

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

ANN MILLER MORIN

Interviewed by: Jewell Fenzi
Initial interview date: June 21, 1988

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INTERVIEW

Q: This is Jewell Fenzi on June 21, 1988. I am interviewing Ann Miller Morin, Mrs. Laurent Morin, at her home in Washington, DC. Mrs. Morin has served in Algiers, Algeria; Le Havre and Paris, France; Kobe, Japan; Baghdad, Iraq; Algeria again; and her husband was an Inspector in the Department. She received her Master's degree in 1960 at the University of Maryland. Her thesis dealt with "educating Foreign Service children," and indicated that Foreign Service children benefit from the life they lead more than they suffer from it. We should bear in mind that this was 28 years ago.

Now Ann is engaged in an oral history project -- interviewing women ambassadors, and she has interviewed most of the living women ambassadors. In addition to talking to her today about her Foreign Service life -- during which time she taught and managed to work, either for a salary or as a volunteer, during practically all of her husband's entire career, which ended in 1979 -- I want to talk to her about her current project.

So, now you're going to the Eisenhower Library to do what?

MORIN: They're having a conference, whose over-all title is "Women in the Eisenhower Period" but they asked me to give a half-hour address on the general subject of women ambassadors. I don't quite know how they want me to tailor it, but I have so much material that that poses the problem -- to winnow it down to exactly what they want, because you can't say much in 30 minutes. Julie Nixon Eisenhower will be the keynoter the night before the conference opens. Then there's someone from the Army and the Navy and from government service and from business, and so forth.

This is a very unusual step for, or all places, the Eisenhower Library to take, because Eisenhower was not known for his interest in women's affairs, and the historians around town are very excited about it because this seems to be a breakthrough. I mean, if Eisenhower Library is sponsoring a thing like this, it augurs very well for women.

Q: How much do you attribute to Julie Nixon Eisenhower?

MORIN: Oh, quite a bit, everybody does, yes. It was nice to know that word about America's women ambassadors is getting out and that people are really interested in it.

Q: How did you get started on the project?

MORIN: Jean Wilkowski, who was the first woman ambassador to an African post -- she went to Zambia, appointed by Nixon -- had served with my husband and me in Paris. One evening in 1983 she was here with mutual friends. We hadn't seen Jean since we'd left Paris in 1954 because she'd gone to her continents and we'd gone to ours. But we'd heard of her through friends, you know; and so we were catching up. My husband said to Jean, "Ann doesn't teach any more, she's writing, exclusively." Her eyes brightened and she said, "I want to talk to her." So afterwards she took me aside and said, "I'm very interested in finding somebody to write a book about women ambassadors, for the simple reason that as I go about the country lecturing on the subject, after the addresses I give there are always questions, "Where can I find out more about the subject?" And she said, "I've searched everywhere, there is nothing. There's 'something' on Jeane Kirkpatrick, 'something' on Shirley Temple Black, there's plenty on Clare Boothe Luce. When you've said that, you've said it."

"So," she said, "I very much want to -- would you be interested?" She thought at the time that she could get a foundation grant, which since proved not possible because we were going at it just at the time the President cut off aid to non-profit foundations, etc. Well, her query prompted very serious misgivings on my part. Having written several books, I know what's involved in that. But adding to that, all of this business about the oral histories, I thought, "Oh, boy, the research... It's a long, long project." And Jean, who is used to doing things by committees, thought it could be done in 18 months. I burst out laughing -- "It's just not possible. I will accept, Jean, but only on the understanding you will help me, and you will make me known to the proper people."

Q: Pave the way for you.

MORIN: Pave the way. So that's exactly what we did. She took me in to see George Vest and Sam Gammon and all kinds of people who "knew where the bodies are buried." I put together a list of people I wanted to see, and we went at it -- not exactly systematically but there was a plan in mind. First of all, in order to apply for money from foundations, I had to have a very clear picture of what I wanted to do. That made me focus my thinking and I made an outline of a book, and so forth. We wrote some proposals, but we didn't have any luck at all with that because we weren't backed by a institution. And it wasn't until, oh, about a year after I had been working independently, that the Association for Diplomatic Studies (ADS) came into being, I went to talk to Gene (Bovis) and to Dick (Parker). I said, "I need your backing." And also it would be something that they could talk about when they brought in other people.

Q: I was just going to say -- that was very much a two-way street, when they were getting started.

MORIN: Yes, sure. So it worked out very well, and they agreed -- if I could get any

money -- to process it for me, i.e., make it tax-exempt for us. So that was fine. I started doing the oral histories -- I knew I had to interview these women, because the whole thrust of the book was to be that this was all new material, told to me "from the horse's mouth," so to speak. Well, Jean called me up and said, "I've heard from the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe and they want to do an oral history of Carol Laise."

Q: "Women in Federal Government."

MORIN: Yes. They only contemplated two women ambassadors -- they already had finished Margaret Tibbetts; the other -- the very last one they were doing, actually -- was to be Laise. They had somebody here at the Brookings Institute who was supposed to do it. She couldn't, so they wanted Jean. She responded, "I'm not interested in doing this, but I'll ask them if you can do it."

So I had to present my résumé and all that sort of thing and they finally approved of me -- I think because I had done the other work on Foreign Service children. Anyway, I did it for them, and Carol Laise was my very first interviewee. She's a very good one because she speaks very slowly and (laughing) I was able to overcome all my initial nervousness. I had done a lot of interviewing before, but nothing that was going into an archive. It does put -- as I'm sure you know and feel too! -- a bit of a strain on you. So, having done that, the project was under way. And I decided "since I'm doing one all the way through, it's a wonderful idea to do them all all the way through."

I knew some library would want the oral histories, because the Schlesinger Library was crazy about this idea. Of course, they haven't any money either: nobody has any money in the 1980s for this sort of project.

Q: Why does Schlesinger not have any money? Isn't Radcliffe financing them?

MORIN: No, it was a Ford grant they had, and they had spent just about all of it, and they couldn't get any more -- I went up and talked to them, and while they're very interested in the project, they don't have any money. Well, how did I get a grant? I was interviewing Anne Cox Chambers, and she is a billionaire, with a b. Her father was Cox, onetime governor of Ohio, who owned the Cox radio-newspaper chain in the South, and she inherited it and now has gone into television, Cox Cable, I think it's called. It's a big thing all through the South and she's just coining money.

Anyway, I was interviewing her, and she asked, "How much longer is it going to take you?" I said, quite openly, "Well, I'm not certain because I'm hampered by lack of money to travel." And she said, "Isn't the State Department paying your way?" I said, "No, I'm paying everything myself." She said, "I think that's awful!" And I replied, "Well, that's the way it is, Mrs. Chambers. I'll let you know -- yours is done and you'll be getting it but I have to get transcription money too."

I hadn't been home a couple of weeks when I got a phone call from one of her lawyers,

who said, "Mrs. Chambers (she laughs) wants to give you some money." (both laugh heartily) And I thought, we don't discourage gestures of that kind. Then he asked the key question: "Are you connected to a non-profit organization? If you're not, that's all right, she wants to give it to you anyway. But if you are, that will expedite matters." I think what he meant was, I would get more, because if it weren't tax-free, although she would give me the same amount, I would net less. So she did. She gave me \$10,000.00 and it was channeled through ADS and those blessed people gave me every penny.

Q: They do us, too.

MORIN: Columbia University wanted 65 percent of everything, American University wanted 33 percent of everything; which is fair enough, that's the way they do it. But I mean, 100 percent is better. (she breaks down in laughter)

Q: But bear in mind that we both are doing Dick Parker a favor, in a way (Morin assents) because we're enhancing his project.

MORIN: Of course we are. And our time is absolutely free. If we were getting paid what oral historians get paid, it couldn't be done.

Q: No, absolutely not.

MORIN: But again, this is the Foreign Service theme: It is the *esprit de corps* that we had and still continues in us. I don't know if it continues with the new people. Possibly it does, with many of them, I'm sure. But this is something -- if you've devoted your life to a cause, it makes you want to make it seem a very worthwhile thing, and therefore, you throw everything into it. And you know, Jewell, the fact of the matter is that it's a very important thing, because if we don't do it pretty soon, there will be nobody around to tell what the Foreign Service was like. And there have been "sea changes" since we came in. I came in a little before you did, and I can see even more because I had little children who had to be educated and had to have doctors and things, and there were no allowances at that time. So it's something that should be recorded. And, just by the way, since I've begun my project, four of "my" women ambassadors have died. So you see, the only one of the four I was able to interview was Clare Boothe Luce. One died the week before I was to see her -- Nancy Rawls. And once the person has died, it is very difficult to understand that person well enough to write about her, without ever having seen her.

