

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

AMBASSADOR ANTHONY QUANTON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is November 6, 1997. This is an interview with Anthony Quainton being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Tony, let’s start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

QUAINTON: I was born in Seattle, Washington on April 4, 1934.

Q: Tell me something about your parents.

QUAINTON: My father was a university professor at the University of Washington. He

was born in England and came to Canada just before the First World War. He subsequently moved from Brandon, Manitoba to Victoria, British Columbia. He went to the University of Cambridge in England and returned to be a school master in British Columbia before receiving an appointment at the University of Washington in about 1930. He was naturalized as an American citizen in early 1934.

Q: What was his specialty?

QUAINTON: European history, particularly English history in the 16th to 18th centuries.

Q: And your mother?

QUAINTON: My mother was born in the United States of English and Irish parents who had migrated about the turn of the century to California. She, in turn, moved with her parents to Victoria, British Columbia shortly after the First World War, her father having gone bankrupt in the period just before the war. So, the two families came together in British Columbia and my mother and father were married there in 1930.

Q: How did the Depression affect your family?

QUAINTON: I have no recollection of the family being directly affected by the Depression. I am sure they were. Professors were not well paid in the 1930s. On the other hand we lived comfortably on my father's income and I certainly had no sense of economic hardship growing up in Seattle in those years.

Q: Where did you go to school?

QUAINTON: I started school in Seattle in Catholic parochial schools. I went through several of them before the third grade. In the third grade, my father, being of English origins, believed that it was a good thing to send a boy away to boarding school at that tender age. I was sent to boarding school at age nine in Victoria, British Columbia at the little school where he had taught in the 1920s and where his brother, my uncle, was teaching at the time in 1943. I stayed there for three years until 1946 when my father was offered a teaching job in Mexico at the Colegio de Mexico. The family went for a year to Mexico City returning in 1947 because my father suffered from a severe heart condition which was not helped by a year at the altitude of Mexico City. He died in 1948 shortly after our return.

Q: While you were both at the Canadian and Mexican schools, did you become aware of foreign affairs or the Foreign Service?

QUAINTON: I have no recollection of being aware of the Foreign Service or the existence of a diplomatic corps, but going to school in Canada as a small boy one certainly learned a great deal of geography, particularly those bits of geography where the map was painted pink.

Q: Which was about a third of the globe.

QUAINTON: Yes. So, one learned a fair amount of esoterica about the British empire and those colonies which were known to most children only through the postage stamps which were much collected in that time. I can still remember map exercises where we had to laboriously place on a map of India the two different Hyderabad, one now in Pakistan and one in India.

Q: I didn't know there were two Hyderabads.

QUAINTON: Hyderabad Deccan, which is in the south of India and Hyderabad Sind which is just a hundred miles or so from Karachi. That information later in a career turned out to be of some considerable utility and interest. The world I saw was certainly seen through the optic of the British empire. We listened faithfully at Christmas to the King's message to the people of the empire and there was a sense of being a part of a large far flung geographic enterprise led from London.

Q: Were you given a rough time as a Yank or not?

QUAINTON: This was a little tiny school, St. Michael's School, founded and run by an Englishman who had come out to Canada in 1906 or 1907 from Keble College, Oxford. He ran it on classical Dickensian lines. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was very much the governing ethos and yet it was a school which cared about the children. There were only three Americans in the school at the time out of 60 or 70 students all together. Fifteen or so of them were boarders. Some of them were English boys who were evacuated from England during the war to Canada with or without their parents. The school replicated in many ways the English education of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Latin, French, mathematics, English were pretty much the sum total of what we worked on. But, it is interesting that from my earliest education a foreign language was part of the curriculum taught through the threat of a piece of wood applied to the hands if appropriate declensions were not learned.

Q: Latin must have been the language.

QUAINTON: Latin was very important, as was French. We read Caesar's *Gallic Wars* at age 10 or 11.

Q: I could never get that bridge built. In Mexico was it a different environment?

QUAINTON: Very much so. I went to the American school in Mexico City, which is still there. I did a little bit of Spanish. We traveled fairly widely in Mexico, as much as my father's health permitted, which was still at that time a fair amount. We lived in a small apartment just a few blocks from where the current American embassy is. It was certainly an eye opening experience for me to live in an entirely different culture, although social life and society into which my parents were parachuted as university people was one which was largely expatriate and largely British, although not exclusively so.

Q: You are approaching the end of high school. By the time you got out of Mexico you still had some years to go didn't you?

QUAINTON: I was beginning high school. I was in the eighth grade in Mexico. The three years I was in Canada accelerated my education. I finished the third grade in Seattle and three years later was in the eighth grade in Mexico City. Very young and socially very immature for my age. I did half a year in the eighth grade and half a year of my freshman year in Mexico and returned to Seattle to public high school where I remained for two years.

Q: Was there a cultural shock when you went back to high school in Seattle?

QUAINTON: I have no great sense of cultural shock. It was a very large public high school, some 2000 boys and girls. I was plunged into the freshman class at age 13. I didn't have terrible academic problems, it all seemed quite easy. I became engaged in a range of activities typical for freshmen and sophomores of that era. In the course of my sophomore year, I was offered a chance to go east to Phillips Academy at Andover. Entirely by chance, I think it was 1947, the "Saturday Evening Post" ran an article about Phillips Academy. I had no connection with eastern United States or with boarding schools in the east. But, I was much taken by this article and showed it to my mother. Some months later she was at a dinner party and her dinner partner asked about me and my brother and what we were doing and where we were going to school. She told him and said, "You know, he always dreamed of going to a school like Andover." The man said, "Well, I'm an Andover graduate. I'll make it happen." One of those small, extraordinary coincidences. He wrote to Andover and they sent me the exam papers. At that time there was a competitive examination to get into Andover. I went there on full scholarship I suppose as a diversity candidate, a boy from the West, eastern schools had very few western boys, in 1948. The only condition was that I redo my sophomore year in high school, which I did. So I ended up at Andover, where I spent three years and graduated in the class of 1951.

Q: Did you have a major there or was it a rather general education?

QUAINTON: It was entirely a general education, although the things I had done before I continued doing - Latin, French, basic sciences. I was exposed for the first time to amateur theater, being on the stage, taking part in debating contests. I was not a very athletic boy. In fact, I wasn't athletic at all and did very little that was of note in field sports.

Q: What sciences did you take?

