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

PATRICIA D. HUGHES

Interviewed by: Raymond Ewing
Initial interview date: July 25, 2002

TABLE OF CONTENTS

State Department; Suitability Conduct Office 1982-1984
Death of husband

State Department; Career Counseling Officer 1984-1989
Family counseling
Assessment

Cape Town, South Africa; Political Officer 1990-1996
Elections
Embassy
Environment
Apartheid
African National Congress
Allan Boesak
Security
Community
Family
Bishop Tutu
District "cleansing"
Theaters
Ambassador Bill Swing

State Department; FSI; Danish language training 1996

Copenhagen, Denmark; Political/Economic Counselor
Elections
World War II
Jews
Peacekeeping Force
President Clinton's visit
US-Denmark relations
Royal family

State Department; Career Development Assignments Officer

INTERVIEW

Q: This is an interview with Pat Hughes. It's the 25th of July, 2002. This is being conducted under the auspices of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training under the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program and my name is Raymond Ewing. Pat, it's really good to be with you, to talk with you this afternoon. Why don't you tell me to begin with just a little bit about your Foreign Service experience? You were a Foreign

Service Officer and you had other connections with the Foreign Service, but why don't you give just a little summary to begin with of that career experience.

HUGHES: Okay, I guess my experience falls into three areas. The first was when I entered the Foreign Service in 1961 and remained for two years until I married a Foreign Service Officer and left the service. Interestingly enough no one ever told me to, it was just sort of something that one did. Be that as it may, I reentered the Foreign Service in 1977 after my husband had retired and I was in the Foreign Service in that mode from '77 to '99.

Q: So, that sounds like about two years the first time and 22 years the second.

HUGHES: That's right, all in all 25 years.

Q: I suppose we should, just to complete the total, picture mention that your son, Paul, was also a Foreign Service Officer for ten years and he began in what year?

HUGHES: He began in 19. I can't do dates. Alice, when did he begin?

ALICE HUGHES: Probably around '88 because he graduated from Princeton in '86.

Q: Okay, because I knew him a little bit and remember when he became a junior Foreign Service Officer. It was probably 1988.

ALICE HUGHES: That sounds right.

Q: That he was in Bombay in the Secretary's office and the operations center.

ALICE HUGHES: And Berlin.

HUGHES: And Berlin.

Q: And Berlin.

HUGHES: At the time of the handout.

Q: I'm sure that was an interesting time for him as well. When you came into the Foreign Service in 1961, where did you serve?

HUGHES: I served nowhere but in Washington. In those days people were assigned to Washington before they were assigned overseas and I entered in November of '61 and I left in August of '63.

Q: You met your husband who was a Foreign Service Officer? You worked together in INR?

HUGHES: Yes, I did, in INR.

Q: Why don't you back up just a little bit, how did you get interested in the Foreign Service in the first place?

HUGHES: I would have taken the exam as a college senior, but it wasn't given that year. I guess it was '60, whatever it was. Excuse me, I've got date problems. So, it just sort of seemed out of the question. Nobody knew anything about when the exam was going to be given again. You probably came in about the same time.

Q: I actually entered just a little before that in 1957 and at that time they were giving the exam quite regularly and in particular that year of 1957 they took in a very large number of us, lowered the standards. They were taking anybody that was willing and able, but I think a few years later they had a budget crunch.

HUGHES: They had a budget crunch.

Q: They had a budget crunch. They had all of us and they didn't need people quite as much.

HUGHES: So, anyway, I overlooked that. I went to IBM and worked there for three weeks until there was a mutual decision that it was not for me. After that I worked for Home Life Insurance Company for a year after which I went to graduate school and got a masters in public administration. One of my professors suggested that I look into the Foreign Service again which I did. by that time they were taking people willy nilly.

Q: Where did you go to college?

P. HUGHES: Wellesley College, in Massachusetts.

Q: Then your graduate school?

HUGHES: It was at Rutgers and I had a fellowship then in public diplomacy.

Q: So, then you took the exam, came into the Department in Washington and after the initial training, A100 course, you were assigned to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research? Did you have language training?

HUGHES: No, I didn't, but I have French.

Q: Had already French? Have you spent some time in France?

HUGHES: No, I had just taken it a lot in college and actually in those days you were given a language if you didn't get a 3/3 and so I took French for probably 12 weeks and

got the 3/3 before I started working in INR.

Q: Before you started working in INR?

HUGHES: Before I started in INR, yes. I can't say enough about my INR stay.

Q: What sort of work were you doing there?

HUGHES: I was working on what was then the British and Northern European Desk. Countries were peeling off like crazy and I can still remember how happy the French analyst was when he picked up all of this stuff. Masses and masses of stuff and took it to the Africa Desk.

Q: So, he didn't have to worry about all of French Africa anymore?

HUGHES: The African French that was taught at FSI in those days was penal French. There was no African context at all in those days, but probably by '63 it was. So many of the people I worked with were OSS types. If I were to mention and you probably would recognize some of the names, like John Shula, who just died, and Tom Defora, who is still around, Martin Pascal, who is still around. In all honesty I'm not sure how much of a wonderful preparation it was for the Foreign Service, but it was a wonderful experience for a historian which I like to think I am.

Q: You also mentioned that you met your husband? He had been a Foreign Service Officer for some time?

