one, having probably made the mistake in the first place to authorize homeporting. But, at least we had enough guts to not carry it through because it would have been a disaster for all the proper reasons - political, economic and military.

Q: I remember at the time thinking one of the Sixth Fleet's major targets could well be Libya and the Greeks had pretty good relations with Libya. It would have been an inhibitor on what we could use the fleet for. The Greeks would have almost a veto and they had not a very friendly policy towards us. That was our perception.

STODDART: Well, we survived that one. Speaking of Libya, the first job that Ron gave me when I came into the Department as director of ISO, as my shop was called, was to run an interdepartmental task force looking at our options in Libya because King Idris had just been bounced by Qadhafi on the first of September, 1969. That was a real can of worms. The Defense Department was the number one player because of their equity in Wheelus Air Force Base. The Brits were very involved too because they had a couple of small installations, one around Tabruk and another one to the west. CIA was involved, as were the African Bureau, the European Bureau, and INR.

The reason the European Bureau was included was because we were looking for alternatives to Wheelus in Europe. The Air Force contended Wheelus was absolutely essential and they couldn't give it up. There were no adequate options for clear air training for their pilots. It was like the Navy and Defense Department position now on the small island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, which we have been bombing the hell out of for years. So, that was a very interesting operation. The task force went on and on for about a year. Joe Palmer was our ambassador in Libya at the time. We sent a team out to Libya that spent a lot of time with the ambassador and with the British embassy. Most of our options to replace the Wheelus training function again were with our most maligned ally, Italy. People don't realize how great an ally Italy has been over the years.

Q: Oh, absolutely. It has always been sort of our fall back place and they have been quite willing to accommodate us. They serviced our squadron from Spain, put missiles in during the Pershing SS20 crisis, etc. You were in PM from 1969 until when?

STODDART: From September, 1969 until January, 1975.

Q: Did Kagnew station in Ethiopia come up during your watch?

STODDART: Yes, it certainly did. Kagnew and the continuation of my perpetual annuity that began in London, the British Indian Ocean territory because all through this period the Navy continued their build up and development of Diego Garcia. I used to tell people that I had the best developed insular mentality in the State Department. I was big on islands. I was involved very much in Malta, Cyprus, facilities in Crete, Iceland,

Ascension island (our rights of transit through Ascension going back to World War II with the British), Mauritius, Christmas Island, south of Hawaii, where we dumped a lot of toxic chemical weapons. We engaged the British on negotiations over Enderbury Island and assisted in sensitive arrangements involving such fabled islands as Oeno, Pantelleria, etc.

Q: I assume the Azores was always there.

STODDART: Oh, yes, very much so. The extension of our base arrangements with the Portuguese. We had a very full plate. And then we were very much involved with CIA and NSA (National Security Agency) sites and places like Iran and Turkey. We were involved with the Pakistanis at Peshawar and a very large operation we had there including the U-2 operation. I worked with the research and development people at CIA which was rather interesting. Some of the stuff was like the guy that invented all of those gimmicks for James Bond in the 007 movies. I used to work closely with INR on special projects. Did a lot of work with Bill McAfee.

Q: What was ISO's main function? Let's take the Azores. Would you set up the parameters, the problems and all that and somebody else would negotiate?

STODDART: The regional bureaus on all these base rights issues would do the negotiating. The reversion of Okinawa was handled by Dick Sneider.

Q: He was my ambassador in Korea.

STODDART: Oh, that was his last assignment before he died. He was one of my closest friends from the National War College class of 1962.

Q: Yes.

STODDART: In all these base rights negotiations we played a supporting role to the regional bureaus. Ron Spiers' position was that PM was a separate bureau and was not created to intrude on the regional bureaus' prerogatives, and he let them all know that. Ron made that very, very clear from the beginning. He said, "We think we can provide a supporting role to the bureaus in many areas with our access to the Pentagon and placing emphasis on the military rather than the political." And it worked out, I think, fairly well. I worked very closely with George Landau on the Spanish and Portuguese base issues. The same thing with the Far Eastern region with people like Dick Sneider and Sam Berger. We helped them because we had pretty good channels to the military in the Pentagon. Although Ron never told me directly, I think one of the reasons Ron hired me to begin with, was my network of senior contacts in the Defense Department that I had built up over the year, including the National War College where I met captains and colonels who ten years later were two and three star rank. Bud Zumwalt in the course of ten years had gone from captain to four star rank.

We had, also, a very good program that had been instigated in the early sixties at the

beginning of the Kennedy administration, the State/Defense Exchange Program, also known as the exchange of hostage program. The theory, which was endorsed by a whole line of very senior people in the Department, including Alex Johnson and Foy Kohler, was by exchanging middle class officers it could instill a sense of mutual respect and understanding between the Departments. You probably have heard the statement that the Potomac river in terms of State and Defense Departments' perceptions of each other, was the widest body of water in the world separating two sovereign entities.

Q: In dealing with the military, could you get a reading about how important a certain base was? When one deals with the military, the phrase I have heard used is if the military had its way it would still be hanging on to Fort Apache just in case the Indians rise again. There had to be a judgment of whether such and such a place was worth all the international heat and repercussions by hanging on to this. Was that part of your job?

STODDART: Yes, it certainly was. I had a very good Air Force colonel who worked for me, named Fred Fleming, as part of the exchange program, and he was invaluable. He went with George Churchill and myself to Athens to do a detailed analysis of home porting and he got into the nitty gritty of all the problems. His friendship with the Air Force base commander didn't hurt. I had a Navy captain who served as my deputy. These guys were very good and I would say their exposure in the State Department created an atmosphere where they could get a more balanced look and understanding of a political dimension, although you never can completely get rid of their basic military ethic or eliminate their subjectivity. I had superlative officers over the four and a half years in PM. I had three navy deputies and three different air force officers. They served us very well and were quite useful because they could make the right contacts in DOD.

Q: I'm told one of the most difficult groups to deal with, and not necessarily the uniformed military, were the Pentagon lawyers who are very hard charging legal people wanting to get everything they can with no feel for the sensitivities of the foreign government. Did you find this at all?

STODDART: The only legal people that I recall dealing with while in PM were our own lawyers. But, from my days in the Pentagon, I would say that you are 105 percent accurate. They are hard nosed guys and have absolutely no political sensitivity. There is a base rights operation in the Pentagon in ISA and it is was run by a very distinguished Princetonian and Harvard lawyer, Phil Barringer, who just retired after 50 years in April last. When I was in ISA we had a lot of dealings with them again because of base right problems involving the same usual customers, the British, Greeks, Spanish, and Portugese.

Q: Let's stop at this point.

STODDART: All right.

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Q: Today is February 21, 2000. Jock, shall we talk about Okinawa or did you have very little to do with that at that time?

STODDART: Very little. The basic action man was our good friend Dick Sneider and he was very heavily involved when he was on the NSC staff in the White House in the late sixties. Then he went out in 1969 or 1970 as political counselor in Tokyo and continued to be the key guy.

Q: Were you involved in Ethiopia, Kagnew?

STODDART: Yes, very much in a supporting role to AF. Of course, INR was also heavily involved.
Q: Was the handwriting on the wall that Kagnew was losing its technological reason for being so important or was it at this time still very much a center for communications?

STODDART: The Defense Department made a good case for keeping it saying it served a dual purpose of communications and also had an intelligence function.

Q: An intercept station, yes.

STODDART: Right. I would say in 1969-70 it was considered still a very important asset, but as things started to crumble on the Horn of Africa and then Ethiopia, it obviously became a wasting asset and that was when Diego Garcia was conceived as a possible alternative to some of the functions that were being performed at Kagnew. DOD was also looking at areas around the periphery of the Arabian Peninsula. There were a couple of islands off the south Arabian coast that they were interested in. But, I didn't get very heavily involved in that at all. However, we did get heavily involved in things like the Bahamas.

Q: What was going on in the Bahamas during this 1969-75 period?

STODDART: Quite a bit. NASA had a tracking station in Great Bahamas, outside of Freeport, the main city. That was part of the downrange Atlantic missile test range where they used to pump shots from Cape Canaveral. Then, on Eleuthera, we had a very highly classified operation run by the Navy which is now in the public domain called SOSUS. These were acoustic cables that were put down on the ocean floor at spaced intervals along the east coast and through the eastern Carribean chain. The SOSUS acoustic ears would detect Soviet submarine movements. And, of course, the Navy had a lot of the same in the Greenland, Iceland, and UK gap going up to the Norwegian sea. SOSUS was a critical facility at the time.

Another key facility was called AUTEC, which was the Acoustic Underwater Technological Evaluation Center which was between New Providence Island, where Nassau is and Andros Island to the west of New Providence. That area's water is one of the deepest in the eastern Atlantic area and was used extensively, not only by the U.S. Navy but by many of the NATO countries, the Dutch, the French, the Brits, and the

Canadians. It was a very high powered, but very under publicized operation.

With these defense equities, the U.S. was faced with the Bahamas getting full independence from the UK in 1973. We had a consul general in Nassau, Moncrieff Spear, a good buddy of mine. Fortuitously, it was a good place to visit. I took about four trips down to the Bahamas and sent other people from my office down because we had the Navy, the Air Force, and NASA with interests and we were concerned with independence and what Pindling, the prime minister, would want from us in the way of a quid pro quo. In 1973 when they achieved full independence, our first ambassador was my boss in PM, Ron Spiers. He thought it was going to be an absolute backwater and in many respects it was, but there were also some challenging problems. Not only our defense equities but drugs were starting to emerge in a big way as some of the Bahama outer islands were being used as way stations by the Cali cartel in Colombia.