Q: My husband could talk to you about Nancy Rawls, because he was the Economic officer in Sierra Leone, and Nancy was Economic officer in Liberia and we used to see her; I know he was in touch with her. Whether he had any contact with her while she was ambassador in Togo, I don't know. But she must have followed Dwight Dickinson there, about 1975 or '76. I recall writing Nancy and saying my daughter was coming to Togo as a Peace Corps volunteer, so Dwight must have gone by that time. So, for Frances Willis you must have had to rely on [people who knew her].

MORIN: Yes, and it means you have to do many more interviews.

Q: Could you get things from the files through Freedom of Information?

MORIN: I have been to the presidential libraries, and there isn't very much on Willis, just on specific issues she dealt with. I found some items on her in the Department's nexus file; I also talked to her relatives. Her brother was living in California and I was in process of making arrangements, held up because I didn't have money to travel, when he died. So his daughter sent me a great many things, and I talked to her cousins, Mrs. Richard Sanger, whose husband was a Foreign Service officer who lives here [in DC], and her sister, Mrs. Pomeroy. The two of them gave me a lengthy interview. (mimicking a woman's high-pitched voice) "About Franny -- you want to know about Franny?" It was fun to get it from the private side, and of course they had insights no one else would have. But they didn't know much about the public side. So you have to do a lot of extra spadework. It was very interesting because they are very lovely women.

I told them I was also interested -- later, after this is done -- in perhaps writing a biography of Frances Willis for young teenagers, because they need role models and Willis is certainly a good one. Well, the next thing I knew, I got a big cardboard box of memorabilia that belonged to Frances Willis. They'd sent me some of her certificates, some of her medals, a lot of photograph albums, a little journal-type of thing she kept -- wonderful stuff. And in her own words, you see. So I have been quoting from that rather freely.

Q: Needless to say!

MORIN: Yes. Because I don't have her to say it. The rest of her stuff is all at Stanford and I expect eventually I will give this material to Stanford University. Unless ADS wants it -- I don't know how much they want, not knowing how much space they'll have.

Q: And who knows when that new complex is going to be built. (both express approval that the tapes will go to Georgetown, thus offering people immediate access to the material when it's turned over) So, until Anne Cox Chambers offered you a nice grant, you really financed everything yourself.

MORIN: Totally.

Q: To what extent were you willing to go?

MORIN: Oh, I'd be willing to go to whatever I had to. I am (she laughs) a very dogged individual and I don't look on this as a monetary thing. Obviously I don't. It is something that stimulates me.

Q: "Retirement pastime" which you're willing to invest in.

MORIN: Well, of course, it's more than a pastime, it really is a profession -- our lives are built around this project and my husband's work at the State Department; this is "what it is." And for the last seven weeks, we have worked seven days a week. This is what we do. And we love it. I love meeting the people -- you asked me how much have I put in. Up to the time when Anne Chambers gave me the money, I had put in around \$13,000.

Q: So her grant really reimbursed you, more or less.

MORIN: More or less. And then, you see, Jean Wilkowski gave some money to ADS to help me buy supplies. And Ambassador Holsey Handyside, bless his heart, gave me the money to take a trip. He's a very close friend of ours, and when he heard I couldn't get out to California to interview Shirley Temple Black and India Edwards -- fascinating subject -- he gave me the money for air fare through ADS. Then this past Christmas, he gave me some more money. So little things are coming in that way. Rosemary Ginn sent a check for \$300 to help in the transcription of her tapes. So Dick and I are going to ask the subjects if they will help me with the transcription costs.

(some discussion on this subject off microphone)

MORIN: I belong to a Biography Group which you might be interested in attending. It doesn't have a name, it's led by Marc Pachter, who is the historian for the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. There was an all-day symposium there on biography, and David McCullough was there and Phyllis Rose and others. Marc was the moderator and at that time said, "If anybody is interested in forming a group so we can discuss this more, come ahead and sign up." Enough of us did so we've been meeting ever since, once a month, usually on a Tuesday evening. We discuss the problems that we all have in writing biographies, funding, anything -- it can be technical, ethical, inspirational, whatever you want. But it's a very good group and everybody is working on something. There's another FS couple there, Ned and Nancy Schaefer. A lot of people are working on family projects. (Fenzi says she'd be interesting in joining; Morin cites several other members' names and what they're doing, and title of Pachter's book, Telling Lives. Morin also says she belongs to Washington Independent Writers, whose annual conferences she finds very worthwhile for networking, and the Oral History Association, a national organization. Further discussion along these lines.

Q: To return to your project, I can see it has become all-consuming, it has become professional. [break in tape] We had started to discuss publishing your book and I wanted to ask you: In your interviews with women ambassadors, did anything ever come up about the spouses that they had to work with? Did you ever focus on that at all? Did it creep into the conversation?

MORIN: I asked definite questions about them. The fact of the matter is that spouses, to date, have not been a very important factor with the women ambassadors. In Clare Boothe Luce's case, her husband was already a highly important man, and he opened an office in Rome so that he could be there. She took the job with the understanding that he would

spend six months a year in Rome, and then they would have a three-month vacation -- that's how things were back in the 1950s -- and the other three months he'd be somewhere else and she'd be there alone, so she wouldn't be there alone too long -- it was bad for her marriage, she said.

Eugenie Anderson's husband was wealthy in his own right; his father invented the puffed wheat/rice process, so he didn't work. He's a photographer and artist and was able to transport what he did. He also traveled a great deal. Patricia Harris's husband was a judge, who went with her, but both had difficulty. She seems to have been the dominant one in that partnership and was always extremely sensitive about the way he was treated by local people, although I understand he did a very fine job and was very good. Now, you'll notice that all of these women I'm talking about are non-career ambassadors. Of the career ambassadors in the time period we're discussing -- 1933-1983 -- only 17 of my 44 are career women.

Q: And how many of them were married?

MORIN: (after reflection) Laise, Jane Coon, Melissa Wells -- and, until I check the list, that's it. Bunker was ambassador to Vietnam, Carlton Coon was ambassador to Nepal when Jane was ambassador to Bangladesh -- they were the first "tandem couple" ever sent out as ambassadors at the same time. Bunker was already in Vietnam when Laise was given Nepal, perhaps because it was "feasible" -- he had an airplane and he could commute; they spent time once a month together in one country or the other. And, although Laise was of the career, Bunker was not.

Anne Cox Chambers' husband was with her but they divorced shortly afterwards. Ruth Farkas's husband was with her some of the time. He died shortly afterwards.

An interesting one is Anne Armstrong's husband. He's a wealthy cattleman but he went with her, and I was told that he looked on his wife "with fond indulgence" -- I thought that was a wonderful phrase. He took over a lot of her representational duties -- he would open fairs and that sort of thing when she was busy with other duties. He was most helpful to her. He went with her to the presentation of credentials and so forth, all dolled up, and she in her long white gown, when the glass coach came after her -- a lot of color there.

[Florence] Daisy Harriman was a widow. Ruth Bryan Owen married a Dane and had to give up her post, as did Helene von Damm, as you know. She took a husband to Vienna with her, divorced him, married a Viennese, and had to give up her job. Faith Whittlesey is a widow. So I think you cannot compare the spousal problem of non-career ambassadors to the spousal problem of women ambassadors from the Foreign Service, because the formers' husbands are usually very successful men, or else it doesn't work and they get a divorce. Well, of course that happens, too, among Foreign Service people, but the majority of women career ambassadors in my sample have never married.

Q: Was there any talk at all about the relationship between the woman ambassador and, say, the spouse of her DCM?

MORIN: Yes. Usually it works very well and the DCM's spouse is very helpful, and quite often will take over the role that the ambassador's wife usually performs.

Q: Without pay, right?