HUGHES: Yes, he had come into the Foreign Service in 1948. He was one of the many who came in after World War II. The thing about my Foreign Service time in a way is not my Foreign Service experience; it's what happened to society. When I took my oral exam, remember how you had to sort of sit outside and wait and you were told whether or not you passed. They told me I should have worn a hat.

Q: Should have worn a hat? Well, they passed you anyway though, despite that?

HUGHES: Yes, but the white gloves were obligatory and when one tells people only a few years behind me, they just really can't believe it. They also said the photograph wasn't flattering. I wish I could remember the gentlemen who gave me the exam because, other than being sort of like very far from today's standards, they were very nice, and very sort of congenial and very helpful. I didn't really get the "tell me what you're going to do if you get married", I mean I really didn't. The whole thing was very odd because as I mentioned before they also didn't tell you to leave. It was just sort of expected that you would leave.

Q: How many women were in your class?

HUGHES: There were five of us. It's because three were USIS.

Q: They did the training together at the State Department, junior Foreign Service Officers?

HUGHES: Yes, we were one of the classes that the stars fell on. Winston Lord, Morton Abramowitz. I can't remember any others, but it was a good class.

Q: It was a class of what 25 or 30?

HUGHES: It was larger because of the USIS component. So, when I took the exam again, so I could get new friends in the '70s, it was very different.

Q: It's interesting that you had that experience with the Board of Examiners. They were all male, of course. The idea of a woman officer being part of the Board of Examiners to do the oral interviews was pretty remote I think in those days.

HUGHES: I think probably, but it's awfully hard to. I mean you're that generation so it doesn't make a whole lot of sense, but you didn't notice, you didn't mind.

Q: We probably didn't know differently or know any better as we should have and certainly the Department should have and eventually things changed. You mentioned that you weren't told that you needed to resign, but that was expected. You did resign after your marriage? People sort of expected that as well, that that was kind of the way it was.

HUGHES: Yes. It was like being a minister's wife. I mean that was sort of carried on for you. I mean, you had enough to do just being married to a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Yes, well I was a PK. Do you know what a PK is? PK was known as; we were preacher's kids. My mother was a minister's wife. I know exactly what you're saying.

HUGHES: Oh gosh. Yes, there's a lot to do.

Q: Why don't you tell me just a little bit about your Foreign Service experience with your husband? Where did you live? You obviously had children, at least two that I know about?

HUGHES: Yes, that's all. We never served together because he retired the same year I reentered. It wouldn't have had to have happened that way, but it did.

Q: Where did you live with him abroad?

HUGHES: London, Cape Town, Helsinki.

Q: Three good posts, good places. But you were very much a mother and a wife and did

all of those things?

HUGHES: Yes and it was great fun. I absolutely have no regrets.

Q: You say you reentered in 1977. That was after his death?

HUGHES: No, it was after he retired.

Q: After he retired and after the rules changed and you were able to come back. Was it difficult for you to get back in in terms of the rules and the procedures?

HUGHES: Yes, but it needn't have. A Department notice went out announcing that everything had changed and there was a certain date by which one had to reapply. One is told that absent any disastrous thing, they would take you back in. But, at that time, Paul was finishing up in Helsinki and I was back in Washington letting our son finish fourth grade, which we thought was incredibly important at the time and it obviously was. So, we never saw the note. Dorothy Sampas told me about the notice a week before the notice came out and my husband went to see the Admin Officer to ask about the notice. This was in Helsinki. His response was, "I didn't pass it around because I knew that no one would be interested." So, I almost missed the whole thing.

Q: That would have been probably a few years before you actually came back in, wasn't it?

HUGHES: I came back in on leave without pay status because that was the only thing they could really do with me.

Q: Initially.

HUGHES: Yes, so I started off on the leave without pay status in '77 and then I came back to work early in '77.

Q: I think we were in Rome from '70 to '73 when everything changed as you said. I don't remember exactly what year it was, it was the '70s and opportunities existed again. After your leave without pay status for a while, then you joined a new officer A100 class?

HUGHES: Yes, which I needn't have done. As I've said I wanted to do it because I wanted some new peers and I think it was fun that I did.

Q: Because you were really coming in at the junior officer level, not taking account of the 20 years or 25 years of experience or 15 years.

HUGHES: Yes, actually I had one promotion so I suppose I came in as a seven.

Q: Not as an eight, at the very bottom. Almost nobody comes in at that now. So, you came

in in 1977 and went through the A100 class and then what happened to you Pat?

HUGHES: By that time I didn't go overseas and I can't remember why. It probably had something to do with; there was a family issue. Oh, I know what it was; Alice in the meantime had developed Crohn's Disease, which is one of the inflammatory diseases.

ALICE HUGHES: Not yet I hadn't.

HUGHES: Oh, you hadn't?

ALICE HUGHES: I developed it in Prague. Tell him what you did before Prague. Prague was '80 to '82.

P. HUGHES: Okay, yes, I was, that was when I did the suitability, conduct and discipline thing.

Q: In the Bureau of Personnel.

HUGHES: In the Bureau of Personnel. I would hate to do it now because I think people are going to be disciplined more than they did, but it was very interesting.

Q: Well, it really wouldn't be appropriate to talk about specific cases, but in that period would you say that the rules weren't being enforced, everything was pretty lenient or were people behaving better?