Q: From your perspective, did the Bahamas work out or were there major problems?

STODDART: No, it worked out very well. The tracking station was phased out because at some point in the seventies NASA found redundant range going down into the south Atlantic. For longer range stuff they were using the Pacific, Vandenberg Air Force base in California. But the SOSUS station and the AUTEC facility were extremely important so we held on to those. I don't know if they are still there or not.

Q: Outside of Kagnew station in Eritrea do we have any other listening places? Is the one in Zanzibar long gone?
STODDART: Yes, that one is gone. We did have communications in the Seychelles and worked closely with the British on that one. And, of course, I have told you about Diego Garcia. We were somewhat involved with Mauritius because when we decided to support the Navy development of Diego Garcia after the contretemps with Aldabra, the Mauritians claimed that Diego Garcia belonged to them. That created some problems with the first prime minister of Mauritius, Ramgoolam. Mauritius is very heavily Indian in makeup. We wanted to use Port Saint Louis, the capital, as the prime staging area for the buildup in Diego Garcia. We couldn't do that because the Mauritians were irritated with us and the British. So, most of the logistic support in the buildup of Diego Garcia came out of Thailand. The Navy was successful in Mauritius for periodic ship visits into Port Saint Louis. We had interest in ship visits in places like Tunisia and Morocco, but in terms of the rest of Africa, that was about it.

The other issue of note was something called the Incidents at Sea negotiations between the Soviets and the U.S. We had had preliminary talks with the Russians in 1971 because contact between the navies was becoming very dangerous. Not only were our surface ships in the North Atlantic, Bering Sea, and Norwegian Sea playing a game of chicken with the Soviets, but our reconnaissance aircraft were coming dangerously close in surveillance missions to Soviet units. It was dicey because when our surveillance aircraft, P-3s, primarily flying out of Keflavik in Iceland or out of Norway, Soviet ships in response would activate their radar and the guns. Some very nasty incidents that were never publicized narrowly adverted serious confrontation. It was decided that in the name

of detente that emerged from the SALT I talks it would be a good idea to get the respective military together to see if they could set up some ground rules to avoid these provocations. Not only in the North Atlantic, but also in the Mediterranean and in the northern Pacific.

Nixon had a trip scheduled to visit Moscow in June 1972. There were a lot of peripheral things that we wanted to tie up with the Soviets and one of them was to get a signed Incidents at Sea agreement. So, in the early spring of 1972 the Incidents at Sea talks picked up. We had been telling Ron and people like Alex Johnson that it was very important that we have a State representative on these talks. I wanted my deputy, a Navy captain who was a flier, to represent us. Ron said that would be fine but he wanted a professional State Department member on the team. Anyway, as it turned out, I became the vice chairman of the U.S. delegation under a three star Navy admiral named Blackie Weinell, a splendid guy who later became a four star and was the U.S. military representative on the NATO Military Committee in Brussels.

The Soviet delegation came over in May, 1972 to wrap up an agreement. These sessions were held at Fort McNair and the nominal head of our delegation was Secretary of the Navy, John Warner, now a senator from Virginia. He presided over the kickoff session and then left it to Blackie Weinell and presumably me. It was a very tortured negotiation. They had ten Russians, generals and admirals, all seemingly highly suspicious of the American side. I think several of them were very uneasy about any sort of negotiation. They were very tough minded and I don't know if this was a stance or whether this was just innate professional military conservatism. After about four days we couldn't get any sort of agreement, so we decided to ship the whole Russian delegation to Florida for a few days. I don't know if we sent them to Disney World, but they did visit Cape Canaveral to give them an idea of some American muscle. They came back refreshed and ultimately we were able to nail down an agreement. It was a very interesting operation.

Q: Did you find that at a certain point when professionals were talking to professionals they were on the same wavelength once they got over the initial discussion?

STODDART: Yes, that is basically what happened. Blackie Weinell was marvelous. There was a lot of drinking going on and the Russians got friendlier and friendlier. We did make the mistake of taking them to the Kennedy Center to a Bach concert, whom we later found the Russians consider a pariah. But overall it was a very successful operation and a very fascinating one. They invited us all, with wives, over for a very liquid lunch at their dacha near the Wye plantation on the Eastern Shore. They presented each of us with a bottle of vodka and cheap perfume - Moscow nights. Subsequently, when Nixon went to Moscow in June, that was one of the signed side agreements.

Q: Were ground forces included in this or was it Air and Navy?

STODDART: It was just Air and Navy and no submarines. Just surface ships and aircraft.

Q: Was there concern at that time about this game of chicken with submarines, because

both sides were beginning to do this?

STODDART: Right, that is one that the Soviets wanted to pursue. Our submariners felt we had a singular advantage over their submarines in terms of what they call cavitation or reduction of noise made by the submarine, and we were afraid if we tried to get any sort of arrangement there, we would be giving away technological secrets the U.S. submarine powers to be refused to get into at all. The Russians probably would have been willing to negotiate but it was a non-starter with our Navy.

Q: *Was there the equivalent of a hot line or something set up? In other words, was there a liaison between our military and the Soviet military, naval and air, so if something started to happen we could cool it down?*

STODDART: No. There was supposed to be a hot line between the White House and the Kremlin, which was always a misnomer, until just a few years ago when an actual direct line was established. We were supposed to use either military and/or diplomatic channels. I have talked with our Navy people over the years and they said it has worked very well. Another place where there was a very dangerous situation was in the Mediterranean. At periods of tension, the Russians would deploy as many as 40 of their ships into the Mediterranean. This occurred at the time of the Six Day War and the 1973 War. Admiral Ike Kidd became a very good friend. He was the commander of the Sixth Fleet and he said in 1973, during the Israeli-Arab War, the 33-33 longitude-latitude mark in the eastern Mediterranean south of Cyprus was like an international boat show with so many Russian and American warships and a few British boats thrown in. That was about the same area the USS Liberty was attacked by the Israelis in the Six Day War in 1967.

Q: So I assume we were taking no chances that that would occur again.

STODDART: Oh, right.

Q: Were those sort of the main things that you were dealing with or is there anything else you would like to mention?

STODDART: Let's see. I had the Bahamas. We had a lot of problems with the Indians because of what they conceived was our too close relationship with Pakistan in the '70s. These problems were compounded because of some of our military deployments at that time. Henry Kissinger ordered the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into the Indian Ocean, unbeknownst to virtually anybody at the working level. This created a furor. Bud Zumwalt was still CNO in the navy at the time.

Q: This was part of the tilt towards Pakistan stand, which was quite ill advised.

STODDART: That came about during the secession of Bangladesh in 1973.

Q: This was sort of a fait accompli and nobody was asking what this would do if we put an Enterprise task group into the Indian Ocean at this time?

STODDART: Well, a lot of people did. Zumwalt and the navy were pushing this and we were working with the problem. Zumwalt floated it with Ron Spiers and we had a very good position all mapped out. But it was all academic because Henry Kissinger preempted everybody and decided a show of U.S. force would be a good idea. So, he gave the word to Admiral Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and off the Enterprise went. It created quite a dustup with the Indians in particular and it was not a morale booster for many of us in the Department.

Q: Well, it was meant to. It caused a lot of people, myself included, to ask what did this mean, we were not going to attack anybody. A carrier group is not going to be much of a threat to the subcontinent anyway, so what is this all about?

STODDART: After it was all over, Ron Spiers sent a personal note to Bud Zumwalt, saying that he saw this whole exercise as "excessive enterprise."

We maintained very close relations with the NATO people in Europe. I did this particularly in the Mediterranean area because I had been invited for active duty tours in Naples. First under the auspices of Dick Colbert, who was a super person. He was the commander-in-chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe through 1974 when he became very ill and died on his way home of leukemia. Dick Colbert was one of the first officers in the early '60s assigned by the Defense Department to the State Department as an exchange officer. He was a Navy captain at the time and assigned to the Policy Planning staff. He developed a great reputation and retired as a four star admiral.

He was succeeded by Admiral Horacio Rivero, who later became our ambassador to Spain. Rivero invited me again for two weeks active duty and I was able to take advantage of those two weeks looking into the home porting operation, including home porting attack submarines at La Maddalena in Sardinia. Rivero was a very interesting guy. He and John McCain, Jack McCain's father, were Annapolis classmates and bitter rivals. They were both about 5'5". I told you that about McCain in London and his eventually becoming commander-in-chief, Pacific, in Honolulu and he invited me out for a two-week tour of active duty and that is when I told you I went to the Philippines, Okinawa and Tokyo and stayed with Dick Sneider. When Rivero was ambassador to Spain, it was said he was the most popular American ambassador ever in Madrid because he was the only ambassador who Franco could actually look down on. Rivero was shorter than he was. Probably an apocryphal story but it could be true.

Q: You left this job in politico-military in 1975. Where did you go?

STODDART: I went to Naples as the political advisor. The previous summer Al Haig was designated SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe). I had been recommended by a couple of people, including George Vest, to replace Ted Long who was scheduled for reassignment in mid-1974 as political advisor to Andy Goodpaster, who was then SACEUR. Then when Nixon resigned and Ford came in the big problem with the people around Ford was what to do with Alexander Haig, who had been Nixon's Chief of Staff. He obviously was not going to be maintained in the White House by Ford.