MORIN: Of course! (both laugh heartily) Well, the ambassador's wife doesn't get paid, you see. These women ambassadors are all trailblazers, so the first things that happen are sort of "worked through" with them. When the Geneva Conference of 1953 took place, a summit with Khrushchev and Eisenhower, Frances Willis was the American ambassador. She didn't have a wife, obviously, so the wife of her DCM went with her to the Conference and was the ranking wife there among diplomats, while her husband stayed home in Bern and "ran the shop." But his wife went as "the wife." So it's interesting the way these things evolve. And, by the way, they "sat below the salt" because there were so many "important" people there! (both laugh heartily)

Q: Well, I can see you are enjoying it -- and isn't it interesting the things you're finding out that you never really thought about, about the Foreign Service.

MORIN: Fascinating, fascinating.

Q: Because your emphasis, really, was on education, wasn't it? (says she read Morin's article drawn from her thesis, found it fascinating, and why, i.e., that FS children's education was of benefit rather than an adverse experience) How did you get started, how were you led to that premise?

MORIN: I had been teaching, as you know, at every post I was at, usually for the Army. We came into the Service in 1948 and we had a two-year-old at the time. While in Paris and Algiers and Le Havre, education was not supported by the Foreign Service; you paid your own child's education. This went on until 1955, when they changed the rules. You see, the Foreign Service Act of 1946 changed the Service's premise -- people were then brought in from all walks of life, but the act did not provide benefits to enable the new people to support this kind of life, and one of the things was that you had to support your children's education; and your own travel -- the wife's travel if she had to leave the post for any reason at all -- which also happened to me -- for health reasons, or the birth of a child. You had to pay.

I taught overseas for the Army, but my child was not eligible for the Army school. We couldn't afford to send her to the American School in Paris, nor could many of the American FS people who lived in Paris. It was a very expensive school, and those of us who were embassy people couldn't afford to send our children there. When we went to Japan, we did pay to have our child go to the Canadian Academy, a private school, because we were not eligible to enroll them in the American Army school. Anyway, I had

majored in English, had taught it, and was always interested in education, particularly after my children were born, so it seemed a natural thing to get into. As you know, early in his career, an FSO is transferred much oftener than when he has a senior position, and I saw my daughter, the oldest child, buffeted about, a new school all the time. It began to be apparent that this would affect her social development; she became very shy. She would have been somewhat shy anyway but I think this added to it, and I was very interested in what this was doing to her.

By the time she finished high school, she had been in 12 different schools, in three different languages. That's difficult for a child, and I was very concerned about her. She learned to read French long before she learned to read English -- she taught herself English. So I worried about her. Then my husband, while at Yale, became very ill and it was feared he had a cancer. He did not, thank goodness. But it scared me so, I thought, with only a bachelors' degree and two children to support, I had better make certain I was employable.

We decided that when we were transferred to Washington I would get a master's degree; which I did, at night -- it took three years to do it that way. For my thesis I decided to work out something that would be helpful to my own situation. I was very lucky, because the advisers at the University of Maryland were very interested in the fact that I was a Foreign Service wife and in what I was trying to do. At the same time, it looked as though my husband would be in the Near East/African division from then on (which is what happened) and I thought, "Here is a place where I am probably going to have to have a hand in running the schools." The University let me tailor my curriculum to suit myself. They let me take any course I thought would help me to run a school, and they certainly encouraged me in my thesis. This is how I got into it.

Then I went to do some research on FS children. At that time, there was a man called Clark Slade, who was as obstructive as he could possibly be. [He was the Department's education counselor -- a new position.] He didn't want me doing it -- it was something he should have done, of course, but I was determined to do the study. A woman named Margaret O'Neill, whose husband was in the Service, had written a term paper on FS children. I heard about it and went to see her, and she gave me some very valuable tips as to how I could get some names of FS children. She knew that American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) had a list of names, and using that -- not through the Foreign Service itself, because I was totally blocked there -- I went ahead and got the names. Then I went to Montgomery and Prince George's County headquarters and got permission to go into the public schools that reflected the same socio-economic background as the FS children, and ask those children questions also.

So that's what I did. Of course, the parents helped me to write the questions. This was strictly a Foreign Service project, and I was delighted with the results. As it says in my paper, all children have problems, and besides that, FS children have other ones.

My conclusion was that Foreign Service children, although subjected to additional

pressures and strains, would make out all right if their parents raised them in a warm, caring atmosphere, with discipline and love, and that the Foreign Service life, with its isolation from the U.S. could, in fact, foster strong nuclear families. Thus the title of an article I wrote on the subject for the Foreign Service Journal: "Stop Feeling Sorry for Your Children".

Now, I think much of the thesis (The Academic Progress and Social Development of Foreign Service Children) is probably still valid, but there are many changes too. In those days, we did not have the drug problems, the alcohol problems; things are very different now. I think basically it's certainly valid that if both parents give their child one-on-one attention, that child will come out all right in the long run.

Q: I would think it would be very valid if someone were to look at it today and say, "Maybe we should be looking at some of these values." (She suggests the Family Liaison Office (FLO) Education Counselor, for one.)

MORIN: (after some comments on young children's absorbing foreign languages) Even though they later on can't remember the vocabulary, on picking up the language again, they have the right accent. They've learned to use their mouths the proper way.

Q: I'm curious about the Japanese family you lived with -- the daughter of the author who wrote Daughter of the Samurai.

MORIN: At all of our posts, housing was very, very scarce. When we arrived in Kobe, I had two little children and didn't know where we were going to live; nothing seemed to be available. During our tour there, they began building a compound. But the Admin officer's wife was friendly with a Japanese woman and knew that this very wealthy Japanese widow lived in a mansion and rented out part of it -- one wing of the mansion was four storeys high and four storeys into the ground: her husband had survived the great earthquake of 1923, so had built the house of reinforced steel. Whatever typhoon, earthquake, etc. we had never shook that house.

The administrative officer's wife asked if we'd mind living with a Japanese family, and we said, "No, any place to get out of a hotel with a two-year-old child." Shortly after, we were invited to tea at the home of this very proper Japanese lady, a delightful woman. She had grown children. I was not aware what was happening, but I was being vetted. A few days later the Admin officer's wife told me, "You've got a house." "Really?" "Yes. Mrs. Kodera has watched your children and has decided they're very well-behaved, and you can live with them." So we had one wing, with a common entryway. (She describes the space they occupied and the screen that separated their part from the Japanese family's Buddhist shrine room. The rest of the house was California Mission-style and had been furnished by Sloane's in New York, who had sent out models, and then the actual furniture, after studying plans of the house which had been sent to them.)

We had the side garden, which had seven terraces. On our side was a hillock which was a

Japanese burial mound, landscaped, where you could walk up and sit among the trees. A stream wound down it into a large carp pool. We had two terraces: they had the rest. It was an extraordinary experience. We soon got involved with the family, including the son's arranged marriage ceremony. As each episode of the courtship happened -- they had go-betweens, of course -- our hostess kept us apprised of the progress. Then when the wedding was planned, a truck drove up one day and all this furniture, trunks and wardrobes were offloaded and all displayed in the Japanese shrine room. It was the bride's dowry. Among the dowry were some very charming things -- little lacquer boxes that held her diplomas. They weren't what we'd expect. They were diplomas in tea ceremony, in doll-making, in Japanese fan-dancing, and that sort of things, to show she was a "proper wife." She was also well educated and those diplomas were there, too. *(End of tape)*

[Interview resumes on subject of Morins' Iraqi tour, an event in Baghdad]

Q: Well, your daughter was running a little school and there was a coup and...

MORIN: Mind you, this was the second coup, and it was on November 13, 1963. She was at school. The coup began with an airplane strafing Camp Rachid, right across the street from the school, trying to knock out tanks. A father came to school with a couple of taxis, packed the children in, and away they went. My daughter had run in to get her coat, and they drove off without her. The school was located in the YWCA, which was on the edge of town, near this Army camp. Baghdad is bisected by the Tigris River, and she was on the outskirts of the side where the embassy is and where our home was. So, theoretically, she could probably have walked it in 30 minutes. But the Army was all around, streets were barricaded, Iraqis were fighting Iraqis, the national guard fighting the army. All hell was breaking loose.