HUGHES: I think people were behaving better. One of the reasons people were behaving better was because they were not sort of as used to the Foreign Service as maybe they should have been. Certainly, spouses, but it seems to me that there was, and this is maybe not true at all, but I think there was a lot more, there were more alcohol problems than there had been previously I think.

Q: In the period that you were there? You had to deal with some of those, the impact on their service?

HUGHES: Yes, in a way they were very lucky because the idea was that it was an illness and if you agreed for treatment as an illness and you did perfectly well. In many instances there wasn't, but some of them I think. We had one fellow who left his classified briefcase in the lettuce when he was shopping for his wife.

Q: Lettuce in a supermarket? In the salad bar?

HUGHES: Yes, no I mean not in that part.

Q: This is not to mention, again I attempted to say a name, but I won't. Some others that we've heard about that were big problems. Okay, well you went to Prague in 1980?

HUGHES: Yes, after taking Czech.

Q: You took Czech and you went as a political officer?

HUGHES: I went as a political/consular officer. I spent the first year in consular which I had never done and the second year in political.

Q: At this time were you tenured or not tenured?

HUGHES: I guess I wasn't tenured because.

Q: Despite all these years.

HUGHES: Yes, Schulman wrote my tenure statement, that I remember.

Q: Schulman, was your supervisor?

HUGHES: Yes, he was the Soviet expert, the one who had come from Columbia.

Q: Right. Marshall Schulman and did you work in his office a bit in the seventh floor department?

HUGHES: Yes, well actually no it was the Soviet desk.

Q: Because he, this would have been I guess the end of the Carter administration and he played a very important role in the U.S. Soviet relations during that period. You didn't travel with them, but you had some association with them?

HUGHES: No, I didn't.

Q: So, in Prague you were a political officer and a consular officer, rotated, a year of each? This was the period while we were still in the cold war?

HUGHES: Yes we were, but I was in the Office of Soviet Exchanges and this was broken down into ten parts and basically dealt with programs and projects for the Soviets that we could really work with them on. Their health, environment.

Q: This was before you went to Prague, when you were still in Washington?

HUGHES: Yes. I think we did some good things actually.

Q: Things were beginning to develop in terms of relations?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: Now, were you in Prague at the time of the, what did they call it the Czech Spring?

HUGHES: No, the Velvet Spring or something like that, but no. That was '68.

When I was there things were pretty tight and my son still teases me about the fact that a lot of dissidents were being tried. So, I'd go to the courthouse everyday and wait for a verdict and there never was a verdict. Paul said it was a good thing because if there had been a verdict I never would have understood it.

Q: Because he didn't think your Czech was good enough?

HUGHES: My Czech was not great. It was only a 2/2, but not all that good. If I had done more consular work, it would have improved.

Q: Yes, to have the opportunity to actually use it. It's not that good in terms of being able to function and use the language. It's not bad in terms of what you can get out of training from I don't know how long, whether you had the full course.

HUGHES: I did. God helped me.

Q: Well, it's not an easy language. Prague was a beautiful place at that time.

HUGHES: Very beautiful, extremely somber. It was the sort of place that if one really wanted to get away for a weekend we'd go to Germany. I remember standing in front of one of the Catholic churches with my son who was wearing plaid trousers and an old woman came up to him. My Czech was good enough. She was screaming at him because he was not wearing appropriate clothes for church. Even though not that many people went to church, the ones that went had extremely high standards.

Q: And expected others to abide by them.

HUGHES: I still remember this because it just shows how things have changed. One of our consular employees was extremely dedicated and had a son who was roughly Paul's age. She had already begun to worry about college forms. He was probably 12. She said, "I am going to have to pay some one a lot to get my son into a university because he isn't very well traveled." She said, "I just hope between now and then I can figure out who."

Q: Make sure she got the right person.

HUGHES: Well, she did.

Q: Did you travel around Czechoslovakia much?

HUGHES: Yes, because we had social security visits. They were fascinating. I mean

everything was so barren and dismal, but every once in a while you'd go into a town where things were just jumping and it was because of the social security money. They were buying appliances, television sets.

Q: These were Czechs who had either worked in the United States themselves or were close relatives of somebody who had?

HUGHES: Yes. On the other hand, one saw extremely pathetic situations where people would get up at 4:00 in the morning and listen to Radio Free Europe. They really, really cared and so many of them, this would not be the case now, but we're dealing with 20 years ago; I mean, people still had more time and they were very strong and they cared a lot about others.

Q: Did you get that impression, that feeling from getting to know people through particularly the social security visits?

HUGHES: It was mostly the social security visits because these people were for the most part, they were older. I think they felt they had a lot less to lose. They, as opposed to people who've had a lot of trouble getting out even for a family, these were people who could come and go. If they went, the government wouldn't care because it would be just one less pension that they'd have to pay.

Q: One less person to feed and support.

HUGHES: On the other hand, to be fair to them, their family reunification record is better than anybody else's.

Q: Was there a lot of fear would you say, were you as an embassy officer, was it difficult for you to get around, was there surveillance?

HUGHES: There was surveillance. My husband was particularly surveilled because he had been not only in the army before the war, but also had been in army intelligence. They were absolutely sure that there was something there that they ought to be able to find. There was nothing, so they never found it. There were some USIS people who were given a little trouble. We were never given any trouble.