Jonathan Moore, who had been Eliot Richardson's right hand man for years and had worked for me in the Defense Department before he came over to the State Department with Bill Bundy when he became Assistant Secretary of East Asia Affairs, was a very, very good friend of mine. In fact I am the Moore's only son's godfather. He was amongst the coterie of behind the scene advisors trying to provide some reasonable policy options for the new president. Jonathan said there was a lot of discussion about what to do with Haig and the ultimate solution was to send Haig to Europe to replace Goodpaster. That was a very, very controversial decision. It antagonized the U.S. Army, particularly the higher ups, because Haig was jumped over 30 or 40 generals more senior to him. Andy Goodpaster was a very revered person not only in the Army but outside the military. He still is. He is a fit for all seasons man. So, a lot of people were outraged feeling Goodpaster was being done in. This is a long winded way of saying as soon as that happened my prospects of going to replace Ted Long went out the window because Al Haig had already picked his own political advisor and that was Bob Brown, a close friend of Haig.

Then late in 1974, the revolution took place in Portugal where Salazar was bounced and the young majors came in and effectively took over power in Portugal. There was a lot of paranoia in Washington that under these young majors Portugal was going from the extreme right under Salazar to the left under Communists, quasi Communists, whatever. We had a very good ambassador, Stuart Scott, and DCM, Dick St. Post, there, but Kissinger got rid of them, sending out Frank Carlucci as ambassador. Carlucci picked as his DCM Herb Okun, who was then political advisor (POLAD) in AFSOUTH, Naples, and who I knew well from my trips to AFSOUTH. Okun called me from Naples to tell me that he was going to Lisbon and he would be moving fast because everybody was very neurotic about what was going on in Portugal. So, he gave me a heads up on it. He said that Naples would be a good post. By that time I had been in PM for over five years and was looking for a change. The powers to be put my name forward and I was nominated to succeed Herb Okun. That was about mid December and I was in Naples by the 20th of January, 1975.

Q: Just to get at the beginning, you were in Naples from 1975 to when?

STODDART: From mid January, 1975 to Bastille Day, July 14, 1979, four and a half years.

Q: Who was the NATO commander when you arrived?

STODDART: A guy named Admiral Means Johnson. I had known him when he was a navy captain. He was a very congenial, social, Alabaman. He was very politically oriented and was a protégé of John Stennis, the senator from Alabama, which obviously did not hurt Means Johnson's career. He was very happy to see me, he had known me. We weren't close but he had certainly seen me around. Means had had an interesting career. He made rear admiral and as such was the Navy's legislative liaison on the Hill, a perfect job for him. Then he had a rather non-substantive job after that but got promoted to vice admiral. Having John Stennis as chairman of the Armed Forces Committee didn't

hurt him. He replaced Dick Colbert and was in place when I arrived in January, 1975. He had been ready to retire from the Navy as a three star when the job opened up in Naples and a lot of people were astounded that he was nominated for the AFSOUTH job. But, he got his four stars and off he went to Naples.

He was somewhat of a controversial figure. He was a highly social animal and had an equally social wife, Hope. When I arrived we had a first-rate consul general in Naples, Dan Horowitz. Unfortunately, we didn't overlap for more than four months because he retired in the late spring of 1975. But, one of the immediate problems that Dan alerted me to, as did subsequently a few other people, including the British consul general, Keith Butler, with whom we became very friendly over the years, was that there was a clear perception that senior NATO American staff, beginning at the top with Means and Hope Johnson, had been basically seized hostage socially, or co-opted, by some very unsavory Neapolitans. In effect, the dark, seamy side of Neopolitan "nobility," the extreme right, if not fascist, were a gaggle of threadbare, dissolute counts, dukes, barons, and spouses. So, this was a very tricky situation. I had also been alerted to this before I left Washington, George Vest saying that he had heard there were some problems there. And, it was true. The Johnsons would have a party and a good proportion of their guests were overt members of the MSI.

Q: Which is a right-wing party.

STODDART: It was Mussolini's former party. His granddaughter is in Parliament now as a member of the MSI. The MSI is very strong in southern Italy, in the Naples area, Calabria and Sicily. So, it was an acute embarrassment and a very delicate situation to try to resolve. I talked off the record candidly to a couple of Means Johnson's aides who I thought were trustworthy and intelligent enough to absorb the message. I could not talk to the AFSOUTH chief-of-staff about it at that time, an Army lieutenant general named Jack Norton, because this guy was off the wall himself. So, redemption occurred when after much talk about retirement, Means Johnson decided to retire in August of 1975, as there was a bonus if you retired before the beginning of a new fiscal year (October 1, 1975). But this was a minefield of an issue that we had to cope with through the summer of 1975. But the end results were fortuitous, as there was a push from Washington to get somebody a little more energetic and broad-gauged to succeed Johnson.

This whole issue more or less became moot when Stansfield Turner was announced as his replacement. Stansfield Turner was arriving in September 1975. We were all ecstatic. Here was an officer who was a Rhodes scholar, and had been president of the Naval War College. In the meantime, one of the great albatrosses around headquarters, the chief-of-staff, Jack Norton, was replaced in June or July by a Lieutenant General Robert MacAlister, who was just absolutely a super officer. Bob MacAlister had been the commanding general of the Army Southern European Task Force at Vicenza. He was erudite with a great sense of humor, had taught English at West Point, and knew Italy and admired the people. We remain very close friends to this day.

When MacAlister arrived, I told him about the perception amongst the locals as well as a

lot of people outside of Naples, including Embassy Rome, of the affinity between senior American officers in Naples and the extreme right, including the MSI. MacAlister took this aboard. In the meantime, I had written a long report about this to George Vest in the Department and suggested the importance of briefing Stansfield Turner on the problem. I gave a copy of my report to Bob MacAlister, who was very appreciative.

So, it was a breath of fresh air and a new awakening. We had MacAlister come aboard and this highly energetic new CINC (commander-in-chief), Stansfield Turner, en route. However, things were not so good in terms of the consulate, where Ernie Colantonio arrived as consul general in June 1975. I can say in absolute candor that both I and my good wife, Carol, who I had the good fortune in November 1970, made every effort over the years to establish a close relationship with Ernie and his wife, Mildred, but it just didn't wash. I think he resented my position at AFSOUTH viewing me as a competitor, which was sort of foolish. He did try to undermine me in a rather crude way a few times. But that is enough on that. I had very good relations with virtually everybody else in the consulate. There were many top professional people there. People like Ruth Davis, who is now head of FSI (Foreign Service Institute) and a super gal. Jim Creagan and his wonderful wife. The SKOL's Ron Oppen, a USIS officer. And there were marvelous local employees who were very supportive. So, we had a great relationship with everybody in the consulate except the consul general.

Q: Well, one of the problems with Ernie Colantonio was that he was born in Naples or just outside and was affected by a syndrome that happens when the local boy goes away, and comes back. He knew some very peculiar people who were sort of the godfather types. I succeeded Ernie as consul general in Naples. I think I saw the threadbare nobility once at a dinner where I shook hands and that was the end of it. Ernie got too involved in almost local matters as a contact of not savory people.

Turner wasn't there very long, was he?

STODDART: No, he came in in September, 1975 and left around March 1, 1977 to take over CIA. So, he was there for about a year and a half. That was an interesting year and a half.

Q: How did he operate?

STODDART: He operated very close to the chest. He was a great communicator corresponded with people all over the world, academia, political. He considered himself an intellectual and he was to a certain extent. His political instincts obviously were acute and he was a tough squash player. He was well read and had a rich command of contemporary events. He had made some revolutionary changes at the Navy War College that generated the same sort of negative reaction that Bud Zumwalt got when he became CNO from the old barnacle-encrusted crowd in the Navy. Stan Turner revised the curriculum at Newport and made it much more muscular intellectually. He was an activist. Personally he was a very nice guy but very egocentric. He suffered from what I call four star syndrome and over my career I have known a lot of four stars. Most of them

were very well balanced people; it hadn't gone to their heads. But for some, it was going back to Lord Acton, power corrupts. He had the capacity on occasion to make some mistakes if he thought in the final analysis that he had all the answers. That was not so damaging when he was CINCSOUTH, but it became more so when he became head of CIA. Bob MacAlister and I spent a lot of time with Turner after he came back from a quick trip to Washington in February, 1977. He had been called back to have a session with the President Carter because Ted Sorensen's nomination as director of CIA had been withdrawn at Sorensen's request because so much static was emerging from the Senate about his qualifications to run the agency. So, Turner hops a T39 to catch a Concorde flight in Paris and off to Washington. He comes back and calls MacAlister and myself in and told us he had been offered the CIA director job by the President, an admirer of Turner's from their Naval Academy days. He said that he wanted us to give him unadorned advice about the job and also asked us about people he thought could help him. We spent many, many hours with him.

General MacAlister and I recommended to Turner very firmly not to let himself be isolated and insulated by building a blue wall of exclusive Navy advisors. We knew that he wanted to take three naval people, which was fine. He had a very bright commander, who also helped as a speech writer, and two other competent aides. That should suffice. The mistake Admiral Raborn made when he was named CIA director to replace John McCone was to bring in half the Navy to man his front office. And Turner seemed aware of this. I heard subsequently that one of his major problems in management of the Agency was that he had done precisely what we advised him not to do. He walled off and was not accessible to the old civilian hands in the agency. And, of course, he came in with this mantra that everything can be solved by technology, and that the so-call "humint" (human intelligence) was much less consequential given the great strides in technology.