So she left the school and started walking. A taxi came by. She signaled madly and he stopped. I should explain, now, that at this time it was very dangerous for a young girl to be out on the street alone, especially in wartime. She had the kind of looks that Iraqis go for -- she's very, very dark but with very white skin, and big brown eyes. She was only 16 and (laughing) a rather toothsome little morsel. That never occurred to her. Well, the taxi driver picked her up and asked where she wanted to go. She didn't speak much Arabic and all she could think of was (in Arabic) "American embassy." He tried to get there. Every street he tried was blocked, and he began to be afraid for his taxi because the national guard were confiscating taxis -- they were losing the battle and they wanted to flee the city. So he zoomed out of town, way downriver, to his native village, hid his taxi, and took her in to his womenfolk. They sat her on a big pile of goatskin rugs and plied her with yogurt from a goatskin bottle. She said she was very grateful to them for being so kind to her but she wasn't used to yogurt and it sort of upset her stomach. So she reached in her bag and -- I hate to say it: she smoked -- pulled out a cigarette. The man vanished, and after a while he returned -- with a package of American cigarettes. They cost a mint in Baghdad. He'd gone around to find her a package of her kind of cigarettes.

They gave her tea, she drank that. The women would try to talk to her, they would

examine her clothing and everything, and she would try to respond -- a terrible communication problem. After a while the taxi driver came back, beckoned her to follow him down to the riverfront. When I think of the naiveté with which she followed this TOTAL STRANGER! (both laugh) So they went down to the riverfront and two of his friends were in this long native boat, to cross the river below the city. The two men began to ogle her, which she began to feel and became very uneasy. Her protector spoke very sharply to them and they desisted. Then, when they came ashore, he -- apparently having some authority in the village -- told them to go back. And he and my daughter began, the two of them, walking back to the city, from way below it.

A pack of wild dogs came after them -- the city is full of packs of wild dogs, you know -- so that really frightened her. He broke off a palm branch and trailed it behind him in the dust, rattling it back and forth. That noise scared the dogs. That's something useful to know, Jewell! (both laugh) Well, he got her back into the city, and he went to a friend's house, and that friend had a taxi, this being on the other side of the river. And with her in the back, the two men looked inquiringly at her as to where to go. She told them "American Library." Incidentally, the bridges were all closed, no way to get across on them. And the library was on the other side! They tried to but couldn't get anywhere near it. Then she recognized where she was and began directing them. They ended up at the home of some friends of ours who lived several streets behind the library.

They let her off, rang the bell, and my friend's cook came out, and my daughter asked him if he would pay the taxi driver -- she didn't have any money. The cook asked the taxi driver how much was it. This is the better part of a day that this man has been taking care of this child. He said, "One dinar," which was about one [British] pound. He was given his dinar and away he went. My friend, coming downstairs, said, "Andy, how did you get here?" And Andy told her. My friend exclaimed, "And we let him go with only one pound? I would have paid him any amount."

The ironical part of this story is that my husband was the warden for the embassy in times of coups and revolutions. He had a little map and walkie-talkies and so forth, and he had located every single American citizen except his own daughter. It wasn't until late that afternoon that somebody, going around checking on that particular family, discovered that she was at our friends' house. "How in the world," he asked "did you get here?" "Oh," she said, "I took a taxi, and I rode in a boat, and I walked." That's all it was to her. Our hair stood on end, because girls did still vanish.

Q: Well, that's a true Foreign Service story. To move to Algiers, you were there when we walked on the moon and also during the anti-U.S. feeling, which must have been fostered by Eldridge Cleaver, right?

MORIN: Yes, well, it didn't help. We were there two times -- for our first post, and then 20 years later we went back. The first time it was part of the French Metropole, it was a consulate general. This was before the war for independence. Then when we returned in 1968, Algeria was an independent country and we were an embassy, but the '67 War had

just occurred and we no longer had an embassy -- no longer had an ambassador -- but there was an interest section.

Q: I regret that I did not save the invitation that we got from Lew Hoffacker for lunch, because we were there just in passing.

MORIN: I know what you mean because Lonnie was chargé when Lew was away. Well, there was an awful lot of anti-American feeling at the time because of the '67 War. I have to say that it was not helped by Eldridge Cleaver. You see, there was a Pan-African conference held in Algiers of all the different African countries and a great many blacks came to Algeria. Among those who came from America were Stokely Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver, if you remember, had jumped bail -- hijacked an airplane and escaped through Cuba to Algiers. He and Stokely Carmichael were in two different camps; they wouldn't speak to each other. One was at the Aletti Hotel, one at the St. George Hotel. It was "Down with the U.S." and "They're terrible to us blacks" and so on. Signs began to appear around the city showing black slaves in chains and nasty slogans about the U.S. and the way they treated people.

Now, you have to understand that in Algeria, blacks are really looked down on; you will never find a black in any position of power. But they were really very virulently anti-U.S., and this emotion was fanned by Cleaver and Carmichael. Although I have to say that Cleaver came to our Thanksgiving Party with all his friends (she laughs). (brief discussion to compare notes on whom the two men were married to) One of the people in the entourage had a little baby. It wasn't getting proper care -- these were very young, almost "hippy" types -- and the embassy took care of it, and got it back to the U.S. -- the grandparents sent the money, our consul got the Air France stewardess to take it to Paris, another one took it to New York. So, I mean, "Down with the U.S. but we'll use the embassy whenever we need it." I thought that was very interesting.

It happened that at this point Lonnie was chargé. Very early one morning, maybe 6 o'clock, still in bed, he got a phone call. He told me that the Algerian chief of protocol had called. It seemed that their Algerian ambassador to the UN, a young man who had just been married, had been on his honeymoon down on one of the Caribbean islands, and while swimming in the surf had accidentally broken his neck. He had been flown back to New York, and been treated by the finest neurosurgeon, but was in a permanent coma. Nothing more could be done for him. He'd been in treatment for about a month by then.

Well, they wanted to get him back to Algiers but of course couldn't send him commercially. They also wanted to get his brand-new wife and his parents who were there and his entourage and the furniture. Now they were calling us -- mind you, this was at the height of anti-American feeling -- to ask us if we would put at their disposal a medevac plane because the Russians had offered one and they didn't want to accept the Russians'. The Russians, you see, were trying to infiltrate -- they had a lot of people there but the Algerians didn't like them much. This was all sort of hush-hush because they wanted to be able to say to the Russians, "Thank you but we already have something." So

Lonnie got in touch with the State Department, who got in touch with Defense, who agreed to do it. There was a plane coming to Frankfurt anyway, so they just diverted it slightly.

Now, this was a very important man. Lonnie and the political officer went out to the airport, as did the Algerian chief of protocol, the foreign minister, and a whole lot of people, to see the plane come in. There had been no military planes at all, and indeed, no American planes because TWA had lost its air rights after the '67 War. Well, you know, after you've lived in a country for a while and everywhere you go you see signs damning your country, you get to feeling very defensive about it. And the American flag you're proud of. Well, they were standing out there and out of the sky came this enormous plane, the kind that has floppy wings, an enormous plane. As it came closer, you could see "USA" and the big U.S. markings on it. My husband and the political officer had a real frisson, you know -- "We are coming to their rescue." And down came the might of the United States, and it settled just like a bird. The crew threw open the doors and out came the captain. He stood at the top, looked around a bit, then began to descend. He was a gorgeous man, a big strapping American, black as the ace of spades! (both laugh heartily) It was marvelous! We wondered -- had the Defense Department done it on purpose? (laughter again) They hadn't, you know. It couldn't have been better -- well, the Algerians stood there gaping. These are the people coming who are so horrible to their blacks, and here was this black in command of a plane, and there was no question he was in charge. The Algerians had laid on cars to take them all through the town -- they were thanking them, you see. And the captain said no, no, he had his schedule, he had to go. But he did stay for a little luncheon and then he took his people back. And everybody poured back onto the tarmac again, and the plane just lifted up. This was a STOL, Short Takeoff and Landing, designed to use a very short runway. And off it went until it was a little speck in the air. But I tell you: what it did for our morale! It was just wonderful.

Q: What was your role in all of this? You've said a couple of times this morning, perhaps unaware of it, "Of course, I volunteered because I'm a Foreign Service wife." And that's what you were doing.