Q: Was your husband working in the embassy?

HUGHES: No.

Q: He was there as your family member?

HUGHES: He was an embassy wife. He had a wonderful time with all of the other wives.

Q: He was part of the wives' club.

P. HUGHES: that's right. He took little children to the museum. I mean, he had a wonderful time.

Q: Was he the CLO, the Community Liaison Officer?

HUGHES: No, he wasn't, but he could have been.

Q: Because that program was just starting at that time.

HUGHES: Yes and they liked him. All the women liked him. He was a very sweet guy.

Q: Did you have any sense of differences between Czechs and Slovaks in that period?

HUGHES: Oh yes, and part of it was mandated by the government. Slovaks could worship if they felt like it, but Czechs better not. They'd get in a lot of trouble if they did.

Q: Did you go to Bratislava some?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: We didn't have a consulate there then?

HUGHES: We had a consulate, but it was empty and our job was to make sure that people stayed there every once in a while so that when it did reopen we'd be able to do it easily.

Q: Empty in the sense that it wasn't staffed?

HUGHES: That's right.

Q: But, if we had a building and we had the intent of opening it again and we did. Anything else about your time in Prague that you remember and want to reflect on?

HUGHES: I was not the world's greatest officer then. I'm not sure whether it was my training or whether it was just something somebody ought to have told me that I didn't know. I mean, I mention this only because the consular work really went well, but I had no idea how to be a political officer.

Q: Probably there was not a political tradecraft course or very much political training at the Foreign Service Institute in that period.

HUGHES: I'll tell you who my ambassador was later.

Q: Well, tell us now.

HUGHES: Jack Matlock.

Q: Jack Matlock; he was very good.

HUGHES: He was very good, but I wish I could remember.

Q: He probably could have done just about everybody's job and tried to and did. I don't know.

HUGHES: Prague in those days was, I mean a lot was going to happen, but nothing had really happened yet.

Q: Was there anticipation on the part of you and others in the embassy that that was the case?

HUGHES: No, but I mean you know everything changes. Ambassador Matlock had served previously in East Germany where there was a lot happening every minute. It was kind of hard to find stuff to write about in Prague.

Q: Do you think it was partly because of what happened in '68 and the clamp down?

HUGHES: What happened in '68 caused the Czechs to pull their necks in like turtles.

Q: Exactly, whereas there had been trouble in East Germany that had been earlier and maybe they were beginning to feel more confidence and do more and to some extent in Hungary as well, I don't know.

HUGHES: Oh yes, by the time we went to Hungary on this tourist thing just a few weeks before we left. I mean, things were happening. People were going to bakeries and buying things.

Q: I remember talking with Arthur Burns when he was chairman of the Federal Reserve. He came to Switzerland from Hungary, from Budapest. This would have been about '74 or '75 and he was really quite impressed by the economic changes that were occurring in Hungary, so this was five years earlier.

HUGHES: I should have mentioned that to show that we all weren't sitting around on our duffs. There was a lot going on in Poland and the Russians were very distressed about what was going on because it had to do with the Catholic Church. It was after really quite a long period deciding that it was just going to do and say what it felt like doing. Cardinal Comocheck, for example, was probably almost 90 and had been very cautious all those years. But what happened was, what one saw in Ruda Pravo in the Czech paper like on Monday, you'd see it in the Russian papers on Tuesday and it was kind of a feeler to see how you'd react and in most instances we just sort of didn't do much because what was

going on in Poland was so much more vivid. There's always been this kind of difference between the Czechs and the Poles. The Czechs feel aggrieved and they've felt aggrieved ever since 1938. They thought that somehow the Poles were getting the better of every deal that was offered.

Q: This was also the beginning of solidarity and Lech Walesa and the shipyards at Gdansk in Poland? Were the Czechs sort of impressed by what the Poles were doing and were able to get away with?

HUGHES: Their feeling was, oh yes, the Americans helped the Poles, they always help the Poles, whereas they never help the Czechs and so we have stopped expecting anything from the Americans. I think to some degree that was right, an accident of history, but they weren't surprised when things happened in Poland that we countenanced. All of the Radio Free Europe and other stuff that was going on.

Q: They assumed that if it had happened in Czechoslovakia it would not have had the same support from the United States or expression of interest?

HUGHES: They wouldn't have had the same support or expressions of interest and they would somehow have gotten clobbered.

Q: Now you were there about five years or so after Helsinki and the CSCE, the European Security Cooperation. Was that something you heard about, thought about, worked on?

HUGHES: Yes, my husband worked on it. I was not working at the time.

Q: But at the time you were in Prague, was it something that seemed important there?

HUGHES: As long as there was the CSCE, it was better than when there was no CSCE. As far as, yes, it made an impression, but there was so much going on in Poland that it didn't make a huge impression. What was happening, was happening anyway in Poland.

Q: In Poland. Okay, anything else about Prague. Where did you go after Prague?

HUGHES: After Prague we came back to Washington where my husband was diagnosed with prostate cancer which he did not survive. I did the suitability conduct discipline thing.

Q: Again?

HUGHES: No, that was the only time.

ALICE HUGHES: She did the Soviet thing before.