QUAINTON: I did a little chemistry. Essentially my education was without science. My later education beyond Andover had no scientific component at all.

Q: It is a beautiful school. I went there one summer in 1945 to take a course in physics.

Were you pointed towards anything when you graduated?

QUAINTON: No, I wasn't pointed towards any particular career. My house master, the senior English teacher at the school, suggested since I was still quite young when I graduated, I was only 17, that another year before going to university might not be a bad thing and that I apply for an English Speaking Union schoolboy fellowship. I did and spent the school year of 1951-52 in England at one of the great English public schools, the Sherborne School, out in the west of England in Dorset. I had been admitted to Princeton on graduation from Andover but did not go immediately. I took that sixth year of high school, something of a record, I suppose, in terms of years spent in secondary education before going to university.

Q: I went by Sherborne this spring.

QUAINTON: There is a beautiful abbey there. At the school there was a continuity of spirit with the little school in Canada that I had gone to some 10 years before. It was a very rigorous school. I did English and history, the only subjects that it was thought an American boy could possibly master at an English standard. I did both English and History at A levels and did very satisfactorily.

During my time in England I was able to travel a fair amount and indeed spent the Christmas of 1951 in bombed-out Cologne, which was still terribly destroyed. One of the teachers at Sherborne was a naturalized British subject of German origin whose father was the head of West German railroads in the Rhineland and we went and spent Christmas with his family there. In the Easter holidays that followed in 1952, he and I (He was only five or six years older than I.) traveled to Italy and to what was then Yugoslavia, a very gray communist country. Yugoslavia was an eye opener in terms of a first exposure to a country ruled in an absolutely ruthless way. These were the very earliest days of Tito's break with Moscow. On the beaches of the Dalmatian coast there were troops every hundred yards or so to prevent people from escaping across to Italy. There was no sense of the freedom that evolved in Yugoslavia during the '70s and '80s before its final break up. Both trips were an exposure for me to conditions that were radically different from those that I had known growing up in Canada and the States.

Q: Were you picking up during your time at Sherborne the problem the British were having of adjusting to a new role in the world?

QUAINTON: It had a little effect. A very high percentage of the boys were still going on to careers in the military, the army and the navy. There was a strong tradition of Sherborne boys going into the Royal Navy. I think there was still a great faith in Britain's role in the world, notwithstanding the independence of India and Pakistan which had taken place in 1947. There was little sense of Britain's changing role. I think young men were still raised on the ethos of public service on a variety of continents in the service of the Empire.

Q: After schooling in Canada, Mexico and England, did the wander lust begin to take

hold?

QUAINTON: I suppose so, although I never consciously thought of it in those terms. I was fascinated by foreign languages, and was much interested in being able to communicate in different cultural contexts. Certainly these experiences, particularly in Mexico and England, began to orient me towards a career external to the United States.

I went to Princeton, in the fall of 1952, where I spent three years, having argued foolishly but successfully that the year I had in England was equivalent to the freshman year at university - in intellectual years it was but not in social terms. I majored in history and studied a variety of languages. I clearly had a vocation for languages. I had French and began Russian and Chinese and did some German and Italian. I concentrated on a range of subjects in the humanities.

I majored formally in the history department, but also took part in a program which no longer exists, the Special Program in the Humanities (SPH). Twenty undergraduates were chosen in their sophomore year to go into this special program. The requirements were that one completed all the coursework for one's degree in the junior year and spent the senior year engaged in more serious thought about the world. All Princetonians today, as then, were required to write a senior thesis, but the special program people were expected to write a longer and more substantial thesis. I wrote about Christian Humanism and the Protestant Reformation. That year provided me an opportunity to do a number of things: to begin the study of Chinese and German as well as do a more extensive piece of research.

Q: This was 1952-55. There was the Korean War, McCarthyism, and a very cold Cold War during that period. Did they intrude at all in your thoughts or experiences?

QUAINTON: The McCarthy period did, in part because I began Russian in my sophomore year, my first year at Princeton and the FBI was enormously interested in all students of Russian. At Princeton we were expected to subscribe to a Soviet publication, I subscribed to something called the Literaturnaya Gazeta. This was a Communist Party publication and led to considerable interest on the part of the FBI in my political orientation. My mother was questioned about my interests. That FBI concern actually became a more serious problem, which we will get to sometime later in 1956, when I was a participant in a communist youth festival in Moscow. But, clearly the McCarthy era was something we watched closely. It was of some importance in family terms because the University of Washington was a hot bed of leftist sentiment in the '30s and '40s and many of my father's colleagues were investigated not by the House Un-American Activities Committee, but by its equivalent in Washington State. There was a fairly considerable scandal in the '30s at the University of Washington about leftist influence. Harold Laski came and was a visiting professor at the University of Washington in 1938 or 1939. People went from the University of Washington into the Abraham Lincoln Brigade to fight in the Spanish Civil War. So McCarthy had a particular resonance to someone like myself.

Q: Washington was a rather radical labor state.

QUAINTON: Yes, that is right. The other cloud over everyone in my generation was the draft. This is the period after the Korean War and before the Vietnam War. Many of us did not serve; I did not serve. We were just too old, or just married, or for a variety of reasons deferments were available to people in the classes of 1955, '56 and '57. Graduate study got you deferred and that carried me four more years beyond 1955.

Q: You graduated in 1955 with a concentration in humanities?

QUAINTON: Yes, that is right. A major in history and a concentration in the humanities.

Q: So what does one do with that?

QUAINTON: One goes into the Foreign Service. I went on studying. In the course of my senior year I became interested in the possibility of studying abroad. I applied for a number of different scholarships - a Fulbright, a Keyesby, a Rhodes Scholarship. In the end I received a Marshall Scholarship and went to Christ Church College, Oxford. My family had been strongly connected to Cambridge University, to Queens College, where both my father and grandfather had gone; I had no Oxford connections. I went to Oxford with the intention of carrying on my studies of history and Russian and did a post graduate degree, which was a thesis degree, no coursework.

I wrote on Franco-Soviet relations in the period from the revolution to French recognition of the Soviet Union in 1923. Coincidentally, George Kennan was at Oxford at the same time writing his work on U.S. -Soviet relations in the same period and an old friend and colleague from Andover days, now the David Bruce Professor of International Relations in Princeton, Richard Ullman, was writing on Anglo-Soviet relations in that period. So, this further whetted my interest in the Soviet Union.