MORIN: Sure. Sure. But I was paid as a teacher. But when I was talking about the volunteer and the FS wife, I meant such things as at my first assignment when, because I spoke French and the consul general's wife didn't, I did her Christmas shopping for her. I wrapped the Christmas presents for her. And you know how many, many times we had to provide all the cookies and sandwiches and things. And we had to be there on tap to help set things up, and afterwards to help clean up. That's what I'm talking about.

Q: Did you accept that as part of being a Foreign Service wife? Or did it grate a little bit?

MORIN: Oh, it grated a great deal. But there was nothing I could do about it. So I accepted with as good grace as I could. But it didn't seem right. And I know that when I, finally, came into a position of supposedly having authority over somebody else, I never

would do it. I would ask people "Would you be willing?" "Would you be so good as to?" And it happened that I had to fly to Germany to have surgery on a foot, which I had broken, and I was quite hampered as to what I could do for entertaining. I asked some of the wives and they very graciously agreed to help me. But if they hadn't, that would have been all right too, because you can't -- I just don't expect people to have to do things like that.

Q: But still, that was before '72.

MORIN: That was still '69 and '70. And don't forget, this was when it was the thing that you got two people for the price of one.

Q: Do you have any idea where the two-for-the-price-of-one began? Among all the older women that I've interviewed, it doesn't crop up anywhere. They just accepted the role.

MORIN: Maybe post-war?

Q: Probably post-Wristonization, do you suppose?

MORIN: Oh no, it was well before Wristonization.

Q: The concept of two-for-the-price-of-one was before Wristonization, you think?

MORIN: I know it was. It was one of the first things I was told when we arrived in Algiers (1948).

Q: When Gene Bovis and I were talking yesterday about the rise of individualism and the larger societal context that he feels our project should be placed in to make it relevant outside the Service, I said, "Do you think the two-for-the-price-of-one concept began with Abigail Adams?" He said no, he felt that she was just carrying out the traditional family values that existed at the time in spite of the well over 100 years of the Hobbsian and Lockian theories. I don't know if I agree with him entirely... She set the pace for all of us.

MORIN: Well, you said that these other women did this and they didn't think anything of it; but they still did it, you see. So it was two for the price of one back then.

Q: Yes but they didn't think of it in those terms.

MORIN: Ah -- but we were told, in so many words; as early as 1948. I remember when our consul general met us the first night or so we were there; I remember his saying, "Aha! Two for the price of one. This looks like it's going to be a good bargain." Something like that. Oh, yes. It was the first time it had dawned on me. I didn't know, because I never had the chance to take any of the training at the Institute.

Q: I must quote you on that, "looks like it's going to be a good bargain." I think I might

go back to some of the women I interviewed earlier and just ask them on the telephone if they remember their participation in those terms.

MORIN: You asked me did I resent any of this. What I did resent was the fact that I was supposed to jettison my children whenever I was needed. There wasn't any question that you stayed home because you had a child who was perhaps ill or that you felt you ought to stay with a little bit, was out of sorts, or didn't want you to go. There was no question about it: you went. I did resent that, because I thought "we're getting our values all backwards here." I think this may be one of the reasons why I put so much of my energies into American children overseas. I think I did.

And don't forget: they don't have such an easy time of it. We set up our little schools, but, for example, in Baghdad, a mob started to storm the school, you had to evacuate the school; that type of thing. You have things happen that aren't apt to happen in America. We had Aladdin stoves, one of them tipped over and caught fire; we had to evacuate the school. One time I recall while I was a teaching-principal in Baghdad: I wasn't in my classroom, I was in my office and my secretary came to me and said, "Mrs. Morin, Mrs. Morin! There's a bunch of Iraqi Air Force officers out here." I said, "Well, show them in." In they came and the leading one was a colonel, there were some captains and I don't know what-all. At this time -- well, always the Iraqi army and air force are paramount. (speaking as though to command) They are little gods. The colonel said to me, "We are requisitioning this school and I want to look it over." This is right in the middle of a school day.

Being an American woman, it never occurred to me that you don't say this to an Iraqi officer; and I said, "You'll just have to wait." He said, "What do you mean I have to wait?" I said, "I'm very sorry but my children are in their classes now. They have had one scare after another and you are not about to march through my classrooms and scare them again." "Oh," he said; and the other men were looking shocked. I said, "Now, if you wouldn't mind, you can come into the faculty room and I will give you floor plans of the school and we'll go over it and you can look at it. Then when recess comes and the children are outside, I will take you around." (she laughs)

They sat down for 15 or 20 minutes. I said to them, "Just before the recess bell rings, I'll take you into the library." I didn't want the children to see them, because the children were very frightened by all of these coups, you see. So I began walking them down the corridor to the library. They were clomping along noisily in their boots, and again without thinking I turned around and went, "Shhhh!" And all six of them shut right up and they walked on tiptoe. Well, it struck me so funny that my shoulders were shaking as I ushered them into the room and shut the door.

Then the children left, and I showed the men around the school, and when the children came back in I ushered them out the door. And when I told some of some of the FSOs about this afterwards, they said, "Oh, Ann, you didn't! Oh my Lord, you didn't do that?" And I said, "Yes, but I did it without thinking." And it worked. They recognize authority;

even a woman. And of course we did lose the school. After that we had to go across the river, closer to the embassy. We had a beautiful embassy, with the ambassador's residence and staff housing; a lovely place. It has been taken over by the Iraqis. It's right next to the presidential palace, so when the palace was being strafed and bombed during one of our many coups, so was the embassy.

Q: What about your interest in archeology? And we haven't even touched on your unerring eye for modern art. I guess the ruins were there. Is that part of the Baghdad "assignment"?

MORIN: For some people. You have to have an interest in history. But there are -- I believe the number is 25,000 abandoned ruins in Iraq. Many of them are in the Diyala Valley which has been flooded since we were there. On Sundays, you would get permission from some office, probably the Foreign Office, to go out to these tells, as these mounds are called, and you could take anything that you found on the surface. And because of the constant wind, every week something different would come to light. We went to all the different tells and picked up these various ...

Q: You mean, everything in that case over there you found on the surface?

MORIN: Yes.

Q: But surely the ones that were shards you put back together?

MORIN: We had to put back together, yes. The oldest piece is that canteen you see at the left. Don Hansen of the Oriental Institute in New York City tells me that that is 4,500 BC; 6,500 years old. Isn't that amazing? We have the provenances of each piece because they come from different tells. That way, experts can date them. Yes, we had to put them back together.

Q: But that was an interest you developed there, wasn't it. You couldn't help but!

MORIN: Well no, a lot of people didn't, but it was a wonderful way to spend a Sunday. You'd take a group of friends, you'd have a picnic. And then we'd meet every so often and have little lectures. People would read up on a subject. I remember mine was on cuneiform writing. (she laughs)

Q: And then your interest in art: could we trace that back to your connection with the Wyeth family?

MORIN: Well, Andrew Wyeth is my first cousin. While we were growing up, every Christmas Andy's father, N. C. Wyeth, would send us the book he had illustrated that year. That was always exciting -- to get Robin Hood, Black Beauty, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' The Yearling, for example. It developed an interest in art in, I guess, all of us cousins; we're a rather large family. Several are artists. This gift does not come only from

the Wyeth side, because some of my other cousins are very fine artists too. But that family, of course, is a very unusual family. One of the [Wyeth] sisters, my cousin Ann -- we were named for our grandmother, by the way -- had her debut, as a pianist, with the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra under Stokowski when she was 18 years old. And when her father died, she wrote a requiem which was played by the Philadelphia [Orchestra]. And, of course, in the summer we would spend time with the cousins at their place up in Maine.

But this developed an interest -- I remember the first thing my husband gave me when we were in Algiers was a beautiful, very large book of the Impressionists. You know, those wonderful French art books, with terrific reproductions, each one worthy of framing. I never did, and I still have the book. He said, "This is to help you fill in the hours between house-hunting," because it was to take us three months to find a place to live. We became very interested in art. So as that developed and grew, as we went to different countries -- in Japan, I can understand why the Japanese had such a terrific impact on the French Impressionists, because going there was an eye-opener to us, too. We were very fascinated with Japanese art in all forms -- their dancing, singing, puppeteers, etc. It's a very formalized, stylized art but very beautiful. And then we seemed to become more and more avant-garde, I guess you'd say, so we end up with this eclectic collection. That has extended to bits and pieces of statues, too.

Q: It's interesting how nicely you've brought it all together here.