Q: Okay, the exchanges, okay. So you did the suitability thing then and this would have

been '82 to '84, '85? Did you come to career counseling from there?

HUGHES: No, I didn't. Someone told me ,I don't know if it's true or not, that they didn't think that the office was ready for a woman.

Q: The Foreign Service Career and Assignments was not ready for a woman?

HUGHES: Not as a political officer. By the time I went back it was perfectly ready.

Q: I should say for purposes of full disclosure that I was the director of that office beginning in '87 when Pat came there and we were very ready for a woman, for Pat Hughes. There were actually a number of women in the office in that period.

HUGHES: I think it was basically, and I don't want to be wrong, because I think it was basically political officers.

Q: Well, you may have been the first career development officer for political cone officers. Do you think you were because I don't know of anybody who would have done it before you came? How did you feel generally about your experience as a career development officer for political officers?

HUGHES: I loved it. I sort of looked forward to going to work everyday.

Q: What part of it did you most like, the counseling part or the problem solving part?

HUGHES: A combination of the counseling part and the problem solving part. There were people as you know who had real problems. You operated within very strict parameters as to what you could do and what you couldn't do, but if you played your cards right, you could get a lot done. Even if it were a family imminence, for example, which no one wanted to talk about and there's still some of those, there's always a way around it. You can always say, well, you've been out a lot and you've been overseas a lot, you haven't been back since 1990 something. Do you know everything that's happened here since you got back? Do you know that we've got family counseling that looks after the other children and all sorts of other stuff. I'm just telling you this on the off chance that you don't know and you might be interested. Well, I mean people are.

Q: And some of the times didn't know basic things like that.

HUGHES: Yes. I enjoyed it very much.

Q: I think one of the satisfactions that I got out of that office was working with the great group of people in a collegial way and there was certainly lively discussion and debate and almost confrontations sometimes. Generally, I think people were motivated by an effort to try and do what was best for the individual, but also for the Service as well for the Department.

HUGHES: Yes. I was sure happy there.

Q: Well, I think you outstayed me. I left in '89 and I think, were you still there when I left or had you left before?

HUGHES: I went to South Africa.

Q: So, we probably left about the same time from the office and you did the language training and where did you go in South Africa?

HUGHES: Cape Town.

Q: You went as a?

HUGHES: I was number two, I guess in the building. I was a political officer.

Q: South Africa, this was post-apartheid?

HUGHES: Yes, just.

Q: Barely. So, the new Nelson Mandela and the new African National Congress Government was feeling their way and doing well?

HUGHES: I knew them all and actually in one of my EERs someone, one of the NIC people was quoted as saying that everywhere I was, there I was, it was a wonderful assignment. I think I did well in Africa. So much was going on and you're right. Mandela was released in February.

Q: I think he was released early in '90, February of '90.

HUGHES: Yes, it was before I got there.

Q: But he wasn't really, hadn't had the full transition yet?

HUGHES: No, the last whites-only election was about a year after I got there and then the real election was probably about six weeks after I left.

Q: But you were there for all of the conventions, got the new constitution, you knew Nelson Mandela?

HUGHES: I knew Tutu was ours as opposed to the embassy's, because of an agreement that was made.

Q: Because he was based in Cape Town? How far is it from Cape Town to the, well the

embassy spent part of the year in Cape Town, though the ambassador did? I guess that's still the case now because of the parliament moves back and forth between Pretoria and Cape Town?

HUGHES: They may not send the whole bevy of people that they would traditionally send, but certainly there was always someone from the embassy there and the ambassador is always there for the end of session.

Q: That must make it difficult for the consul general and for the other people in the consulate?

HUGHES: I spent six years there altogether. So, I have to tell everything that people were. Every once in a while the ambassador would ask for help and it would be either covering something that his folks didn't have time to cover or some sort of rush entertaining job. Ordinarily they both kept their sort of their responsibilities.

Q: So, the ambassador and the embassy were primarily involved with the government, maybe with the parliament and not so much with the local political figures in Cape Town or Cape Province or certainly the business community?

HUGHES: Right and we had, I can't remember his name, but there was another important political figure who ended up in jail.

I could never have another job like that. As you may remember there was some discussion about whether or when I was going to go because the embassy didn't know me.

Q: Who was the ambassador at the time?

HUGHES: Bill Swing part of the time, and Ed Perkins before him.

Q: Certainly Bill Swing knew you?

HUGHES: Oh yes.

Q: Ed Perkins didn't perhaps.

HUGHES: After a while he certainly did because he was one of the ones who had to make the decision as to whether or not I should go.

Q: Because he had become the director general.

HUGHES: Yes, he made the decision and probably effected it. People change their minds. It's much better to have a positive mind and not a negative one with the people you're living with.

Q: You mentioned that you were in South Africa six years. Part of that time was with your husband earlier? Okay, during apartheid? So, you were certainly able to compare and contrast.

HUGHES: That's right. Yes, I was. Never to the degree that one would have been able to fortunately for those who lived in Johannesburg or anywhere else in the country. Things were never quite, no matter how bad things were in Cape Town they were never quite as bad as they were anywhere else.

Q: The apartheid was not enforced as tightly or?