In due course this interest looked as it might be something which the Foreign Service might want. I had taken the Foreign Service exam in the spring of 1955 before graduating from Princeton. I believe this was the first year that the new one-day multiple choice exam was given.

Q: I took it in 1953 and it was a three and a half day exam.

QUAINTON: Yes, that had gone by 1955.

Q: You were taking Russian studies at Princeton. You were taking them at Oxford. I think it would be interesting for somebody to get a perspective on how the Soviet Union was viewed during this period, the middle of the Cold War. People tried to approach this as intellectuals. Can you give your impressions as to how they were displayed?

QUAINTON: That is a very hard question. I think in European academic circles the Cold War was a less intense phenomenon than it was in American political circles at the time. When I was at Oxford, the defining event was the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956. I think that changed the environment in terms of thinking about the geo-strategic

ambitions of the Soviet Union. Having studied the history of the early 1920s, I think there was a predisposition to think that the Soviet Union had been hardly done by in its relations with the West. The British, but also the French and the Americans, had invaded and occupied large parts of Russia in hopes of overturning the revolution. That, I think, left a kind of sense of guilt on the part of those who were aware of those events, a feeling that we had not given the Soviet Union a fair chance in the beginning of the revolution, at least. Although with the purges in the 1930s and the Soviet occupation of eastern Europe after the War, those attitudes began to change. I think it is fair to say that the intellectual climate at Oxford was a fairly liberal one, I won't say a radical one. Thinking of the outside world was very much in the context of an anti-imperialist mood. The Labor club at Oxford was very active. A lot of very prominent Labor politicians were in view. I'm not saying Conservatives were not, but I think in the mid-1950s, people who were interested in international relations were more likely to be caught up on the left side of the spectrum than on the right. I never thought of myself as being very far to the left, but I certainly was not a Tory.

During the four years that I spent at Oxford, I traveled widely all over Western Europe, Spain, Italy, France, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, Germany, etc. One summer I went by bus across Turkey, Greece and down as far as Damascus and Beirut and back again. The most profound experience for me occurred in the summer of 1957 when I and 120 other Americans went as participants to the Moscow youth festival. This was an event that not only attracted the watchful eye of the FBI but a lot of other intelligence agencies as well. I went a bit by chance. I had moved from Christ Church to Nuffield College where I won a studentship. For a hundred pounds one was offered three weeks in the Soviet Union all expenses paid. That was very cheap in those days. In fact it wasn't much more than the round trip rail fare from London to the East German border. A handful of us from England joined the rest of the American delegation that was already in Moscow.

Before setting out, since I had applied to the Foreign Service, I thought it prudent to go up to the embassy in London and tell them that I was going. I identified myself and was shown into an office of someone who was described as a first secretary in the political section. It was a fairly austere office. There were no books, no papers, nothing that would identify the room as anybody's office. I was interviewed by the officer concerned who said that it was a good thing I was going because we needed some right thinking Americans as part of the American delegation which otherwise would be made up entirely of communists. Since I knew Russian, I could be particularly helpful. He suggested that I come back three weeks later, just before I was leaving, in case there were any bits of advise that they might want to pass on to me.

I went up to London three weeks later and asked for the same gentleman and was told that he was not available but another gentleman would see me. I was shown to the same antiseptic office. I said that I was back as promised and was there anything that he would like to share with me before I went. He said, "Well, it is our strong feeling that you shouldn't go to Moscow." I said, "Well, three weeks ago your colleague felt I should go." He said, "Ah well, he has been transferred." I asked if my going would affect my entrance into the Foreign Service and he said that he could make no promises. I was a bit

taken aback but felt here I am 22 years old with an interest in the Soviet Union, so I would go anyway. And, so I did, notwithstanding those cautionary notes from the American embassy in London.

It was an extraordinary experience, three weeks in the Soviet Union. In the first time in the history of the Soviet Union, I think it is safe to say, the place opened up. There were tens of thousand of young people from all over the world, although not very many Americans. The security forces couldn't control this enormous number of people. The American delegation was taken to a hostel in the outskirts of Moscow where we met on the evening before the festival was to begin. The organizers of the American delegation were, I think, all children of members of the Communist Party USA with a certain number of fellow travelers and a few graduate students like myself. We had a very bizarre but long discussion about who we were because banners had already been prepared for us to carry into Lenin Stadium at the head of the American delegation. Like an Olympic festival each country came in behind its flag. There was a large banner which said, "The American Delegation Greet World Youth." This was perfectly innocuous in itself, except that one of the people who was there made the point that the National Union of Students in the United States was boycotting the festival so we couldn't be considered a delegation. We were individual participants. After a long discussion, in the best spirit of democratic centralism, we voted to delete the word "delegation" from the banner and replace it with "participants." That required a certain amount of sewing and snipping but the organizers went along with the will of the group.

It was made clear to us that we were expected to attend the opening ceremony but we did not have to march. Those who didn't feel comfortable marching in the countries parade did not have to do so. We were told we could go straight to our seats in the stadium. The next morning, we were marshaled at 10:00 (The opening ceremony was at 4:00 in the afternoon.), in a lot outside Moscow. We were put into flatbed trucks with two rows of seats facing outward. The trucks were decorated with peace doves and slogans, mainly "Peace and Friendship." For some six hours we were hawked through the streets of Moscow on these trucks. People gave us doves to release. We went in front of the American embassy. Diplomacy was already intruding itself into my young life. There were military attaches and others taking pictures of the American delegation as we went by.

When we got to Lenin Stadium we were indeed allowed to dismount and those who wanted to march marched, and I and some of my colleagues went to sit in the stands. It was an amazing event. The Politburo, Bulganin, Khrushchev and Kaganovich, were all there. There were 110 thousand young people. The rest of the time, except for organized visits to appropriate museums, we had fraternal meetings with other delegations. It seems very far off, but the first one we had was with the North Korean delegation. I think we were the first Americans to have met with North Koreans since the end of the Korean War four years before. They had a huge delegation as you can imagine, over a thousand strong. It was very well organized and did a whole series of cultural presentations for us including dances and songs. They were beautifully costumed. After their performance was over, they turned to us and said, "Now, tell us what kind of cultural presentation the

American delegation has in mind.” Well, in our delegation was a young lady, Peggy Seeger, whose brother was Pete Seeger, who was an undergraduate at Radcliffe at the time. She had her guitar so we sang American folk songs for the edification of our North Korean brothers. The only one I can remember is “I’m going to lay down that atom bomb down by the river side.” It got a fair amount of cheering from the North Koreans.