MORIN: Thank you, I appreciate that. I had a decorator who came in here once. He was putting up some curtains for me. He looked around and said, "Absolutely nothing goes with anything -- but it all looks very nice together." (both laugh heartily, and agree neither of them can stand a "decorator house.")

Q: Is there anything else that I've missed? I've tried to hit all of your high points. Now, you gave me nothing between 1964 and '68. Were you in Washington during those years?

MORIN: 1964-68: that's when I was Director of Admissions at the International Center for Language Studies, in Washington. I only gave you the overseas posts -- I'm sorry. 1970-74 was Washington too. That's when I was in the travel agency. It was interesting because I was part owner of a travel agency at the same time Lonnie was a Foreign Service Inspector. And as you know, the Service doesn't pay for the wife on his trips. So it was a useful combination because I managed to get in a couple of trips through my own business, because I could do some scouting for restaurants and hotels while he was inspecting.

Q: You've really been very clever in your career. You did what needed to be done at the time.

MORIN: Well, I really think that's the only way to approach it, don't you?

Q: Absolutely. And now you've got this other wonderful project.

MORIN: Yes, exactly.

Q: So it's really just an extension of the way you managed your Foreign Service life.

MORIN: There's just one little thing I'd like to add, if I may, and that is -- I think this will explain the differences between when we started and now -- when we set out for our first post, which was Algiers in 1948, we were supposed to take one of the new Four Aces [ocean liners]. We were to be on the maiden voyage of the Exchordia in the fall of 1948. The ship wasn't finished in time. The Department said, "You must get out there; we simply have to have you out there." I don't know why (laughing) but anyway they had to have a person. So they put us on a Norwegian tramp steamer called the Estrella. It was a motor ship, not a steamship. It had two motors, and it was about 5,000 tons; a very small ship. My husband had been in the Navy, and when we arrived at the pier in New York, he looked down at this boat, and said, "I spent two years in the Navy and I never had to walk down to get to a ship."

On descending we found we were to be in the ship's sick bay, which was one room with two cabins, and there were three of us. I had been told what to take to the post -- new evening gowns -- and I thought this was going to be a lovely trip: music and dining and so forth. Well, we had to pull out slacks and a few shirts and tops to take the trip. The rest went down in the hold. And for 30 days we rode on that ship to get to our post. We hit a hurricane, it knocked out one of the motors, and for three days we just rocked. The water poured through the portholes. My husband and my daughter were so sick -- they didn't have Dramamine then. We ate canned everything because they ran out of fresh food after a week. (laughing) By the time we got to Algiers, Lonnie, who should have been there two and a half weeks earlier, was the watch officer who was supposed to meet himself! Fortunately, the Exec noticed that they'd forgotten to change the watch list and he came down and met us at the boat. After that, (she laughs again) I think I was pretty well inured, you know. That was a very good way to start out because ...

Q: Well but you sound like you've been a good sport throughout it all, too.

MORIN: I'd like to think so.

Q: Oh, that counts for a lot, really.

MORIN: As long as things can make me laugh. That was quite a trip because we had no fresh water on board, except to drink, so we had to bathe in salt water, and had to wash the baby's diapers in salt water. We would string them up on the captain's bridge and they would get like boards. I remember we were coming into Oran and the Captain came to us and said, "Would you take the diapers down? It doesn't look right." (great laughter)

Q: You have to keep your sense of humor.

MORIN: Oh, you absolutely have to, yes. It's a very rich life. It's a very good life. And the thing is, youmeet such nice people. Fascinating people.

How did my husband go into the Foreign Service? He was in the Navy, and was a naval officer in the Amphibious Corps. He was in four invasions. After that was over -- he came through without a scratch -- he didn't know what he wanted to do, but he knew he wanted to travel. And his father was prominent in New Hampshire politics, and he said, "Styles Bridges is a friend of mine. Go down and talk to Styles Bridges."

So Lonnie came down to Washington and talked to Styles Bridges or his assistant, and the assistant said, "Go on over and talk to Jack Peurifoy at the State Department." So Lonnie had an appointment and went over there. He had heard about the ECA [European aid] program: he thought he would really like to be an ECA officer overseas. That would allow him to travel.

We knew nothing about the Foreign Service. So, over he went. And Peurifoy said, "Oh, you don't want to be in ECA, that's too temporary. There won't be any 'aid' after five or six years." (she laughs) "You want a permanent career. I would say to you, go take the Foreign Service exam, but you have a wife and baby, you can't afford to sit around and wait, you've got to support them. So join the staff corps. So Lonnie said, "Fine."

He was put through the FSI course. He had the A-100 course and all that sort of thing. He was, I think, the only FSS in that group of FSOs. And he went out. He was going to take the FS exam. Well, the first two years he was too busy getting himself acclimated. And then, the next year he was going to take it, and our child died. That just knocked the slats out from under us. So he canceled his application or whatever you did, and he didn't do it. It wasn't until 1953 -- and we'd entered in '48 -- that he actually sat down and took the exams. They took three days back then.

In Paris. And he passed it. I remember -- I think it was New Year's Eve we got word that he had passed it and was being sent back to Washington to take the orals. Well, he got back to Washington and he was to transfer with somebody in Kobe, Japan, who had done the same thing. They were going to swap jobs. The other fellow was fine, he went back, took his orals, passed, went on to Le Havre. Lonnie went back and they said, "Well, we're terribly sorry but we have lost your security papers." (They'd been misplaced, they weren't lost.) "And so we haven't done the field security clearance on you; you will have to wait. It will probably take six months. You can live in Washington on TDY; or you can go to Kobe."

He came back and said to me, "What do I do?" "Well," I said, "I think you go to Kobe." I'd always wanted to go to the Orient. My grandmother had been in China in the 1920s with her son who was in the Navy. They always had a tour in the Orient, you know, in those days, after Annapolis. And so we went off to Japan.

Well, come spring, the Wriston program started. Lonnie couldn't take his orals, there was nobody to give them to him until the Wriston program was just about over. It wasn't until 1956 (laughing) that he finally took the orals and got in. In the meantime, just about everybody in the consulate had become FSOs except us. We were the only one who passed the exam. Now, that is a very revealing statement; I say "we" because I can remember sitting there with books, with Bartlett's [Familiar] Quotations, with atlases and so forth, helping him prepare for the exam.

Right after he became an FSO, that's when the Inspectors thought he should have advanced training, and that's why we were sent back from Japan to Yale. But the comment I was making was that I resented this, the fact that he had to wait, a lot more than he did. He's a very, very steady, even-tempered individual. And the reason I resented it is that so much of me was wrapped up in his career, because it had to be. And I had to keep stopping my career. Therefore, all of my eggs were in his basket. And if it was something that was reflecting on him, it reflected on me. And I was very cross about it, I really was. Plus the fact that one had to do all of these things which one didn't necessarily want to do -- you know, ladies' clubs and that sort of thing. I'm not much of a ladies clubber, although you can meet some very lovely people. I usually prefer to do something more in the education line or lecturing or something like that.

Q: So he was in the Service for almost 31 years, from '48 until '79, and went out as an FSO for the first time in 1960, so that was twelve years.

MORIN: He was a staff officer for eight years -- 1948-1956. The Wriston program delayed his transition to FSO for two years after he passed the written exams.

Q: Yes. So you saw Algiers, Le Havre, Paris and Kobe from a staff officer's wife's point of view.

MORIN: Except, I don't know, when we first entered the Service in Algiers I remember there was another couple there. He was a staff officer, and to be perfectly honest with you, I never knew that there were two kinds. I never knew until this woman told me, and we had been in Algiers several weeks by the time they arrived. She said, "You watch, the FSOs aren't going to treat you well." I never was treated as anything but exactly as one of them. I never had the slightest problem with that anywhere. But she said, "Oh, they are going to snub you, and this and that." Well, I think, as with so many of these things, it all goes back to the individual, how well you get along.

Q: It's how you perceive yourself. If you perceive yourself as a doormat, people are going to use you as one.

MORIN: I know that that couple was not popular in Algiers. She would say it was because he was a staff officer. I would say it was because they were pains in the neck. They did sneaky little things, like -- housing was very, very difficult there, and it was the custom that when you arrived you were next in line for any house that opened up. We had

a little child, they didn't have any children, and we were to get a house that was about to open up, after three months. Darned if they didn't go to the landlord behind our backs, give him some key money, and took the house, and they wondered why they were not popular?