HUGHES: It was not enforced as tightly. I can remember the mayor who was opposed to the enforcement that was ordered by Pretoria to put signs on the park benches, you know whites-only signs. The mayor said if you want to do it, you do it, I'm not going to do it. It was that kind of thing because when we arrived in 1970 they were using the old South African terminology. There were three colored city counselors who had been elected by everyone in Cape Town.

Q: Already, at that time in 1970? How about your language, your Afrikaans?

HUGHES: It's actually good. Every once in a while, for example, somebody in the Conservative Party would be speaking in Cape Town from Pretoria and there just weren't enough people to handle all of it. It's an easy language.

Q: Had you studied some previously when you were there in the '70s?

HUGHES: No.

Q: I'd like to talk about, just to probe a little bit more about this period in Cape Town when you were there. It must have been an exhilarating and exciting period. Had the United States a role, did we have lots of visitors coming?

HUGHES: Yes, we did and we had quite a number of tutelage programs for the ANC members. Allan Boesak is the name of a person of some importance who belonged to us.

Q: Because he was in Cape Town?

HUGHES: Because he was Cape Town based.

Q: Not because he got into trouble?

HUGHES: No, although interestingly enough the money that he got into trouble with came from Denmark. So it was kind of fun trying to track that later when I was in Copenhagen. When I look back on it, it was a fairly dangerous posting, although I think

probably one of the things that television does to us is make us inured to things that are really happening. I've climbed walls and tried to get out of the way of marauding mobs. I've heard guns shot in anger although I don't think anyone ever shot one at me. At the same time, the Pan African Congress, for example, which declared war on the United States, also whenever they had a meeting they always made a place for me. Come on Mama, sit here.

Q: You're welcome, huh?

HUGHES: Yes. So, it was an extremely heady place to be and I still keep in touch with quite a number of people.

Q: Part of the problems in South Africa, and I've never been there myself, so I may be wrong in this, but there's been a fair amount of crime. Was that a problem in Cape Town at the time when you were there?

HUGHES: If you go from 1960, when there was virtually none, to our departure, yes, there was quite a bit, but nothing to compare with Johannesburg where everything was boiled up. I haven't been up there since the last sort of step of people warring themselves up.

Q: Trying to protect themselves? Cape Town is very different you mentioned a couple of times from Johannesburg. Why is it different do you think? Is it because it's more English?

HUGHES: No, it's probably about half-and-half. It was settled first in 1642 or something like that, but from the very beginning, certainly from the first 50 years, the Afrikaners thought that everything was much too liberal, they wanted to get out. So, by the 19t^{h} century they were heading north.

Q: The Boer War was?

HUGHES: Yes, that was the late 1800s. It attracted a different kind of people from the very beginning, farmers for the most part, but wine farmers.

Q: Wine farmers? In the cape region, the Cape Province?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: Lots of business people.

HUGHES: Lots of business people, but interesting starting from 1970 the businessmen couldn't speak English. I mean my husband had to use his German to communicate with them and that obviously had all changed.

Q: When you were there with your husband in the early 1970s that was in Cape Town also?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: So, you really were in Cape Town twice. Your six years in South Africa was all in Cape Town? It sounds pretty good to me.

HUGHES: Yes, it was.

Q: It's a beautiful place in terms of the scenery, the natural layout.

HUGHES: I was very fortunate in my friends because for that first year when I didn't work, all I did was play tennis and swim and stuff and get to know a lot of the local people. The people I knew and still know from those days, they're getting on. Even though they were all older than I was, their children were all the same age because they married so much later because of the war.

Q: The same age as your children?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: When you were there the first time in the early '70s were you able to have friends across the racial lines?

HUGHES: We were, because we were diplomats and every once in a while there would be a neighbor who didn't quite understand and would call the police and the police would explain that we could have people of any color we wanted to at any time.

Q: It was never an issue between the police and the consulate?

HUGHES: No.

Q: You mentioned Bishop Tutu as somebody who was obviously very important with the church, but also in political terms as well. Was he somebody you knew the first time you were there?

HUGHES: Only the second.

Q: Only the second time, when he was the bishop?

HUGHES: Right, exactly. I'm not quite sure what I think about saints, but if I really thought about saints he would be at the top of my list.

Q: Well, I've heard him speak at the National Cathedral here, probably more than once

and he's certainly very impressive, very articulate.

HUGHES: He has prostate cancer and I don't think he's doing all that well, but some people are very lucky and they do well. He had a good office so that whenever we asked for anything or whenever we hoped for something, all you had to do was say something and somebody from his office would make a call and usually very often.

Q: You mean if you had a visitor you would like to take and see him and he would receive them? His office was good in the sense that it was efficient and functioned well?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: What other recollections, memories do you have of that period, the second time especially when you were?

HUGHES: Okay, the first time just very briefly I can recall being terribly angry about being there for probably the first 18 months I was there.

Q: Angry because of the political situation and the apartheid and all that that represented?

HUGHES: People were still at the tail end of being moved out of District Six which was where the coloreds, so-called, lived and their houses were all razed and they still have been razed because nobody really wants to touch them. I mean, it's sort of like, Osama Bin Laden and what he's been doing. People just don't want to have anything to do with District Six anymore, but eventually they will because it's in town.

Q: Cape Town?

HUGHES: Yes. People whose families had been there for generations had been booted out and it got to you even if you had nothing to do with the situation otherwise.