Q: Your talking about satellite imagery, radio intercepts and that sort of thing?

STODDART: Yes. So, he fired a lot of station chiefs and shook things up and gave the tech people higher priority than the blue collar spy types. That is what I have read and heard from a lot of people I know from the agency. It is unfortunate. I enjoyed working for him because he was a splendid person in many respects.

Q: The command there is really not so much a military command as a political command. You have the French equation with the French elite. You have the Greeks and the Turks and then you have Israel hovering off on the edge. This was your job really to keep him apprized. Why don't we talk about the French first and then we will go to the Greek Turkish issue.

STODDART: Okay, when the French pulled out of the integrated military structure of NATO in 1966, they had been part of the command structure in the Med, not only at the headquarters in Naples, but there was an odd hybrid called CINCAFMED in Valletta, Malta. That was a major command at that time and one of the legacies of the British naval interest in the Mediterranean which basically was a gift to Lord Louis Mountbatten.

He became the first CINCAFMED in Valletta. So you had a real mutation, the Naples command and this redundant headquarters sitting down in Malta. We went through Malta while I was at the National War College in 1962 and CINCAFMED was still around.

Between 1962 and my arrival in 1970, some sense of logic prevailed. The British were in the process of withdrawal, not only east of Suez but to some respect east of Gibraltar. The command in Malta was deactivated and a subordinate Navy command established in Naples was put directly under CINCSOUTH. You had three basic commands. The Air Force command was COMAIRSOUTH, Naples. The Army was bifurcated. COMLANDFORCESOUTH was commanded by an Italian four star general in Verona. COMLANDFORCESOUTHEAST, which was supposed to join Greece and Turkey in Izmir, Turkey, but lost clout when the Greeks withdrew their liaison officers following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. Finally, we had this odd naval curiosity I told you about that was housed in Malta. In the Bay of Pozzuoli, north of Naples, there is a lovely small peninsula called Nisida where the new naval headquarters were set up for COMNAVFORSOUTH, which absorbed the remnants from Malta. The commander was an Italian four star admiral. The British, having lost the Valletta top job, were given the consolation prize of chief-of-staff at NISADA, rank vice admiral, Royal Navy, and senior British officer in the Mediterranean. So, we had a lot of brass floating around in Naples.

You asked me what my basic function was. Okay. I forgot to mention one of the other responsibilities I had back in the State Department as director of International Security Operations. That was the care and feeding, information, and administrative requirements of not only the POLAD program, but also the State-Defense Exchange Program. When I inherited the POLADs from Joe Wolf, we had political advisors in Ramstein, the Air Force headquarters in Germany; Heidelberg, the Army; the European Command Headquarters, Stuttgart; SHAPE, Mons, Belgium; and Naples. In the U.S., we had POLADs with the Military Airlift Command in Fort Sheridan, Illinois, one with SAC in Omaha, Nebraska, one with the Coast Guard in Washington, one with the commander-in-chief Pacific in Honolulu, one in Naha in Okinawa, one at the STRIKEFORCE Command at MacDill Air Force base in Tampa and one in Panama Southern Command. Then we always had 10-12 State Department officers assigned to the Pentagon in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the three services. We had not only a lot of billets but we had some very talented people in those billets.

I obviously was a strong fan of the POLAD program and knew all of the officers assigned, a good excuse to go out and see them in the field, which I did. One of my last acts before I left the State Department in 1975 was getting agreement to set up a POLAD to CINCUSNAVEUR in London. We had some very good luck with that position. Our first POLADs were Arnold Freshman, Herb Hagerty, and Don Gelber, top of the line officers.

Anyway, I knew there were two basic criteria to be a successful POLAD. First, you had to establish a good personal relationship with your CINC because if you didn't have that you were basically dead in the water. Secondly, you might have the best personal relationship with your CINC in the world but if you couldn't do anything for him you are

more or less irrelevant. So, that translates into providing information and analysis on what the information means. That is really the essence of it. Where do you get the information? Well, that is an ongoing problem for any POLAD any place. You really have to battle like mad with the system to get it.

Well, there is a third part that to me was quite important. When you are POLAD to a multinational institution like NATO, it is very important that there is a perception that you are not an American dealing exclusively with an American commander. I think it is extremely important to develop a network based on trust and accessibility with the senior foreign elements of any command that you are attached too. To me that is essential and I told that to General Bernie Rogers when he first interviewed me in April 1979. I think that was one of the compelling arguments in his decision to take me on as POLAD to SHAPE, but we will get to that one later.

I immediately put this to Means Johnson when I arrived in Naples. I said, in effect, "With your permission, I want to not only make formal calls on every senior officer in this command, but I want them to know that my office is accessible to them. I would like to share as much information as I can without running into security problems in doing so." He agreed to that, they all did, everyone I worked for - three four star admirals in Naples and Bernie Rogers for nearly four and a half years.

Now, you asked me about the French at AFSOUTH. The French had maintained a modest liaison office when they pulled out of the integrated command structure in 1966. When I arrived in Naples in January, 1975, my next door office neighbor was a Captain Beau of the French Navy. He was essentially sitting there doing not very much of anything but representing France with his nameplate. Then, in the fall of 1975 the French upgraded that office, something that Stan Turner had encouraged with Haig's permission. They assigned a rear admiral, who was absolutely super, François Crouzat, with his relatively new wife who had previously been his mistress for 20-odd years. He was a magnificent officer. He later became a four star admiral, head of the French Navy nuclear program and his last job was commander of the French Western Sea Frontier with headquarters in Cherbourg, where we visited him. A later story.

The French obviously had made, if not a 180 degree turn, certainly a 130 degree turn from no priority at all to some priority. Crouzat was a great politician and did very well for the French image in Naples, as did his lovely wife, Michele. As a result, during their tenure, which nearly kept pace with our own, the French became much more active in allied exercises in the Mediterranean. There was much more toing and froing of senior officers between Paris and Naples and the French fleet headquarters outside of Toulon. And, of course, Haig was very much interested. He and Turner were working very closely on this because a parallel thing was happening with the French at SHAPE outside of Mons, Belgium.

So, while the French revived interest was a plus, the opposite side of the coin throughout my career in Naples was a steady deterioration of relations between the Greeks and the Turks. What I used to refer to as the two adolescents in the sandbox in the eastern

Mediterranean. And it was a very difficult time. There were intractable problems. I used to know more about what they call the FIR (Flight information Region) than any human would want. The FIR separated the Aegean into quadrants and sectors and all sorts of flight areas that kept the Turkish air force constricted. The island of Limnos, the largest island before you hit the Dardanelles in the northeast Aegean, had been supposedly neutralized, defortified according to the Montreux Convention. The Greeks kept muttering that they wanted to engage military activities on Limnos. This was only one irritation that we were seized with constantly.

Of course, the Turks would hear about it and be up in arms. The logistic officer at AFSOUTH was a U.S. Navy admiral; Plans and Policy was an American Army brigadier; Communications was a British commodore; Operations was run by an Italian; so that left Personnel to give to the Greeks or Turks. They each had a brigadier general on the staff. One ran Personnel and the other infrastructure or some damn thing. The two inconsequential jobs were held by the Greek and the Turk and they were both very pleasant. An officer by the name of Andreas Marathias was the Greek, who became the Greek national military representative with a promotion to major general at SHAPE when I arrived in 1979. The Turk was a very friendly, robust, gung-ho typical Turk. The two were a mixture of oil and water and I would say from the CINC on down through the various staff levels, probably sixty percent of our time was spent on Greek Turkish problems. It was a pain. And this was reflected up to SHAPE, where the military staff there were preoccupied with identical problems. So, those issues followed me from Naples to Mons. My presumed background with the Greek-Turkish problems were one of the main reasons that George Vest recommended to General Rogers that I stay in a career rut and become his POLAD at SHAPE because it was a command preoccupation then, as it remains today.
Q: Did the Palestinian-Israeli problem affect you at all? Did we have only a watching brief? Did Turner visit Arab countries?

STODDART: No, he was proscribed from doing so. We didn't have any operational mandate except from our own national interests around the Mediterranean littoral. During that period we were also trying to establish closer relations with the Spaniards, Tunisians, and Moroccans. Our ambassadors from all these countries, plus Yugoslavia, visited and were given the red carpet treatment from Honor Guard on arrival, a command briefing, and a trip to Capri on the admiral's barge - euphemism for a 65 foot Chris Craft.

Back to the watching brief. It was essential to provide information to your CINC. I did so by drawing down, obviously, on the resources of the Department and primarily depended on PM to keep me fully informed. When Ron Spiers became the first Assistant Secretary of PM, very early on in the game he instituted something called the circular letter which was sent to all POLADs. We tried to get it out on a monthly basis. Each of the six directors under Ron would contribute. My office and Leon Sloss' office contributed most of the stuff. No, that's not fair. People dealing with SALT did their full share. Anyway, this was very useful and very candid. After Ron left it became pretty spotty so we POLADS would have to keep pressing for information. I would personally talk to INR about getting their intelligence briefs, and they were very responsive. I was on all the

cable traffic. Then I also had my own contacts in our embassies around Europe. If you didn't want to put something in a cable you would put it in a letter. We had access to secure telephones.