One of the highlights of the visit was that as we moved around the city we met foreigners of all sorts. I was accosted by members of the Jewish community in Moscow and was given letters to take out to family and friends on the outside. In the middle of the festival after a visit to the Lenin and Stalin tombs we came out and were greeted by a lot of young Russians who wanted to know why there weren’t more Americans and why Americans were boycotting the festival, etc. I got into an animated discussion about Hungary and what had gone on and my picture ended up on the front page of the *New York Times* lecturing the Russians from a podium in Red Square. I may be the only American you know who has given a speech in Red Square.

Q: This couldn’t help but help your advancement in the Foreign Service.

QUAINTON: Well, it led to a very extensive investigation by the FBI. After my return, the FBI went to talk to my mother in Seattle and demanded to see all the letters I had written and she refused to give them up. She told them if they had any questions to ask, they could ask them directly, which they didn’t do, of course. But, the whole environment was one of suspicion.

Some of us went to the embassy in Moscow. One of the things that goes on in any festival is the exchange of pins and mementoes. We had nothing to exchange, so we went to the embassy and asked if they could give us pencils. We were lectured sternly for being in Moscow and for the disservice we were doing American foreign policy by our presence. We said, “Wait a minute. There is an opportunity here to take advantage of the situation. Use some of us.” We were told absolutely not, that it was totally against American foreign policy. We did eventually get to see Ambassador Thompson because we were offered as a delegation a chance to go to China, almost as controversial as North Korea at that time. The Chinese would have paid our way from Moscow and back. Some members of the delegation were quite interested in doing that, and we were given an exceptionally stern lecture that we would end up in jail if we went. A few people did go, I didn’t. When I got back to Washington, I wrote to the Washington Post protesting the short-sightedness of the American government in boycotting the festival. I felt then and feel now that we made a serious mistake.

It was an extraordinary introduction to the communist world. We went up to Leningrad and visited the Hermitage and the vaults where they stored prohibited pictures. We saw racks of Kandinskys, for example. Most had not been seen since the Revolution. So, in a way, the Russians allowed our experience to be a very open one.

We also met with orthodox seminarians who were very interested in Christianity in the United States, but more interested in whether what they had seen on television was true,

i.e., that every American carried a gun. They had an image of the United States as a violent and uncivilized place. One realized how powerful the propaganda had been over the years since the end of the Second World War in conveying an extremely negative image of the United States to many Soviet citizens.

Q: From what you are telling me it sounds as if there wasn't much of an attempt on the part of the leaders of the American delegation and others to manipulate you.

QUAINTON: There wasn't a great deal of manipulation with the exception of the big events to which we went. We were pretty free to do what we liked. We were offered opportunities to do certain things, go to certain museums, etc. and one took advantage of what was interesting. As a student of the history of the Soviet Union, I was fascinated to see some of the things that one had read about and studied. We went by train across the border at Brest-Litovsk. It was fascinating being on a train all the way across Europe. It took a day and a half to get to Moscow from London.

When I got back to London, there was a more positive interest by the American embassy in what had happened and what I had done. I was debriefed. Interestingly enough, two years later, during my last year at Oxford, the next communist festival came along which was in Vienna. [This was] the first time the festival had been held outside the Soviet Bloc.

Q: Wasn't there also one in Finland?

QUAINTON: That was after Vienna in either 1961 or 1962. The one in 1955 had been in Warsaw. There had been several in Eastern European capitals before Moscow.

I was invited to come up to London and had my first taste of clandestine service. Now, instead of the antiseptic room in the embassy, there were park benches where I was invited to meet with American representatives to talk about my availability to go to Vienna. They had seen the error of their ways with regard to Moscow. By discouraging people like myself, they failed to take advantage of opportunities presented. I agreed to go to Vienna with my wife. I married in the summer of 1958 to another Marshall scholar who I met at a reception at the House of Commons. We went very briefly to the Vienna festival. It was a pretty open ended mission. Vienna in some ways was significantly more sinister than Moscow if only because of the baggage that one carried around from films, news clips from the 1930s, 1940s. With 100 thousand people in Vienna shouting *Frieden und Freundschaft* [German: Peace and Friendship] with their right arm extended in salute, it was more Nuremberg than Moscow, whereas in Moscow 100,000 Russians shouting "*Mir i druzhba*" had a kind of softness to it which was not nearly as menacing. We didn't stay in Vienna very long, but it was interesting to me to attend a gathering which was militantly opposed to one's own government and at one's own government's request.

Q: Within the American student body and often the academic and whatever passes as the intellectual class in the United States, from the '20s on, and it continues to some extent today, there has been a certain attraction to the Soviet experiment and I have never quite

understood why people who join the Communist Party seem to discount the horror of Stalin and some of his people. It wasn't as if this was secret stuff. Did you find any of this at Oxford or on these trips that people were aware of what went on?

QUAINTON: I think we knew. We certainly were aware that we were going to a police state in which all power was manipulated and controlled by the government. Clearly one's encounter with people who really lived in fear was very powerful. We will get to talk about this again when we get to my time in Nicaragua. I think it is hard for most Americans, at least it was until the Central American crisis of the 1980s, to feel the true moral attraction of communism. That may sound an odd way of putting it, but I think Europeans, having lived through 50 years of the most horrifying wars in which great numbers of Western Europeans and Russians were killed, had a fixation on social justice, on how the state could intervene to redress social grievances with regard to health, education, etc., things that the Russians were perceived to have succeeded in doing, notwithstanding the brutality and the coerciveness of the Soviet state. That residue of sympathy still exists, and you hear it still when people talk about Cuba today. The debate always comes back to education and health, because a communist regime seems capable of redressing profound social grievances. The intellectual's perception of the USSR in the 1950s was certainly that the communists had redressed in some important way the vices that were institutionalized under the czars in terms of social stratification, etc. More sophisticated people were aware of the injustices, of the brutality of the system, as well as of the particular privileges of the elite. But, I think for students, those things seemed more remote. It wasn't to say there weren't very conservative students who were strongly anti-communist, but the intellectual climate at Oxford was certainly one that was more tolerant of the Soviet system than was ever generally the case in the United States. I think almost any European when told or reminded of how many million of Russians died fighting with us against the Nazis had some kind of sympathy for the Soviet regime even if they didn't have sympathy for communism intellectually.