Q: How do you feel look back on the American role, the role of the United States in terms of the way we staffed our embassy and consulate in Cape Town? Did that have any particular impact would you say over the years? We've had African American ambassadors, consul generals?

HUGHES: Oh, yes. We've had because times have changed; we've had some pretty oblivious employees as well.

Q: Oblivious to the past?

HUGHES: This is from 1990 from 1992 I'd say. I was delighted selfishly to be able to go to the theaters for example, they had built some excellent theaters there. The British weren't allowed to go by their ambassador.

Q: Why?

HUGHES: Just because it was under apartheid rule. We went. I wasn't working so I could do what I wanted to.

Q: This again was the earlier period during apartheid? So, the British were protesting or objecting to the manifestations of apartheid and we were going along with it?

HUGHES: We weren't going along with it. I think that's a little bit too strong, but just sort of ignored it. Overall, I don't think it made any difference, I don't think we kept anybody from doing anything. We did have an ambassador who was about to go hunting with the minister of justice and his political counselor advised him not to go and he didn't go. People listened. The difference between the political ambassador and Bill Swing, was like night and day. Nobody ever put anything over on him.

Q: Well, Ambassador Swing I know was very much involved in encouraging, assisting, helping Mandela and the new government and as you said before we also sent some ANC people out for training I suppose in the United States on international business programs?

HUGHES: Yes, and we also had people coming to South Africa to train.

Q: To do workshops and courses?

HUGHES: Yes. As I say, it was interesting because you went everywhere, you ran the gamut. Some of my Cape Town contacts and colleagues are still in the government and they haven't done anything bad which is nice. I think they're going to be all right. I remember when the congressman, the one who is Hungarian by birth?

Q: Tom Lantos in California.

HUGHES: I took care of him for one weekend and he said, "How do you think things are going to turn out?" This was again in the early '70s and I wasn't working. I said I think they're going to turn out better than any other system than they've tried so far. I think that was the case.

Q: I would say that the glass is certainly half full. They've done a lot in the last ten years. After Cape Town you went to Danish language training and then Copenhagen?

HUGHES: Yes, Danish language training at FSI in Washington and then Copenhagen.

Q: Then to Copenhagen as political officer?

HUGHES: Pol/Econ counselor.

Q: It was a combined political and economic section and you were in charge of both. I have interviewed the DCM at that time, so I know a little bit about and I also have a friend who is with the USIS, Virgil Bodine at the time, so I know a little bit about the embassy at the time. I think it was a difficult period for people working there.

HUGHES: Yes, it was.

Q: Not so much because of the state of U.S. Danish relations.

HUGHES: Denmark was interesting. They had two elections when I was there and they were fine. There was all of the peacekeeping and other things that went on with the Danes that made it an interesting time to be there.

Q: The peacekeeping issue is related to Bosnia at that time for the most part? Kosovo, not yet?

HUGHES: Not yet.

Q: You were sort of coordinating and working with the Danish government on their participation with the United States and also in terms of NATO I suppose in S4 and post Dayton I guess?

HUGHES: Yes, Dayton was June of that last year.

Q: What sort of impression do you have of Danish capabilities in the peacekeeping area; they're, pretty experienced?

HUGHES: They're very experienced and they are an interesting psychological study, which they themselves will tell you about at the drop of a hat. They did not have a glorious war and I think they were trying to make up for it ever since. It wouldn't have made a whole lot of difference because Denmark is flat and it wasn't a Norway.

Q: They wouldn't have been able to defend themselves if they had tried?

HUGHES: No. I can remember my friends asking me to remind me how many Danes, how many Danish soldiers were killed during the invasion. It was something like nine.

Q: During the Second World War?

HUGHES: His response was, "Oh their mothers must have been so annoyed." As a matter of fact, the queen in her 1990 address, which was kind of a big deal because it was the anniversary of the invasion and was also the anniversary of her birthday, said in her address, "All right, enough is enough. You may rejoice. You haven't felt like rejoicing, but you may rejoice." Because, oddly enough, they didn't do all that badly because of

how they helped the Jews out. It was only after, if they had not had that experience they probably would have gone along swimmingly for the whole rest of the time. But the resistance only started after the Jews were evacuated.

Q: These were Jews living in Denmark?

HUGHES: Yes. They got them all out practically.

Q: They were able to get them out before they went to Sweden? The Danish army, I don't know anything about. I assume it is good and capable. They have an air force and a navy and all those things?

HUGHES: Yes, they do.

Q: I was in Cyprus in the early '80s and Denmark had a contingent element of the United Nations peacekeeping force there which was small. I believe they were volunteers. In other words, I'm not sure; they basically could stay in Cyprus pretty much as long as they wanted. I assume they had some training. They wore uniforms, but they were not in any sense, I don't think they were professional soldiers like the British or the Canadians. Does that sound right?

HUGHES: What year was that?

Q: This would have been the early '80s, so it was before the period we're talking about.

HUGHES: Yes. The reason I'm asking is because in the late '70s I remember when the British were being evacuated in Cyprus and the BBC sort of carried news every 15 minutes or so telling people where to go and what port to go to if they had dogs and what port to go to if they didn't have dogs.

Q: That was '74.

HUGHES: It was hairy stuff. We were in Finland then.

Q: But the Danes were very happy to be part of the UN force? At the time I was there, there were only four other countries that were there, the British, the Canadians and two others.