Q: How did we view the Libyans during the 1975-79 period?

STODDART: Not very well. They were considered pariahs. They had few problems with the Italians because the Italians didn't thinks the Libyans were quite a bad as the Americans thought they were. So, we didn't have any visitors, obviously, from Libya. We did have a very interesting American ambassador in Algiers, Ulric Haynes, who came over, a Black American. Bob Anderson visited from Morocco. In my U.S. hat, I had pretty good communication with our non-NATO Mediterranean countries in Madrid, Lisbon, Belgrade, Tunis, and Malta.

Q: How about Egypt? At this time Sadat was there and made the move towards Israel. Did NATO South take this as changing the balance in any way?

STODDART: We obviously thought it was a constructive thing. It took some of the pressure off the eastern Mediterranean. But, honestly, I would say we were essentially bystanders. We didn't have any substantive input into those areas at all.

Q: How did we view the Soviet threat during the 1975-79 period?

STODDART: We considered we were a backwater in Naples compared to SHAPE and Allied Forces Central Europe. The Northern and Southern flanks of NATO always considered that they were the orphans of NATO. That all the concentration of military forces, money and interest in terms of being newsworthy, were focused on Central Europe. I must say the NATO commands in both Oslo and Naples were a touch paranoid and parochial on this. I probably shared those introspective characterizations myself during my period in Naples. But, we basically took the position that while obviously Central Europe is the focal point of any Soviet threat, you can't eliminate the importance or the security and strategic equities of the Northern and Southern flanks. Our command briefing went on ad nauseam talking about how quickly the Soviets could pour through Slovenia, through the Ljubljana gap and into the Po River Valley and cut off northern Italy from southern Italy. We made much of the Soviet naval threat in the Mediterranean which could peak up to 40 or 50 ships during crisis situations. We probably overstated the threat, but no more so than the people who were giving similar briefings in Casteau to visiting firemen about the Soviet threat to Central Europe or you would hear at Kolsas, outside of Oslo, about the Soviet threat to Norway, etc. It was a legitimate threat. All of our intelligence services were manufacturing these assessments that made the Soviets' capabilities nine feet tall in effect. In hindsight, I think all of these threat assessments were overdone and it is a question of degree how much they were overdone. The Yugoslavs we considered a decided asset with Tito's defection. I would say there was a modest concern about what was going on in Albania even at that time with their growing Chinese connection.

Q: I'm told that the Albanians used to say between us and China we control a quarter of the world's population.

STODDART: Right. When I arrived in Naples in January, 1975, I felt in some respects like that Al Capp creature in Lil Abner, Joe Bfstlk, the guy that was always walking around with a cloud over his head. Two weeks after my arrival the Senate in its infinite wisdom imposed an arms embargo on the Turks. Our Congress has done some irresponsible things in its history, but this was one of the stupidest.

Q: But, the Greek vote is important in the United States and the Turkish vote is not. That's the be all and end all of that particular stance.

STODDART: Maybe I said this before, but George Vest's great line was that the Turks don't have enough restaurants in the U.S. The embargo immediately set our command at CINCSOUTH in a tizzy and properly so. Then we had the great danger of Italy going left which consumed everybody from Henry Kissinger on down in Washington at that time because they were having elections in June of 1975.

Q: They are always having elections.

STODDART: But this was the one where the PCI (the Communist Party) was going to make their big breakthrough.

Q: This was a time of Eurocommunism which was supposed to be a new face on the Communist...

STODDART: Yes, that is right. That was the impetus that sparked the great anxiety in Washington about events in Portugal. So, there was a lot of anxiety neurosis in Washington about Eurocommunism, the new trendy thing in West European politics. Therefore there was great focus on the Italian elections in June 1975. We were inundated by all levels of people coming through Naples. John Hawes came by. He was in RPM in EUR at the time and a splendid officer. He told me amusing stories about everybody climbing the wall at the prospect of losing Italy. There was intense pressure on the embassy in Rome. John Volpe was ambassador and his DCM was Bob Barbour, who was getting insufferable heat from Washington. But, in the end, we survived.

We had a very heavy load of visitors that came through Naples and that meant a lot of honor ceremonies in front of our headquarters in Bagnoli for these distinguished visitors as well as command briefings. The NATO Military Committee come down in June 1975 and at the end of June we had the permanent representatives come down. They were with us for over three days because that coincided with the annual war game that was held out in the alternative headquarters in a rock north of Naples called Proto. It was great fun because our U.S. permanent representative to NATO was David Bruce and it was a privilege to reunite with him after my three years with him in London. We had a smashing time. We took them all out to the rock at Proto, which is a hideous, dismal arrangement. It had been engineered like a rogue mining operation. Water dripping from

the walls. We took antique coal mine cars about a mile under the mountain. It was a very rudimentary setup - the lighting was not very good, the ventilation worse. It was a one week war game. Out of deference to the age and seniority of the permanent representatives, we gave them an early lunch and a quick briefing and got them out within two to two and a half hours, which we felt was the most they could tolerate.

I escorted Bruce throughout the trip. Before the lunch, there was an open bar and the Italian waiter asked Bruce what he would like and Bruce said, "I would like a dry martini but I think I had better make it myself." He didn't want a dry vermouth martini. He poured himself a very generous shot of gin and a few drops of vermouth and a couple of ice cubes. He was wearing sandals, a white hat, and a Panama suit and looked like someone straight out of Graham Greene. There is a terrific book about Bruce which covers the essence of the man.

Q: The Last Gentleman.

STODDART: Yes, have you read it?

Q: Yes.

STODDART: I have it here. I thought it was very well done. So, it was an interesting time and Means Johnson was very good on things like that.

Q: Who took Turner's place?

STODDART: Turner left on March 1, 1977 and his replacement did not come until July 18. The problem was there was a bitter fight in the U.S. Navy on who was going to succeed Turner. Tom Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wanted his brother, Joe, who was CINCUSNAVEUR, with three stars in London. The Moorer in London was sort of a congenial non-entity but obviously well plugged in with the Navy hierarchy.

This led to an ongoing fight that took four months to resolve. In the meantime, Admiral [Luigi] Tomasuolo, the Italian four star admiral who was at COMNAVSOUTH, was elevated to acting CINCSOUTH and he was a delightful fellow. Getting back to this contretemps, the navy finally sorted it out. Hal Shear, who was Vice Chief of Naval Operations had retired in June and already sent all of the family furniture up to his home in Groton Long Point, outside of New London, Connecticut. But the Navy decided finally as a compromise candidate they would halt Shear's retirement and send him to Naples as CINCSOUTH. So, he was named, he came and it was an absolutely fortuitous appointment. He turned out to be a super person and perfect for the job. He stayed on through 1980 having nearly three years in the job. I had known him slightly. He had been CINCUSNAVEUR in London for a couple of years. It turned out that he lived in a house in Groton Long Point next door to Carol's aunt.

Hal Shear was absolutely fixated on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and had bought a piece of property south of Cambridge, Maryland in Dorchester county, which he was

planning to use as his retirement home after he fully retired from the navy. When he arrived it didn't take long to establish the fact that I was born and brought up until the age of ten in Dorchester country and a good symbiotic relationship was established on the basis of the Eastern Shore. He was very good because he was the sort of officer that needed a POLAD and accepted the fact. He had no illusions about it. He was a pure breed sailor, not a political animal. This was a very satisfactory relationship. I had nearly two years as POLAD with Hal Shear and we worked very well together.

Q: How did he treat the Greek-Turkish situation?

STODDART: Like everybody else, with acute frustration. Both Greeks and Turks could be very irritating, but the Greeks could be more so because they were cleverer than the Turks. The Turks were always very forthright and sort of tried to con you with their honesty and there was no duplicity from them like the Greeks. Hal Shear worked very well with them though. He was a very forthright guy. My image of Hal Shear was, even though he was a submariner, of a barnacle-encrusted Navy sailor type on the Murmansk run during World War II. He was a real sailor. He was born on Block Island and actually spent some time as a commercial fisherman. He had a delightful, straight arrow wife, Betty, who was from Yarmouth, Maine, north of Portland. He was gruff but basically kind and worked very well with the internationals.

Q: This might be a good time to stop and we will pick it up the next time when you went to SHAPE. You were there from 1979 to when?

STODDART: Until the end of October, 1983.

Q: We will pick it up then.

STODDART: Okay.

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Q: Today is March 1, 2000. Jock, you are still in Naples. I was talking with Steve Ledogar this morning and he said he came there with Lucy Benson and you said you were going to show them the real Naples and that I should get you to talk about it. What did you show them?

STODDART: Oh, I took them down to Spacca Napoli, the old city and the backbone of Napoli. Very late in my days at Naples two formidable and savvy British navy captains who were on the staff of AFSOUTH, introduced me to a hot suit merchant right next to the local prison. They took me down and I got two splendid suits, one a dark silk summer one for under $100. I still have these two suits. You would get great deals, goods all pilfered by the local mafioso. We always took our visitors and houseguests to the Parco Rimebranza, which looked out over the Bay of Naples, Capri, and the Bay of Pozzuoli, a little tour around there about dusk when all of the action began with all the lovers in their Fiats.

Q: With newspaper covering the windows.

STODDART: As some of my Italian friends said, it was the only proper use for the "Il Mattino," the local newspaper.

Q: Yes, and they would rock.