Q: Oh, no! If they were after you they hadn't been in the hotel as long as you, and they didn't have children. How shocking.

MORIN: It's water over the dam, it's something to laugh about now. But, it just shows you. So I don't think that this staff and non-staff... There were and there are some very snobbish Foreign Service officer types, there is no question about it, and the wives are worse than the men.

Q: Well, see, that's because they had no identity of their own. Everything, as you said, you had all your eggs in your husband's basket. And they were powerless in a way, really. And to a certain extent they still must be.

MORIN: Now they must feel even worse because they see so many other wives who are working.

(Fenzi relates situation mentioned by Gene Bovis of two Smith graduates at same post; one, the DCM's wife was unhappy, felt that she was wasting her expensive education; the other woman, a lower ranking FSO with dependent spouse, was content.)

Q: The DCM's wife felt that the woman officer had it all and she, the wife, had nothing. In a way, she was right, because she was working for no income. Well, people still curry favor with the DCM's wife, because the DCM is going to write [or comment on] their efficiency report, but they are not currying favor with her because she is who she is. It's because of his job. And she was very unhappy.

MORIN: You used to see very miserable people in the Foreign Service.

Q: Well, I certainly did, but my experience was that most of the unhappy ones were -- perhaps it was just my experience -- foreign born spouses.

MORIN: They didn't belong anywhere.

Q: I had one consul general's wife who had only had a high school education [not foreign born].

MORIN: You can imagine how defensive she must have been. (Discussion of activities of the unhappy spouse.) To me, the Foreign Service is all about people. You are representing your country overseas, and the only way you can do it is with other people. Therefore, you'd better like people. If you do, then you will enjoy it. Because entertaining is a lot of work. It's a lot of work, especially if, as nowadays, you don't have the servants that people

used to have, and you have to do all the cooking. It's a lot of effort. Of course, men are helping a lot more now.

(Discussion of interview techniques.)

MORIN: There are tremendous changes which have taken place in the lives of families in the Foreign Service. One of the things is housing. Because the Department is now buying a lot more housing around the world. They're also putting up compounds. We used to drag our own things around and they would be broken, or sunk in the Gulf of Aden, or you'd lose your silverware -- this, that and the other thing -- because we went by ship. The stuff doesn't go by ship any more, it's all at the post. You fly and you take your few things. But a wife had to spend so much time just finding a house, tramping the streets, knocking on doors. I was offered a house in Algiers once -- or I tried to get a house in Algiers once -- I just knocked door-to-door. It was the house of the local executioner and the guillotine was in the cellar. Another house that I found, which we didn't get, I thought was very strange; there was a bidet in every room. It had been a whorehouse. This is the kind of stuff we were up against right after the War in places like that. Le Havre had been completely bombed, you know. You don't have to spend your time doing that any more. The embassy takes care of it.

Narrator's addendum:

The pressure to find a house was intense because the temporary quarters allowance lasted 90 days, and the regular housing allowance that then kicked in would not begin to cover the cost of the hotel room. (My husband's salary as an FSS-11 was \$3,200 per annum.) There was no allowance for meals and other expenses, which reminds me of an amusing anecdote. It very quickly became apparent we could not afford the price of meals in the hotel dining room. However, having a small child precluded our searching out cheaper restaurants because evening meals in downtown establishments were served at an hour when she would be in bed. Nor could we leave her alone in the hotel room. Her meals were prepared on a hot plate balanced on an ornate heater installed in the fireplace opening.

We hit upon the solution of ordering sandwiches from room service. This went on for several days and then Robert, our waiter, made a suggestion: "Why don't you order one menu fixe? It won't cost any more, and you'll get more food." So from then on, each evening at a set time, Robert knocked on the door and waited for one of us to call "Entrez!" Then the door would fly open, and in he would rattle, pushing an enormous room service cart. On it would be two sets of gleaming napery, sparkling crystal and dishes, and shining cutlery. He would set the table impeccably and then, as if he were pulling a rabbit out of a top hat, he would lift one of the silver covers keeping the food warm and demand, "Who gets the soup tonight?" And, taking turns, we two would savor our main meal of the day as we ate our way through one French diner. Incidentally, our daughter's first word spoken in French as "Entrez!"

Just days before our deadline, we found a house in the suburbs of El Biar. It had been

requisitioned by the French military for five years and was in deplorable condition, with broken bath fixtures, dangling wires, gouged plaster walls, drooping wallpaper. The landlord was so depressed by it he wanted to sell it for what he could get. An officer at the consulate persuaded him to meet us so we could plead our case in person. Five minutes into the interview, the landlord and his wife, after initially refusing, suddenly changed their minds and said we could have the place. So we moved in, and with weekend help from office colleagues (rather like a New England barn raising), we put the place in order and made it livable.

The landlord and his wife were very helpful; they even let me use their telephone from time to time. (Telephones were greatly prized in post-war Algeria. It was impossible to get one for ourselves because the antiquated system couldn't handle any more lines.) Much later the landlord confided to me why she and her husband had so suddenly changed their minds about renting to us. She said they couldn't bear to refuse shelter to our little girl, because she looked so much like their own daughter, who had died when she was two years old.
End addendum

Another thing is transportation. We used to have those "leisurely trips" -- I told you about that funny one on the Estrella -- but I have had some very lovely trips where there was a playroom for the children and all the rest of it. It was a chance to unwind, and a chance to get yourself psyched up for the next post.

Q: That has been mentioned on a number of tapes.

MORIN: Now, of course, you just fly and you're there before you leave, practically. Another thing: the education of children is much better. Children's education is paid for and it doesn't make any difference where it is. Once that was permitted, that you could have [paid for] education, that was sort of a left-handed gift. I remember in Kobe you could only have the allowance if you sent your child to the Army school, which we had been forbidden to do before. So you were supposed to pull your child out and put it there. In the event, we had to weigh very carefully as to what we wanted to do, and we decided on the Army school because of the buses. Kobe is a very steep city and the buses that went up and down to the American Academy didn't always have good brakes; and I'd worried so one year that I really couldn't go through it another. Now that's not the way to pick your child's education, but it sometimes comes down to that; and you have to put the child's life first. Another thing that is very important is the way stress and danger are taken care of. When we had stresses, there was nobody who really cared.

Q: Could this be Baghdad in the year ...

MORIN: Yes. Between '60 and '64, as I told you, we had three coups d'etat. We weren't given, which I think is a wonderful thing now, a course before we went out on how to handle stress. The ambassadors weren't educated in this. You just went there and whatever happened was what happened.

When I first started out, there weren't doctors at the post. Yes, there was a doctor in Paris but the families couldn't use him at all. And therefore I was thrown on the local medical economy, so to speak, and a terrible thing nearly happened. You should remember, this was after I had lost a child and therefore, perhaps, I was a much more nervous mother than I might otherwise have been. My little baby had been crying a lot and holding his ear. Then that stopped but he had sniffles a lot. I took him to an ear doctor in Chatou and the doctor said to me, "Mrs. Morin, I must operate on this child." Well the word "operation" sent me into orbit, because the other child had died while in surgery. I said, "On my child here? No, you won't. Use antibiotics." "No, no," he said, "I have to operate, it will be mastoid. If you don't operate within 24 hours, I cannot answer for the life of this child."

So I telephoned my husband and said, "What do I do?" He said, "Well, there is an American-trained doctor in Paris. We'll call her up." I called her up and she asked the symptoms. I gave all of them to her, she said, "Don't do it. Bring in the child to me" -- this was a Friday -- "on Monday." So the doctor came around that evening to the house, carrying a bag, and wanted to cut open my child's ear and I wouldn't let him. He shook his head. "Oh, Madame, I can't answer, I can't answer for your child's life." What a frightening thing.

Monday morning I took my child to the French woman doctor in Paris, who had trained at Temple University, so therefore we had great faith in her. She looked at him and said, "Which ear was it?" I asked, "What do you mean, which ear was it?" She said, "Well, there's nothing wrong with either ear." I said, "How could this happen in the space of two days?" She had recommended medication that I'd given him over the weekend. She said, "Mrs. Morin, I hate to tell you, but did you happen to notice the date? It's the end of the month, he had to pay his bills." And she added, "I shouldn't say this but I'm afraid some of my fellow doctors do unnecessary operation in order to do this sort of thing." Isn't that a shocker? If I hadn't been a frightened, trembling mother, they might have come and punctured my child's ear. Who knows what would have happened later? He probably would be deaf by now.