HUGHES: Yes, when I left they probably had the highest percentage of peacekeepers of other than the …

Q: Before the NATO force went out and then they stayed? They were in a number of other places, the Middle East, probably not in Cyprus anymore because I think they had left by that time. So, you spent a lot of time primarily talking to the foreign ministry or the defense ministry about?

HUGHES: The foreign ministry. The defense ministry had an attaché. Which was fine.

Q: Were there other side issues? You were there not too long after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changes in Eastern Europe? Were you affected by that much?

HUGHES: Not really. We were extremely busy, in fact, when the president made his very first visit ever to Poland.

Q: That certainly has an impact on an embassy. They brought in a lot of people to help the embassy I suppose?

HUGHES: Yes, they did, but it was not as many as one would hope. We had one person, a fairly junior officer come down from Stockholm and I think one got a very different impression of how other foreign ministries work or can work. The president was supposed to come, let's say in May. He had canceled and the trip had to be rescheduled

Q: This was President Clinton?

HUGHES: President Clinton. There was a great deal of unhappiness because the cancellation was only two days before.

Q: Oh really? All the preparations that had been made?

HUGHES: All the preparations had been made.

Q: So, he came later?

HUGHES: Yes, he did.

Q: After what, a few months?

HUGHES: He promised actually at the time when the trip was canceled that he would come and he did, but I said to the chief of protocol, "Oh golly, this is really going to conflict with the summer." He knew that he and his wife had their vacations all set. I said, "This is really going to mess you up." He said, "No, it's not. We'll go anyway." I said, "What?" He said, "It'll get done, somebody else will do it."

Q: That's exactly what happened?

HUGHES: That's what happened.

Q: That's a good attitude. I wish more people had that.

HUGHES: Yes it is.

Q: But you didn't take your vacation. You were there for the president's visit?

HUGHES: Oh, of course. It was a treat because first of all you have no idea how tall the president is because the queen is over six feet and we're used to seeing her tower over everybody else in the room. She wasn't towering over at all, he towered over her. She's a very charming woman and of course there were so many people. You've been involved in presidential visits, it was my first one, but I had no idea of the number of people that would turn out. I had a driver taking me back into town. I said to the driver, "I haven't seen this many people since the queen's birthday celebration." He just looked at me and said, "We love our queen." And they do.

Q: They also love America? Or they like the United States and the American people?

HUGHES: Yes they do.

Q: And this was reflected in the attitude toward the visit?

HUGHES: I'm not sure, yes it was, it certainly was. The more you are exposed to the sort of visitors; I mean who would have guessed that millions of people would turn out for the queen mother's funeral?

Q: How much contact did you have with the royal family in Denmark?

HUGHES: Well, I was invited to the lunch, I was fortunate enough to be invited to the lunch. That was very nice.

Q: When the president was there?

HUGHES: Yes, because you were announced in and that was kind of scary. I didn't have much contact otherwise. That was really a treat and those of us who were invited felt that it was a tremendous treat.

Q: Were you involved in other aspects of the president's visit?

HUGHES: I had Strobe who was very easy because all he wanted to do was rest. It was the last stop on a very grueling NATO connected schedule.

Q: Strobe Talbott? Had they been to Moscow, too?

HUGHES: Yes and as I say, it was the very last stop. I went with him everywhere. As a matter of fact he was the one who gave out the retirement awards the year that I retired which was lovely because I've always liked him very much, but he said something about, "Well, you survived" and I said, "Yes, I did." So, they all knew about our ambassador.

Q: So, in survival terms he was talking about that experience as opposed to the president's visit?

HUGHES: Oh, no, he knew the president's visit was going to be just fine and it was.

Q: Let's see, what else about Copenhagen? You mentioned the peacekeeping, the president's visit, anything else?

HUGHES: I don't think so. There was the usual and I wasn't involved because of the age of my children, but there were the usual school issues.

Q: You were not on the school board?

HUGHES: No.

Q: Did you have an inspection?

HUGHES: No, we didn't.

Q: The reason I ask that is the only time I've ever been to Copenhagen or to Denmark, I actually went as an inspector. The only time I ever was an inspector, it was only three weeks I was actually in Rome at the time, but it was a good experience.

HUGHES: I would have liked that.

Q: Okay, so that was your last Foreign Service post and you came back from there and retired?

HUGHES: No actually I came back from there and went back to CDA, which was a mistake.

Q: What were you doing in CDA, Career Development Assignments? You were again a career counselor?

HUGHES: The same thing that I had done before.

Q: Why was it a mistake?

HUGHES: It wasn't broadening to me.

Q: I didn't realize you had gone back again. I won't ask you to compare the second experience with the first one.

HUGHES: At least not on tape. Although some of the same people were there. Vince Battle was there.

Q: Vince Battle was the head of the office then, or head of the senior officers?

HUGHES: He was moving into the head of the office as I appeared.

Q: I think he was the head of the senior officer division before that. He's done very well since that. Lebanon I believe that's where he is. He was DCM in Cairo. He's a very good officer.

HUGHES: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay.

HUGHES: I can't imagine that I've contributed anything, but it's been fun and it's been nice to see you.

Q: Well, it's been fun to talk and to hear you reflect

HUGHES: Well, thank you.

End of interview