STODDART: Oh, my, would they rock. I remember when my mother, then 81, came to visit us in 1978, we took her up there on a spring day at dusk and she was not appalled but absolutely astounded because in one of the Fiat Quatrocentos (400), the very small one, there was actually a pair of feet sticking out of the open, canvas sunroof. Oh, it was magnificent. Everybody loved it. We took Steve and Lucy Benson up there. I'm not sure if Lucy enjoyed that, but we had a splendid time. We set up the honor ceremony for Lucy which she appreciated. The Italians put on a great show. They had the Carabinieri and the plumed Bersaglieri all in uniforms and the band. It was a very good performance. We put on a lot of those for distinguished visitors.

Q: Now you were going to talk about Admiral Crowe.

STODDART: Yes. In Naples and subsequently in Casteau at SHAPE, I met a lot of officers with great growth potential. I had known Bill Crowe when he was a captain in the early '70s. He had been assigned as deputy to Haydn Williams, who was a very close friend of mine going back to my Fletcher School days in 1946-47. Haydn was president of the Asia Foundation, but he had also been named as a special ambassador for the Micronesia Status Negotiations. As you might recall, we held a trusteeship of Micronesia which goes back to the end of World War II. It included Saipan and a number of islands which were scattered around the western Pacific. Haydn Williams did this more or less pro bono as president of the Asia Foundation.

Haydn spent a lot of time in and out of Washington and decided he needed a reliable deputy. His first one was a State Department senior officer. Then he decided in 1973 that it would be helpful to have a navy deputy to insure better contact with the Pentagon. There were a lot of vested and conflicting interests in these negotiations. The Interior Department administered the trust. Of course, the navy was very much interested. Several of the islands had been a Japanese stronghold in World War II. So, Bill Crowe was nominated by the Navy.

I had known him slightly before then and he came over to talk to me as he was very unsettled about the appointment because he felt it was taking him out of the assignment pattern required for flag rank and the prospect for getting a deep draft command, the penultimate stepping stone and ticket puncher for promotion to rear admiral. He knew I was a good friend of Bud Zumwalt's, the CNO of the Navy, and he asked if I or Ron Spiers could do anything to help him. I wrote letters for Ron Spiers to send to Bud Zumwalt and one to the Secretary of the Navy, John Warner, saying that this was a very, very important job and we hoped the fact that Captain Crowe was designated to be the

deputy to the Micronesia Status Talks would not have an adverse affect on onward assignments and his career. Ron Spiers talked personally to Zumwalt, who said that absolutely Crowe was a comer and this appointment would not have any adverse effect whatsoever. So, Bill was very appreciative of that. He served Haydn Williams very well for a couple of years and then he got promoted to rear admiral and then went out as commander, Mideast Force in Bahrain. He came back and became regional director for East Asia affairs in ISA, my old office in the Pentagon. So, I would see him on and off and I had only the highest regard for him.

When he was appointed CINCSOUTH in 1980, we were delighted to come down from SHAPE for the change of command ceremony because Admiral Shear was retiring and Carol and I both had great affection for the Shears as well as for Bill and Shirley Crowe. We saw them on and off while he was at AFSOUTH. He would come up for meetings at SHAPE and Shirley would accompany him on occasion. They are a super couple and I was delighted with his subsequent career success terminating as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Q: You were at SHAPE from when to when?

STODDART: I checked in at the end of August, 1979, after home leave in the States and assisting getting my stepdaughter married, and stayed until the end of October, 1983. So, I was there for four-plus years.

Q: What was your job?

STODDART: I was called the international affairs advisor (INTAF) to the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe with the rank of minister - a very exciting job. It was unusual, if not a first, for someone to go from one POLAD position to another. But, George Vest had written me in the spring of 1979 asking me if I would be interested. This was very important because Al Haig was retiring and General Bernard Rogers had been nominated to take Haig's place. Vest considered the situation in the Mediterranean, particularly between the Greeks and the Turks, of key importance and that General Rogers could use an officer who was closely familiar with Mediterranean problems. George Vest was then Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. He talked to Rogers and as it turned out I had to come back to the States in April 1979 because my mother was dying. After her death, I came down from Connecticut to have an interview with General Rogers. We seemed to gel, so George moved ahead with my nomination as Bernie Rogers' international affairs advisor or POLAD.

So, that is how that happened and from my standpoint, both personally and professionally, it was a very fortuitous event because I had over four years with Rogers and found it one of the most challenging and stimulating jobs anybody could conceivably have. A lot of things happened in Europe during this period. There was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

Q: You had the business of the Iranians taking over the American embassy in November

1979, which put everybody on edge.

STODDART: And then we had the very interesting and demanding decision to face in the deployment of Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCMs) to Europe. I will come back to that. The surroundings were great. There were a top notch group of people we dealt with in Brussels at NATO, and the various permanent representatives that made up the NATO Council, plus the number of bilateral embassies accredited to Belgium that we did a lot of business with. So, it was an exciting time.

Q: How did General Rogers operate and how did he use you?

STODDART: As I think I told you last time it was essential for the POLAD and his boss to develop good personal chemistry. If you don't have that, you are not going to be very effective. And, of course, the second point I made was that you had to be able to do something for him and that translates into information. I believe I made the point unsuccessfully with Means Johnson but successfully with Turner and Shear in Naples. To me it was essential that I not be perceived as an exclusive American client, that I was accessible to the international staff and in a meaningful way. General Rogers completely agreed. I had heard from George Vest, among others, that there was some suspicion directed at Haig's operation and that of his POLAD, Bob Brown, my predecessor at SHAPE, that Brown was exclusively perceived as Al Haig's minion. Rogers was greatly in favor of more outreach to the multilateral staff not only at SHAPE but opposite numbers in Brussels, like the NATO Military Committee, the permanent representatives, and also some of the key NATO foreign office and ministry of defense people. So, I made it a point in my four and a half years of cultivating very good relationships with all the senior officers of which there were a galaxy at SHAPE. We had about 36 one and two stars of flag officer rank. We had four four stars - the SACEUR, his chief of staff, who was an American and then two deputy SACEURs, one British and one German. The German had come in rather recently in the late seventies because they argued, if not for military reasons but political reasons, they merited co-equality with the British. And there were two three stars. On the pecking order I came in 3 1/2. When people would ask me where I sat in the protocol list early on I was dumb and would say about 3 plus. Then I was smart enough to realize 4 minus sounds more impressive. But, anyway it was a great setup.

Q: I would have thought with the number of high ranking military around to do anything would have been pretty cumbersome. What was your impression?

STODDART: It certainly was cumbersome because when you build a multilateral headquarters you obviously are going to have to factor in political considerations. By that I mean making sure that all countries feel that if they don't have absolutely adequate representation that they have at least permissible representation. That means you have to find senior places on the staff for everyone of the countries contributing forces to Allied Command Europe. That essentially meant 14 countries. You deduct Iceland, which had no military forces. Luxembourg had a colonel, who represented Luxembourg on the National Military Representative Committee, which was the liaison between Rogers, the

senior staff at SHAPE and their home ministries of defense. So, they occupied a national position and not a multilateral position. But all the other positions were multilateral positions. It was the old political game of tradeoffs.

Q: What would you do with something like Denmark which had a minuscule military?

STODDART: Well, the Danes had an important staff position. They had a very good major general, Pemo Gruner, who was there for most of my time. He was deputy to a Belgian major general, the assistant chief of staff for logistics and infrastructure, a relatively important position. The infrastructure program controlled a lot of money, some of which we would refer to here as "pork" projects.

Q: How did you handle the dog's breakfast with Greece and Turkey at that level and what was your role?

STODDART: Well, I kept very close continuous watching brief on this for nearly nine years, first at Naples and then at SHAPE. Haig had made one impressive personnel move. He had taken a Navy captain, Charlie Byrd, who had worked on this continuously in Naples, and brought him up to SHAPE. So, he provided continuity, as did I. When Bill Crowe took over in Naples in 1980, it was the same perpetual problem as it was for Bernie Rogers. He spent maybe 10 percent of his time on it. He had another very good officer, a West Point colonel, named John Pappageorge, who was Greek-American but very objective. He became Bernie Rogers' exclusive action officer on that one subject. I consumed much time with Pappageorge and Captain Byrd in maintaining a constant brief for Rogers and his continuous interchange with Crowe. The best result after working on this problem for nearly nine years in my judgement was effective damage control in restraining the Greeks and Turks and keeping them from each others' throats. We didn't solve any basic problems, but I wouldn't say we aggravated the problems.

Q: In your calculations for operations of NATO which for the most part were essentially training operations, did you do less in Turkey and Greece than elsewhere because every time you tried something there it meant problems?

STODDART: Well, Haig tried to force feed the issue in his last year as SACEUR in 1979 and his intentions were absolutely honorable by applying the "mano a mano" [Spanish: person to person] personal touch to the respective service chiefs. We were supporting this strongly from the Naples end. General Sancar, who was Chief of the Turkish General Staff, was straight out of the 19th century, a big guy about 6'5", who loved to come to Naples and fish and drink copiously. But not even the admiral would move him toward the Haig appeal for modest concessions to the Greeks.

Q: The admiral had a cabin cruiser.

STODDART: Haig tried to do the same thing with General Angeles, an Air Force general who at the same time was chief of the Greek General Staff. Haig and Shear, at some point in early 1979 actually got Angeles to come meet them at an airfield in Vicenza. All those

efforts bombed, but they tried. We spent a lot of staff resources in trying to come up with non-papers that we could show the Turks and Greeks to try to get them together. As I say, it didn't work, but at least we averted an even nastier situation.