Q: I don't want to belabor this but it has always disturbed me that Hitler, outside of the war action, killed maybe 10 million people, but I have heard at least on Radio Moscow once, that Stalin killed 40 million of his own people. There seems to be a different prism by which these two horrors are seen.

QUAINTON: I don't think the 40 million figure was widely accepted or known in the fifties. The trials and deportations were well known. But quantitatively I don't think people talked in those numbers. And there was universal condemnation of the show trials and what had happened thereafter. Nonetheless, the political climate was not entirely unsympathetic to the Russians because they consistently reverted back to their own sufferings and used them as a justification for what they did in the post Second World War period. You have to see this as a post Second World War phenomenon. In a country that has been through this terrible devastation and was trying to put itself back on its feet, lots of students were willing to make allowances.

Q: I think it is very interesting to probe somebody's mind who has come out of your

background. You went on and had to deal with these problems the rest of the time. When you left Moscow what were your impressions?

QUAINTON: That is very hard to answer. Clearly some of what I saw did work. One could not help but be impressed by the extraordinary organizational capability of the Soviet government. This was an enormous endeavor, the festival itself. It was done with considerable success in terms of moving people around and having them do things that they wanted them to do. One was not aware, I think, of extreme poverty, although I suppose there was such. The Soviets were putting their best face on for the benefit of all these outsiders. And, yet, I came back much impressed with the dissidents that I met, the people who were opposed to the Soviet system. It was a kind of mixed message because one was not subjected to the rigors of the Soviet system, quite consciously on their part. They didn't want people going away strongly antagonistic. I can't say that I left the Soviet Union more hostile to it than when I went. I was very ambiguous about the experience because I saw positive sides and a fair number of the negatives. So, I had a fairly open mind. I think I thought then, as I have over the years, that in some ways the extreme conservative rhetoric about the Soviet Union was exaggerated. I may not have been right in that judgment, but certainly as a young student I felt a lot of what was being said by conservative commentators seemed not to fully reflect the reality. Impressionable youth, I suppose.

Q: What was the spirit you found at Oxford regarding the Soviet Union? Was it more or less what you were reflecting?

QUAINTON: I don't know. There was not an enormous interest in the Soviet Union. You must remember that at Oxford in 1955-59, the study of political science and modern history ended in 1939. There was no academic study of the Soviet Union except in the context of the immediate post First World War period. The focus of modern historical discourse was on the origins of the First and Second World Wars and that gave a very heavy focus to studying Germany and its relations with France, Russia and the United Kingdom. All studies were Eurocentric, and Russia was a kind of appendage to Europe. A lot of people did study the origins of the Russian Revolution, but Oxford undergraduates were not enormously interested in Russia. They were interested in European politics. They were interested in the Suez crisis. They did get fairly steamed up about the Hungarian crisis in 1956, but I don't remember spending very much time at all in discussions about the nature of the Soviet system.

The issues that animated British students to the degree that they were politically conscious were the social questions of the United Kingdom: class. Britain was and perhaps still is a country in which class consciousness is extraordinarily developed. The working class really perceives itself to be extraordinarily disadvantaged in the total make up of things. If that class consciousness spilled over at all, it spilled over into a more positive assessment of the Soviet Union and what it had done to create a classless society which was not dominated by the old aristocracy. I don't think that was explicitly said, but there was a kind of resonance for the Soviet Revolution in the United Kingdom, particularly in the 1950s with Labour governments in power. And each Conservative

government has had to constantly react to that class reality, which remains very powerful in the UK.

Q: You left Oxford when?

QUAINTON: I left in the summer of 1959 after four years. I spent the last year in Oxford as a research fellow at St. Antony's College where I did research on the origins of the Italian Communist Party. Antonio Gramsci and the intellectual underpinnings of Italian communism was kind of an extension of the work that I had done on the Soviet Union. I did this largely because the warden of St. Antony's had Mussolini's papers and was one of the leading authorities at Oxford on the rise of Fascism. Of course it was the same period that the foundations of the Communist Party were established. So, I worked on that for a year, lectured and taught modern European history, and European politics between the wars, 1919-1939.

Q: When did you go out into the world?

QUAINTON: In the spring of 1959 an impatient State Department said that I had to come back for my oral examination. I had put it off on several occasions pleading absence from the country. It was now getting on to four years since I had taken the written examination and they said that if I didn't come forward, it would be my last chance. So, I flew back to take the Foreign Service exam. I had simultaneously applied for a teaching post at Haverford, which I didn't get in the end, but I was ambiguous as to whether I wanted to go into academic work or into the Foreign Service.

The oral exam was entirely different from the one that is given today. I think there were three senior Foreign Service officers across the table from me. They welcomed me and asked what I liked to drink before dinner. I ventured that a dry sherry was the appropriate gentleman's drink. They seemed surprised. They then went on to ask about my interest in the Foreign Service. Then there were a series of more factual questions which in retrospect would seem to a much later generation to be quite bizarre. They asked me if I were going by boat from Pittsburgh to the sea, what I would observe on the trip? What rivers would I go down? What states were on either sides of the waterways? And any other sights that I might notice. I had a fairly clear idea I would get to the Mississippi but a little uncertain about where I was starting. They then asked me if I was sailing on the Chesapeake Bay what rivers would I sail up? Being a boy from Seattle, I did not know much about the Chesapeake Bay except that the Potomac flowed into it. I ventured the Potomac and they nodded and asked for more. I ventured the Delaware and they suggested that was not the right answer. Then they tested my knowledge of foreign affairs. They asked me whether I knew what NATO was? I said I did. They asked who were the members? I rattled them off. They asked me about SEATO, CENTO, WEU, OAS, OAU and what they stood for. This was very much my line. Then they asked me about RFD. I said I didn't know RFD. They then asked about COD. I said that I was completely lost. They said, "You don't know COD, Mr. Quainton? You have been out of the country much too long." This was perfectly true for the purposes of this examination. But, it was a game which tested...

Q: You might explain what RFD and COD mean.

QUAINTON: Rural Free Delivery and Cash On Delivery. These were common postal abbreviations at the time. I actually knew them but not in the context of the questions they were asking me. I guess I answered with a certain degree of poise if not knowledge. But there was no attempt to pretend that any of the questions were directly related to a career in the Foreign Service. In any case, I passed and was offered a place in the class that began in November 1959.