That was the other thing, because medicine overseas was so far behind American medicine. But you had very little recourse. It was the same way with dentistry. One other thing that I was talking about: health care was a big problem. One of the reasons why I did have surgery so many times was because in the States I had to have "put back" what had been done wrong overseas. That is something that wears you down, and it rather frightens you -- not for yourself but for your children. At least that was my case -- you're so afraid something will happen -- heightened, of course, by the fact that I did lose a child. He was being operated on for an inguinal hernia, which of course is very routine, just nothing, usually; and he died on the table. Presumably because of the anaesthetic. That was in Boston -- we'd brought him back, you see, for that. And then his brother was born a year later, and had the same problem. That was pretty rugged. His surgery was done when he was six weeks old, in the States, and because he was less than a year old,

our insurance wouldn't cover it. It took us twelve months to pay off the hospital and the doctor. That child is the little brother whose ear the French doctor wanted to puncture and I wouldn't have it.

Then, in Paris at about the same time -- I always remember because the doctor who did it was a Dr. Chekhov -- my daughter got an abscess in the glands under her chin. The doctor came to the house and anesthetized her. I held her shoulders, my husband held her feet while the doctor cut her open. And do you know, that child was so frightened that she cried throughout the whole thing and you could hear her down in the kitchen, but she was "out cold." After the surgery we applied boiled flax to "draw out" the puss.

This kind of thing wouldn't happen now, but it did happen in the 50s. I remember when I came back from Baghdad -- because my house was shelled, I've got a piece of a shell that I picked up as a souvenir piece at the time. There were three such times in an eight-month period. We were in very grave danger then, we found out later.

I remember I came home to the U.S. in summer and was spending the time with my father and mother in New Hampshire. It was the Fourth of July and all these firecrackers started to go off. All of a sudden, with no apparent cause, I began to cry. I'm not a crier. My husband said, "What is it? What is it?" I said, "That noise! I can't bear it. It sounds like machine guns." My father was in World War I, in France, and he was shell-shocked. And he said to me, "That's your problem, you're shell-shocked." So I remember coming back to the Department, having my physical before going out again and telling the doctor that. He said, "I'm sure that's what it was. You had a mild case of shell-shock. It's one thing to send soldiers into battle, or even officers, many of whom have had military training, and it's another thing to send a wife with her children into a place where this is going to happen." It can be devastating to your nerves.

Then when we were transferred to Algiers, the first week we were there, there was an attempt on the life of Boumedienne, and I thought, "Oh no! Not again?" (she laughs) But it wasn't, the fellow was apprehended, matters were all right. But these are the things that are now looked out for. There wasn't anybody who knew about these things or who cared. They have the terrible dangers now of kidnaping and murder; which is awful. But after Qasim was killed in Baghdad, a manifesto was found in his pocket -- he knew there was going to be an uprising -- and that manifesto is reported to have said -- something he was going to announce to the fellaheen -- "to rape, loot and murder, beginning with the Americans."

You know, in 1948, when they killed King Faisal, that's what happened -- they did kill some Europeans, you know. Fortunately, Qasim was killed. Do you know how he was killed? They took him to the television station and they executed him with a gun held to his temple before they turned on the TV camera. All day long we were being told, "Tune in at six o'clock, tune in at six o'clock." We didn't have televisions, but the embassy did, and we all gathered around the TV. First of all, there was a cartoon of Felix the Cat. I will always remember Felix the Cat. When that finished, on came the leader, Abdul Karim

Qasim, sitting up in a chair, staring straight ahead. He had one eye that slouched and he tended to stare anyway. We thought, "Oh, he hasn't been captured, here he is on TV." And then his head fell forward. A man grabbed his hair, turned his head this way so you see the bullet wound right through here. The man was dead and they did it on television. The reason they did it was because they didn't want the fellaheen to say "He's still alive, he'll come back and lead us." They wanted to show people he really was dead. These are the things that sort of shattered my nerves after a while. (she laughs)

Q: I would think so. That was in 1963. The children were older by then, at least.

MORIN: Oh yes. But you know, it's a funny thing: while all those coups were going on and we had to figure out where we could hide in case somebody stormed the house -- well, it turned out there really was no place to hide -- my husband was at the embassy, I was at the house alone, my daughter was lost at the school, and my son had been taken to the embassy from his school. But after that, there wasn't any school; everybody came home. We had curfews for several weeks. My little boy soon became very used to the odd, sporadic machine gun fighting and so forth. He'd be playing with his friends, and every time they heard the machine guns they'd jump over the fence and hide, then they'd come back out again. And they played ball right under the tanks that blocked our street at each end. Children are marvelous, they're marvelous! But the parents were a bit worried, you know.

By the way, I used to have to stockpile the school with supplies -- food, in case we couldn't get the children out. We never had to use it but you had to be prepared. Bandages and that sort of thing. The things that you don't have to think of here, you know? It's curious.

Q: Well, in spite of all this you really enjoyed your -- you wouldn't trade it for anything in the world, would you?

MORIN: It had its high points, but it exacted its tolls, psychic and physical. The Service has come to recognize that these things do exist, that a man or woman won't do a good job unless family is taken care of. We had to do an awful lot of "coping" back then that is now taken care of by the blessed administrative section. Can't say enough about them. They're wonderful, wonderful. And it must be a thankless job, too, I would think. You can't ever please everybody. I had one administrative officer tell me it's a job where you know there are going to be at least 10 percent of the people who aren't happy, no matter what you do.

Q: (laughing) I would think it would be higher than that.

MORIN: I would, too. Now of course, foreign service people are given furniture, allowances for the children's education, you're permitted to bring them out -- we had to pay to bring my daughter out, and I remember it cost \$900. That was a lot of money in those days. That's what my salary went for, of course. But you see, the more you put into

a thing, the dearer it is to you. And I think this explains to you why I am doing this [the Women Ambassador's Project] for the Foreign Service: I want people to know about the Foreign Service, I want Americans to know about it. I want them to know that this isn't a bunch of "cookie-pushers." We earn our keep. And we certainly try to represent America the very best we can.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Spouse: Laurent Emile Morin

Date entered Service: 1948

Left Service: 1979

Posts:

1948-1951	Algiers, Algeria
1951-1952	Le Havre, France
1952-1954	Paris, France
1954-1956	Kobe, Japan
1960-1964	Baghdad, Iraq
1968-1970	Algiers, Algeria
1974-1977	Washington, DC, Inspector

Status: Spouse of retired Foreign Service Officer

Date/place of birth: Winchester, Massachusetts; July 28, 1924

Maiden name: Miller

Parents:

Herbert Dwight Miller, Engineer, Educator,
Ruth Bockius Miller, homemaker; in 1960s became bookstore manager (Niece of N.C. Wyeth, cousin of Andrew and Jamie Wyeth)

Schools:

- * Dover High School, Dover, New Hampshire
- * University of New Hampshire, BA
- * University of Maryland, MA

Place/date of marriage: Berlin, New Hampshire; December 2, 1943

Children:

- Ann Dunstan Morin (Mrs. David Levine)
- Laurent George Morin (deceased)
- (Commander) Lee Miller Morin, MD, Ph.D.

Profession: Educator, Lecturer, Writer, Oral Historian

Positions held:

At Post:

Paid:

U.S. Army High School, Paris

U.S. Army Elementary School, Kobe

Principal - American Community Center School, Baghdad

American International School, Algiers

Volunteer:

Private tutoring, lecturing for USIS

Teaching English to group of ambassador's wives, Baghdad

Working as volunteer secretary at the Kennedy Eye Clinic, Algiers

In Washington:

Paid:

Director of Admissions, International Center for Language Studies

Part owner/travel consultant, ACCENT TRAVEL

Volunteer:

Docent, Smithsonian Natural History Museum

Neo-natal Ward Children's Hospital

Librarian, Sumner Elementary School

Honors:

Phi Kappa Phi

Tau Beta Kappa

2 academic scholarships

Who's Who Among American University Students

End of interview