Q: There must have been somebody in NATO who was sitting back and thinking, "All right, if the Soviet Union attacks or somehow war starts, what would happen on the Turkish-Greek flank." What was the feeling about what would happen there?

STODDART: We had the feeling that each of them would protect their own national interests. That means their own borders. Incidently, all of the activity that occurred in Naples and subsequently at Casteau, involved a group of select permanent representatives in NATO like Tap Bennett, Clyde Rose, the British permanent representative, Secretary General Luns and his deputy, an Italian who later became ambassador here, all the big players. We didn't accomplish anything except maintaining the status quo and sometimes diplomatically that is the most you can do.

Q: What was the feeling towards Greek and Turkish military capabilities, not against each other, but just as nations?
STODDART: As you know, the Turks have the largest standing army in NATO but it is seriously underequipped. The general consensus was that they would fight very hard and valiantly as they had demonstrated when they provided a brigade during the Korean War in 1951 and performed very well. But, they had very serious logistic shortages. The consensus was that the Greeks would comport themselves equally well, but they were qualitatively much further along in terms of materiel than the Turks. They had a pretty good air force. God forbid if they ever fought each other. We have never war gamed that for obvious reasons.

Q: I was told when I was in Athens by one of our military attaché, this was 1974, that if they did fight each other they would run out of ammunition in about a week.

STODDART: That's true. Turks probably before the Greeks.

Getting back to SHAPE I spent a lot of time buttering up the senior staff. While there, I made some of the closest friends I have made during my professional career. We still keep in very close touch with many British, Norwegian, Danish, German, Dutch, Belgian, French, Italian, and Portugese friends. General John Maxwell, a British planner and a very good one, and his wife spent a week with us here about three years ago and we have visited them in England. One of our greatest friends was the Portuguese national military representative, an extraordinary man named Vasco Rocha Vieira. When the Portuguese revolution broke out and ousted Salazar in late 1974, Vasco was a colonel, an engineer officer in Macao. He was called back to Portugal by the chief of staff of the Army and promoted to major general as the head engineer. And then when the chief of staff of the Army moved up and became president, Vasco became chief of staff of the army at the age of about 35. This happened in 1975. Bernie Rogers who was chief of staff of the U.S. Army at that time, had invited his opposite number for an official visit. So, they knew each other previously. When I showed up at SHAPE I found this absolutely incredible

guy. He said the military in Portugal, the 13 majors who had organized the coup, were getting too big for their britches and the military should go back to doing what it should do best and that is be military and get out of politics. He accepted a demotion from chief of staff of the Portuguese army to colonel and in effect was exiled by assignment to SHAPE as the Portuguese national military representative. Everybody said that he was on the short list someday to become president of Portugal. Carol and I visited Vasco and his lovely wife, Leonore, in Lisbon in 1980 and spent three delightful days with them and then went to southern Portugal on leave. They would take us around Lisbon and everybody knew both the Rocha Vieira. He later became the commandant of the military academy, then the governor of the Azores, a cabinet position. Five years ago, he was sent out to Macao as governor general. He went out early because he was such a skilled diplomat and the government wanted him in place for the turnover to China, which occurred two months ago. That is the sort of quality person we had in the senior staffs at SHAPE.

Q: How was the role of Italy seen in NATO? In a way Italy isn't a frontline state.

STODDART: Well, the role of Italy was very critical. If the Italians hadn't agreed to take GLCMs, the ground launched cruise missiles that subsequently were deployed at Sigonella, Sicily. The whole deployment plan for GLCMs and Pershing IIs would have aborted. My God, the Italians have been absolutely magnificent since NATO's inception. I remember all the briefings we went through. People coming in to see Bernie Rogers on how critical it was to get these deployments approved. The Italians had made it clear that there had to be another continental country that would take the missiles. They didn't want unitary exposure. We finally prevailed on the Belgians to deploy GLCMs at an airfield in Florennes, near Liege. The fact the British were going to place GLCMs at Greenham Common in the south of England didn't wash with the Italians. They had to have a continental partner. So, it was a very dicey period. That was really an extraordinary negotiation as the Germans wouldn't accept GLCMs but finally agreed to accept Pershing IIs.

Q: What was the rationale for taking one but not the other?

STODDART: They felt the Pershing was less vulnerable, politically and militarily, than the GLCMs.

Getting back to your basic point about how Italy was perceived, it was certainly viewed by many senior people in NATO as a useful but not vital link in terms of the capabilities that they gave our military forces in the Southern Region of NATO. I like to think that perhaps I contributed in modest measure to a greater appreciation of Italy's importance while I was the POLAD at SHAPE. It is self explanatory when you look at the assets that are scattered around Italy going from Vicenza and the Southern European Task Force to Camp Darby outside of Livorno, all the telecommunications facilities, the air base at Aviano, which played such a large role during the Croatia-Bosnia-Serbia problem and subsequently in Kosovo. Aviano has been a critical place. Going back to our ejection from Wheelus Field by the Libyans in 1969, an airfield in southern Sardinia was a vital alternative to Wheelus in assuming clear air training capabilities that were marginal in

Central Europe with fog limitations limiting flight hours. Again, there is the home port of the Sixth Fleet's flag ship at Gaeta since the French closed us out of Villefranche in 1966. We have so much stuff sprinkled around Italy even people who were stationed there didn't realize the enormity or value of Italy's contribution. So, the Italians have been one of the strongest, staunchest allies within NATO from the start.

Q: What was the perception of Denmark and Norway, the Scandinavian flank?

STODDART: The perception was that the Norwegians were very, very capable. They had demonstrated their merit and courage during the German occupation during World War II. Given their small size and the topography of the country, they are considered of high strategic value. They also provide some very important assets including intelligence gathering sites on Norwegian territory. The Norwegian military, while limited, are very qualitative. The Danes defense efforts at best are marginal. In NATO they provide the least percentage of gross national product for defense. They had some very well trained, able people, but they do not have a very robust military. That always worries the planners because they would look at Denmark and look at the vulnerability of Skagerrak and Kattegat, but that is an overrated problem. If anything ever happened, the capabilities of other allied air and naval forces would have been able to handle that.

Q: Was there any reaching out or tacit agreement to Sweden at this time?

STODDART: No. They were decidedly off limits. I would say that was handled on a bilateral basis amongst the NATO countries. But, we did have an absolute constant number of visitors coming through SHAPE. Everybody always wanted to have some personal time with the Supreme Allied Commander and Bernie Rogers was extraordinarily good at that. He was a very fine, able man and came across well with U.S. and foreign personalities alike. He was outspoken, eloquent, very well read. I would call him a legitimate cerebral intellectual military type.

An interesting story. When Cyprus Vance was Secretary of the Army in the mid-'60s, he had two majors working for him. One was short, cocky, and gregarious, and the other was tall, thin, and reserved. One was Rogers and the other one was Haig. One of my best friends was Cy Vance's executive, a colonel, later major general, named Jim Baldwin. At a party over at Baldwin's house one night Vance was there. They were talking about Haig and Rogers. Vance said, "I had two extraordinarily gifted officers there, both sure bets to make general officer. I had the loud aggressive short one and the quiet and very cerebral tall one, but I think between the two of them the tall quiet one will do better." Well, it is interesting that the tall quiet one succeeded the short loud one.

Q: Was this a period when everyone was feeling the heat of congress talking about cutting back and were you involved at all?
STODDART: Yes. We had quite a number of visits while I was in Naples. Sam Nunn and John Warner first come through Naples in the late '70s. That was when I first met Patrick Leahy, then the new senator from Vermont. But, then when I got up to SHAPE this whole thing escalated. There was a constant flow of members of Congress, Cabinet

officers, the whole bit, coming through. That took up a lot of time because Rogers liked to be well briefed every time he talked to these visitors. The main message of most of the congressional people who came through was that the Europeans had to do more. That the U.S. was picking up an excessive amount of the burden within NATO not only in terms of providing military manpower but also in terms of defense dollars. This used to be a constant cacophony with everybody coming through. Rogers was always trying to play the role of the doctor in tamping down these neurotic impulses from the Washington crowd. He tried to play up the good things that the Europeans were doing. On balance he did a very effective job. Again it was damage limitation.

One of the interesting aspects of my job was representing Rogers quite extensively at meetings of the North Atlantic Assembly, the group of North Atlantic Parliamentarians of which the House of Representatives and Senate delegations played a large role in every meeting. I was also his stand-in at meetings of the West European Union, which were usually held in Paris, which was real hardship duty. I also attended as member the annual meetings of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. The North Atlantic Assembly was interesting because we had some big players involved in this - Nunn, Joe Biden took an early interest in it, Senator Roth of Delaware, Rudman, Leahy. The Senate had overall a pretty impressive and serious group that attended these meetings. They were split with separate economic, political, and military agendas. Of course, as I represented SHAPE and General Rogers, I gravitated mostly to the military sessions, although I took in many of the political ones. So, I got to know a lot of the senior political and military personalities throughout NATO - people from the German defense ministry, the British defense ministry, a lot of whom I knew from my days in London. This was all helpful from my professional standpoint, even though they were spent again in such backwaters like Madeira, Lisbon, Stresa, St. Moritz, Vienna, Venice, Copenhagen, Munich, etc.

Q: In this period what was the role of France in the military side of NATO? How did France figure in NATO?