Q: Did you have any problems with the security side of things?

QUAINTON: I had been aware that after going to Moscow the FBI was interested in my background, and I wondered if that would have any impact on my entry into the Foreign Service. To the best of my knowledge it did not. I certainly never heard about it from people who were otherwise interviewed about me. No questions were raised directly to me or my family at the time I was applying for entry into the Service.

Q: So you came in in November 1959. Can you describe your basic officer course, the people in it and your impression of how the course went?

QUAINTON: There were 25 of us, I think, five of whom were women. There was no diversity in terms of color, all of us were white. We came from a very wide cross section educationally. It was not a group dominated by ivy league graduates, although I was one and there were one or two others. People came from all over the United States and in that sense it was a very diverse group of men and women. All of us were under 35, which was the maximum age of entry at the time, and indeed I think only one was over 30. Almost all of us were homogeneous in the sense that most of us had just done a graduate degree somewhere so we were in our mid twenties. A few had worked at other jobs before entering the Service. Not very many of us spoke any foreign languages, perhaps half a dozen, and those of us that did all went to English-speaking posts on our first assignment - Edinburgh, Sydney, Canada, etc.

Q: Having come from Oxford, did you get any feel for the indoctrination into the Foreign Service? Did it feel like a different world?

QUAINTON: It certainly was a different world. We all had mentors. Mine was Stephen Winship, who had just come back from Australia, where he had been consul in Perth. We actually stayed in contact for a number of years afterwards. I can remember thinking the intellectual quality of the A-100 course was not very high. There were a lot of talking heads and I remember almost nothing of it actually. We were talked at about the Foreign Service and the Department. We went away to Front Royal for a week's off-site which I remember being very austere. That was certainly a very positive experience in the sense of the bonding among the members of the class. The class has stayed in touch over the last 38 years. In fact, we still have reunions which include those who have left the Service. The women all left the Service within 15 years, several to get married and were

required to leave, several dropped out and one, who became famous, Alison Palmer, who was the author of the women's class action suit against the Department. After that suit was launched, she too resigned from the Foreign Service. So, the women did not survive in the Service a long time. In fact, it is interesting compared to the current dire concerns about the durability of a career in the Foreign Service today that I think half of the members of the class were gone within 15 years - for personal reasons, some went into academia, one left over a policy dispute on Biafra, others just didn't want to stay.

Q: Did you have any place you wanted to go?

QUAINTON: I thought, entirely without reason, that I would be snapped up by the Russia crowd since my educational background had been very heavily in Soviet studies, including the language. So, I assumed after the initial two years of junior officer consular work at Sydney, that I would move on to Moscow or the Soviet desk in Washington. That, of course, never happened to my continuing surprise until some 25 years thereafter.

Q: At that time specializing in Soviet Affairs was considered to be the top specialty wasn't it?

QUAINTON: Yes. The Soviet Union was the great strategic adversary. Foreign policy was dominated by Cold War concerns. A lot of young officers I encountered had done Russian studies in one way or another. The Foreign Service had a surplus, in fact, of officers who spoke Russian and wished to work in the Soviet area. In early 1952 a major effort was made to attract officers to hard languages as a result of the book "The Ugly American." All officers were asked to put down three choices of a hard language when assignment time rolled around. While in Sydney, I put down Indonesian, Persian, and Hindi and was chosen for Hindi language study and my career veered off in a totally different direction after my first tour.

Q: You are off to Sydney early 1960. Next time we will talk about Sydney.

QUAINTON: Okay.

Q: Today is November 12, 1997. Tony, how did you get to Sydney?

QUAINTON: Like so many officers of our day, there wasn't a whole lot of choice of where you went. There was no bidding; assignments were handed out. When the day came to announce where we would be going, Sydney fell to our lot. My wife and I were fairly disappointed, having spent the previous four years in England in my case, and two years in the case of my wife. We had acquired many unfortunate attitudes about the Australians as slightly less civilized than Americans about Australia as an isolated, far away country with very little to offer by way of culture or anything else. So, coming into the Foreign Service with several foreign languages, a background in Soviet studies, the thought of going to Australia was not immediately attractive. In the event, the two years we spent there turned out to be some of the happiest of our Foreign Service career. We

didn't actually leave for Sydney until early February of 1960 after having taken the consular course to prepare us for my first job as vice consul at the consulate general.

We traveled out by air via Japan and the Philippines. My wife was eight months pregnant at the time, so the trip was something of a trial for her. We arrived and were immediately put into temporary quarters by the consulate staff, a little house that we lived in for three months, and then moved into an apartment for the remaining two years of our tour. It was a small basement apartment which the real estate dealers advertised as having a harbor glimpse, which meant that if you stood on the toilet in the bathroom and looked out the window you could indeed see a portion of Sydney harbor.

The consulate was relatively small. There was a consul general, a commercial section with two officers, a consular section with four and an administrative section with a couple of officers and a communicator. It was in the upper floor of a downtown bank building. It is no longer at that location. The junior of two vice consuls was expected to do the non-immigrant visa work, and he stood all day at a counter in the waiting room without any of the protection or barriers that today characterize our consular sections. He in effect acted not only as vice consul, and non-immigrant visa officer, but as receptionist. Everybody who came into the consulate general was greeted by me and referred down the hall to the commercial or administrative sections, or, if it were a consular matter, I would deal with it.

Consular interviews, which were mandatory in those days, required the asking of a series of questions, which had to be asked directly, not read and then commented on. People were asked if they were members of the Communist Party; whether they had any intention of overthrowing the government of the United States; whether they were coming to the United States for immoral purposes; whether they had committed a crime involving moral turpitude; and other questions of that ilk. Many people thought nothing of these questions, but priests, nuns, clergymen, and others often were offended.

Q: Did anyone ever ask you what was meant by moral turpitude?