STODDART: Well, they figured very closely. They had a very large military mission at SHAPE headed by a major general. This followed the increased interest that the French demonstrated when I was in Naples in the late ‘70s when I told you they upgraded the post there and put in this very effective admiral. They did the same thing at SHAPE. Haig encouraged this as did Rogers when he succeeded Haig. I maintained a very close relationship with the French Military Mission and had equally very cordial social relations. The word from Paris was to open up. And they did so to the extent that we had some very sensitive but helpful joint sessions with the French in terms of planning in the event things deteriorated militarily in Western Europe. These were sensitive areas and I can’t say very much more about them except to say that in my four plus years in Casteau the relationships between France and NATO improved drastically and has been on going from what I have heard since the time I left SHAPE toward the end of 1983.

Q: Now, 1979 is still the Carter administration and Carter was the President until January, 1981. Did you sense with our allies or anyone else a certain disquiet with the Carter administration about how they viewed NATO and the commitment?

STODDART: You had some people who have made that case retroactively. People like Al Haig, for instance. And you had certain people with right wing sentiments in Western Europe that were played up to by some Americans that the Carter administration was weak. At one point in the late 1970s, we were thinking about introducing tactical nuclear weapons in Western Europe. That created quite a hiccup at the time. And the fact that we didn't was treated as a case of weakness on the part of the Carter administration, although there were sound political and military reasons to pull back. Yes, there were some people who were concerned because of the Iranian hostage crisis and because of what happened during the oil crisis and I think there was a perception among many people in Western Europe that Carter had lost credibility and that his administration had lost a measure of effectiveness. So, yes, I would say the Carter administration had been wounded to a certain but not to a damning extent.

Q: Strictly from a military point of view, was the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and coming into power in 1981, welcomed would you say? He had been talking about a stronger military and all. Did they feel that maybe a firmer hand was going to be at the helm?

STODDART: I think among most of the military it was probably welcome, but not universally. The prospect of Weinberg coming in as Secretary of Defense with virtually the sky's the limit in terms of the defense budget was welcomed, particularly by the military. On the political side, I would say it was a wash. The moderate, left leaning in Europe across the board were concerned that Reagan's rhetoric and possible follow on actions would adversely effect east-west relationships overall. We had the embargo of the Olympics in 1980 by Carter, but you had a lot of strong talk in the pre-electoral period and the evil empire stuff that bothered a lot of people. I think that most people were happy that Haig was named Secretary of State because a lot of Europeans knew Haig by reputation and felt that he would be a moderate voice of reason within the Reagan administration. Of course, that didn't last too long. Then they came out with the Star Wars initiative and that bothered a great number of thoughtful military and political leaders in Europe, because if it wasn't conceived as a pie-in-the-sky proposition, it was conceived as one that would be destabilizing in terms of the obvious Soviet reaction to it. And it was also seen as something that would be diverting dollars to pie-in-the-sky rather than to on going military programs. In sum, I would say there was a good level of confusion about the early years of the Reagan administration and the perception of it in Europe.

Q: At the time of the takeover of Kabul by the Soviets in November 1979, was the feeling that we had a more dangerous Soviet Union or was this felt to be an isolated thing?

STODDART: I think probably most people treated it, again for self-serving purposes, the former, that it was a matter of concern and not an isolated event. It was showing the Soviets as what they truly were - expansionists. When I say self-serving, going back to my initial position as a captain in the U.S. Army in Army Intelligence in 1951, I view all intelligence agencies with some suspicion at this point in life. I think there is a tendency to build up the capabilities of adversaries and misread the capabilities, crediting them

with greater capabilities than actually exist. You have been reading about the heat that the agencies have taken in the 1980s for not properly foreseeing the collapse of the Soviet Union. The intelligence analysis of the Soviet threat really remained undiminished through the '60s, '70s and early '80s concluding the Soviets had the capability to overrun Western Europe in a matter of days. That is why we never would even consider forsaking first use of nuclear weapons. That became the central focus of NATO's strategy going back to the mid-'60s. Everybody was playing from the same sheet of music. Practically every intelligence organization in Western Europe agreed with the assessment that the Soviets had this colossal capability, which a lot of people now consider to be highly suspect. Instead of making them 9 feet tall they were probably 5 and a half feet tall. I would listen to all these people from NSA, CIA, DIA, etc., extremely capable ones at that, who came to SHAPE to show us the latest technology and on the basis of analysis of overhead photography make a very credible case that the Soviets had colossal capability.

Q: We have talked about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and our perception of it, and the cruise missile problem and the transition between the Carter and Reagan administrations, what other areas do you think we should talk about?

STODDART: One of the other important things that came up during my tour at SHAPE was the rapid changes that were taking place in Spain and translating that change into Spanish NATO membership. I spent quite a bit of time on that one, particularly in 1982-83. I took a couple of visits to Spain and did rather extensive briefings of senior officials in the Spanish foreign office and their ministry of defense, just talking to them about SHAPE, its mission, and how we were organized and so on. Information type briefings basically. I made myself available for a couple of days in a sort of breaking the ground exercise. And this ultimately paid off. We expended a lot of time back at SHAPE working all sorts of different papers and scenarios on how Spain would fit into the integrated military structure once they came into the alliance.

It was a lot of fun and games and took a great deal of time, but the effort was very rewarding because just before I left in late 1983, the Spanish had assigned liaison officers to SHAPE, somewhat in the French model, and also to NATO civil headquarters in Brussels. In the mid-'80s Spain became part of the integrated structure and the 16th NATO member. I am just mentioning this because I considered it was time well spent. There was great change in NATO from the time I went to Naples in January, 1975 and until I left Casteau in October 1983. The whole Iberian peninsula had basically changed where you had two real functioning democracies in Portugal and Spain. This was a great boost to the Alliance and to the Southern Region of NATO in particular because we had two relatively strong countries on the southern flank overlooking the Straits of Gibralter and with access to the Atlantic.

Q: There had been great concern earlier on about what appeared to be the growing strength of eurocommunism which was supposedly a more benign communism, but still a communism that might start taking over countries. By the time you left that was dead pretty much, wasn't it?

STODDART: That was pretty dead. In the early '80s when the Socialists took over in France and Communists became part of that government, it hardly created a ripple in Western Europe at that time because the French Communist Party while still marginally relevant had lost a lot of its steam and core strength from the 1970s.

Q: And Mitterrand coopted them and essentially destroyed them.

STODDART: He coopted, if not destroyed, them and the highest cabinet position they had was the ministry of transport. So, they were basically rendered toothless by Mitterrand's astute political maneuvering. It is amazing. Everybody was so upset about the rise of Eurocommunism in the mid-'70s and basically it ceased to exist by the beginning of the next decade.

Q: *Did President Reagan make any visit to NATO while you were there?*

STODDART: No, not while I was there. But, we had everybody else in the world from Margaret Thatcher to Crown Prince Olaf, who later became King of Norway. We had practically every prime minister in NATO. Everybody wanted a little bit of the action from SHAPE. For formal visitors who came to SHAPE the drill would be that they would arrive in the afternoon of day one and go to Bernie Rogers' lovely chateau in Mons where there would be a black tie dinner in their honor that night. The next morning there would be a private session with Rogers and then a full SHAPE briefing and then a luncheon and departure. That would be it. It was generally a little less than a day. And every American ambassador in Europe wanted to come to SHAPE. He gave top priority to our ambassadors to NATO countries, but our ambassadors in Moscow, Stockholm, Helsinki, Vienna, Bern, all came.

I finally made a deal with Bernie Rogers. I said, "This is too much of an imposition on you to host every American ambassador. Why don't you take the ambassadors to the NATO countries and I will take the non-NATO ambassadors?" He agreed to that. We had a lovely chateau in Casteau and a little money from the Department as well as some from SHAPE. I took on all the non-NATO American ambassadors. That was pretty interesting. That included Art Hartman and his DCM, Chris Chapman, when he was ambassador to France. There was Watson from Moscow and a mixed bag of Reagan appointees, some on the bizarre, if not odd, side, from Hungary, Switzerland, Austria, Romania, Finland, and Sweden. Dick Davies, a career ambassador in Poland, came through for compensation.

We would always invite an ambassador to bring their pol/mil counselor or DCM and we would always host these invitees. So, this was fun. I would have somebody to sit around with at night and have a drink and talk about the latest gossip. We also put up a lot of the non-Americans who came through SHAPE. British, Germans, and Italians on business at SHAPE would get our B&B with a small dinner thrown in. The representational side of this was pretty heavy, but again, highly worthwhile.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover you think on this period?

STODDART: I think I have covered the highlights. As I say it was a very, very stimulating tour. Bernie Rogers wanted me to extend but I was facing forced retirement at the age of 62. So, I came back at the end of October, 1983 and drifted around aimlessly more or less popping into EUR, PM and INR, but doing nothing very serious, so I retired on May 1, 1984.

One thought I would like to leave you with is that I found the years between the ages of 50 up through the time I retired, the most rewarding in my professional life and am convinced, the most productive. I strongly believe the Department should take heed of all the work and experience one had prior to age 50 and the contacts made and networking throughout the government and overseas. In many respects, the Department is consuming its young by forcing so many of these very, very able gifted young officers out at age 50 or early 50s. We are losing great assets here.

Q: I agree with you. Okay. I want to thank you very much.

STODDART: It has been great fun and thank you.

End of interview