QUAINTON: Indeed. Within the first day on the job, when I got to the question of "Have you ever committed a crime involving moral turpitude," one of the applicants said, "What's that?" I said that it was a serious crime usually involving a felony sentence and the gentleman concerned said, "Yes." I asked what crime he had committed and he said murder. As it turned out, this gentleman in 1919, having returned from the battlefields of Western Europe as part of the ANZAC battalion, killed a man in a bar and was sentenced to second degree murder and served 20 years. He was freed sometime in the early 1940s. This was now 20 years later, he had done his time, but he was ineligible for a visa to the United States having committed a crime involving moral turpitude. I remember seeking a waiver from the Attorney General and having it denied in what I thought was an unjust fashion. He was a returned serviceman and was going with a group of other servicemen around the world back to the battlefields of France crossing the United States, but no waiver was granted and he had to travel through Canada while the rest of his party traveled through the United States. That was my introduction to problems of moral

turpitude.

Frequently, more often than one would imagine, when I asked this question one got shifty eyed answers and indeed we had a system of police checks with the Australian authorities. It turned out that a considerable number of men had committed a crime not much thought about today called indecent exposure. In Australia in the 1950s and through most of the 1960s, the licensing laws were such that the bars closed at six pm. Men came out of their offices or factories at five pm and immediately went to the local pub and drank two or more pints of beer, at the end of which time the bars closed. There being no public facilities, these men took refuge behind the nearest bush, at which point the police pounced and they were sentenced for indecent exposure. That also created a problem for eligibility for visas to the United States.

The third category of visas that were troublesome were young single women traveling to the United States, according to them to visit friends for a short visit, but in fact frequently going to marry American servicemen that they had met during or after the war. At that time, there was no fiancée visa provision in the law and they were ineligible to go to the United States if they could not demonstrate their intention to return to Australia. The head of the consular section, a man who had traumatic visa experiences in the 1930s, which I will come back to in a moment, regarded these cases as opportunities to exercise his authority, and we were instructed to refuse these cases in a most vigorous way until such time as sufficient pressure built up by a sufficient number of important Australians calling up to express their belief in the virtue and integrity of the lady in question. After this charade, the word of the young lady would be accepted.

Q: With all due credit going to the consul.

QUAINTON: Yes. But, I certainly enjoyed the time I spent doing consular work. Almost immediately I was given additional responsibilities to do the political reporting on New South Wales, which was the consular district for the consulate general in Sydney.

Q: Did you get problems with "Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party" business?

QUAINTON: That was never much of a problem. There was a communist party in Australia but this was a time when there was a very intense battle going on for control of the Australian labour movement. One of the labour leaders who has stayed a friend over 35 years, Laurie Short, who was the head of the Ironworkers Union, had just thrown out the communist leadership in that union. As the political officer I got to know a fair number of the Labour Party leaders in New South Wales since the government in New South Wales was a Labour government, although the national government under Bob Menzies was a Liberal Country Party coalition government. So, I got some exposure to the politics of New South Wales. Then after a year I was transferred to the commercial section of the consulate. Another vice consul had arrived who is now a Burgess of the House of Delegates in Virginia. He, like me, was a Princeton graduate and had distinguished himself by being the Princeton tiger at all home football games.

Q: Was this Jay Katzen?

QUAINTON: Yes, Jay Katzen.

Q: I've interviewed him.

QUAINTON: Well, we will have to compare notes.

I was completely unqualified to be commercial officer. I had never sold anything significant, although I spent a brief period selling shoes at university to help myself through. We spent most of our time doing World Trade Directory reports and trade surveys for insignificant American companies seeking access to the Australian market. I was impressed then by the competence of the countries that had professional trade services, the British, Canadians, Germans, etc., compared to the amateurism with which we went about trade promotion. Although my first boss had been doing commercial work for a number of years, my second boss had been in the civil aviation business and knew very little about commerce.

Nonetheless, I went about the work of trade promotion with a certain enthusiasm selling everything from beach towels to machine tools to anyone who expressed an interest in the products being offered. My only significant success as a commercial officer was to sell an onion harvester to the city of Sydney. The municipality needed a mechanical device to rake the beer bottles off Bondi Beach on Sunday morning after the Saturday festivities on the beach and an onion harvester was ideally suited for raking up beer bottles out of the sand. Some middle west harvester manufacturer was the beneficiary of that particular effort.

Q: You mentioned that the British, Canadian and German commercial people were much more adept at this. Could you compare, contrast?

QUAINTON: Well, they had a trade commissioner service, the British and Canadians, for which people were recruited whose sole job and career was the promotion of trade for their respective countries. Whereas in our case, until the creation of the Foreign Commercial Service some 15 years later, we thought this was something that generalist officers could do as a sidelight to their careers without any training, or exposure to the American business community and not much exposure to the Department of Commerce in Washington before they took up their work. The competition frequently had been briefed by the major exporting companies in their country and they knew much more about the market than we did. It seemed to me then, as it does now, that the Foreign Service has not distinguished itself in the nuts and bolts of trade promotion. Although it has done much good work in helping major corporations with contracts and other investment and trade problems with host governments, the nitty gritty commercial work has never been something which was much to the taste of the officers of the Foreign Service.

There was an enormous amount of representation in Australia at two different levels. The

consul general was much in demand in New South Wales to preside over debutante balls, open fêtes, attend official functions, give speeches to Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, etc. After the Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales, he was perhaps one of the most important commercial figures in the area. He couldn't attend all these functions, so the junior officers got a lot of the opportunities that were otherwise the consul general's, to represent the United States in all sorts of ways. I can still remember going out to a little country town called Mudgee in the center of New South Wales to preside over a debutante ball with the debutantes being only several years younger than the arriving dignitary, the vice consul. The local citizenry was, I think, somewhat taken aback and indeed the mayor said that he had expected somebody who was bald, fat and fifty instead of somebody who was 25 and looked younger than that.

But the Australians were wonderfully hospitable people and we were able to travel widely. The country in many ways was like the America of the 1930s. We had friends who still had outdoor plumbing in the center of the city. It is hard to image a major American city in the early 1960s where indoor plumbing was not absolutely the common thing. But, the Australians lived a fairly simple, straightforward outdoor life. On the other hand, Sydney was already a city with a very considerable cultural life. The Australians were in the process of designing and just about to begin the construction of the famous Sydney Opera House. There was a major symphony orchestra in Sydney, lots of artists, etc. So contrary to our expectations when we heard about going to Sydney, it turned out to be a much more cosmopolitan and interesting post than we had expected.

Q: Who was your consul general?

QUAINTON: The consul general was Larry Vass. He had been in the civil aviation business for almost all of his career. He was a real specialist in civil aviation and was rewarded with being made consul general in Sydney, a job which he loved and which he carried out with some distinction. The consul general in those days had a beautiful house, which since has been sold, located at the end of Darling Point, one of the major promontories in Sydney harbor. It had a spectacular view out over the harbor and was a wonderful place for the consul general to carry out his representational responsibilities.

We were all expected to do representation and I still remember the first time the inspectors came to Australia. We were called together by the consul general and given the instructions that had come from the inspectors. One of them was that every officer was to give a dinner for the inspectors and was expected to invite eight to ten of his or her contacts to that dinner. The inspectors would come promptly at eight and would leave promptly at eleven. There would be no lingering by the inspectors to show that they enjoyed this party more than another. It was all very highly choreographed. We invited the speaker of the New South Wales legislature and a number of people out of political life to our little apartment. There were two inspectors. For my wife, it was really her first major occasion to give a state dinner where you were being judged for the quality of your food and conversation, as well as natural charm. It went reasonably well, although in our efforts to be elegant, we served pigeon which, unfortunately, was so hard it could not be cut.

Q: You mentioned that something had happened to the consul there during the thirties.

QUAINTON: Yes, his name was Orrey Taft. He subsequently committed suicide after he left Australia. He had joined the Foreign Service in the beginning of the 1930s and either his first or second post was Warsaw, where he served in the visa section. In the late thirties under a rightist but not yet fully Fascist government there was already significant persecution of the Jewish community. As he looked back on that experience, the people who got visas at his hand lived and those whom he had to turn down died. He felt he had been asked to make life and death decisions and not just administer a visa law. He was a very bitter and angry man as a result of those experiences. It left him with a kind of cynicism about the visa business which was not always a constructive one when it came to managing a visa section.

Q: What was your impression of the Australian attitude towards England? Unlike most of the Foreign Service where you just come from the United States, you had a good solid dose of the British system and there is an antagonism and snobbism on one side or the other. Could you talk a bit about what you observed at that time?

QUAINTON: Oh, I think there is no doubt that the hostility to the British was very real, even though these were the days of the white Australia policy. The only people who could immigrate into Australia were Americans or Western Europeans. There had been a major influx of Eastern and Southern Europeans in the thirties as a result of the rise of Nazism and conditions in Western Europe and again after the Second World War substantial numbers of Hungarians, Czechs, and others came. But, there continued to be substantial British migration to Australia and they did well in business and the professions. And yet paradoxically, Britain was still the country of preference in educational terms, and people who went on to graduate school were more likely to go to the UK than they were the United States, although that was beginning to change. The cultural links were very strong. The crown was still popular. The Australians had always been more than willing participants in the Imperial war effort. A large number of Australians took part in the Boer War, and the ANZAC battalion was justly famous in the First World War. To be an ANZAC was still something of great prestige on Armistice Day. There was always a parade in Sydney, and the people at the head of that parade were those who had fought with the ANZACs in the First World War. There was also great pride in the Australian effort in the Second World War, although there the linkages were with the Americans, not with the British. The great military event for younger Australians was the Battle of the Coral Sea, at which the Japanese were turned back from the area just north of Australia. Every year there was a major ball and a public holiday to celebrate this battle. The consul general was much in demand to preside over the festivities on the occasion.

But, one heard a great deal of criticism of the "Pommies," of the British. The British had a tendency to look down on and patronize the Australians as being slightly uncivilized and uncouth. And, the Australians, of course, couldn't stand being patronized by the mother country. Despite this, there were extraordinary ties between Australia and Britain,

which were much stronger then than they are 40 years later.

Q: You had a Labour government in New South Wales and a coalition Liberal Country Party in Canberra. Did you find that the Australian Labour Party then was as doctrinaire as some of the other Labour Parties, like the New Zealand Labour Party and other places where they had gone quite left wing, really very Marxist, although not communist?

QUAINTON: The Labour Party was divided in many ways. It was resistant to communist influence, but on the other hand was very aggressive as a party. The Labour Party rested directly on funding which it got from the trade union movement, and trade union leaders played an enormously powerful role in Labour Party politics. There was tension between the working class and what one could call the country class, the people who lived off the land, whose livelihood, as Australia's livelihood, depended on sheep, wool, and products of this sort. There was a certain class difference, although Australia is not a society marked by class in the European sense or to the European degree. There is no aristocracy to speak of in Australia. But, the real sense of working with your hands as distinct from working on the land provided, I think, a profound cleavage in Australian society which still exists to some degree. This cleavage is much extenuated as Australia has become an urban, service-oriented society as much as industrial based.

Q: You were there during the election of Kennedy. Had he seized the imagination of the Australians as a bright young leader?

QUAINTON: Yes, I think so. I don't have any specific memories of the Kennedy era as it affected U.S.-Australian relations. Australians were in many respects very insular, and it was then a country that was inward looking. It had not really begun to see itself, as it did in the seventies, as an Asian power. Its cultural links were still back to the mother country, to Britain. So, Kennedy was admired as Americans were generally admired, but it didn't make much of a difference in U.S.-Australia relations. It is very interesting that the American ambassador throughout this period was William Sebald and it was said, and I have reason to believe truthfully, that Mrs. Sebald was never received in an Australian home because she was Japanese. He was an East Asianist who had married her before the war, but the Australians were not prepared to deal with a Japanese woman even the wife of the American ambassador to Australia. So, that gets to the heart of what was then a very strong sense of white cultural identity and a very strong rejection of all things related to Japan. Today Japanese is taught in Australian schools and the Australians see Japan as a major market. The white Australia policy is gone, and the country is almost as diverse as the United States.

Q: Were we trying in some way to say, "Come on fellas we have to deal with Japan," or anything like that?

QUAINTON: I have no idea. The consulate really did only two things. It issued visas and it promoted trade. There was some political reporting by me and by the consul. We were interested in the tension between the parties and the roles of communists, etc. This was a great preoccupation for American foreign policy in the Cold War period. We always

wanted to know were the communists gaining, winning, losing, falling behind, etc.

Q: You left there when?

QUAINTON: Well, there was a travel freeze. We were due out in February, 1962, after a two year tour, but the Department froze all travel except emergency travel, so we stayed until May, 1962 when we were told we were coming back for a year of Urdu language training. That didn't happen accidentally. At some point in 1961, the Department made a conscious decision to increase the number of junior officers who spoke hard languages. I believe this was in part a result of a congressional perception that the Soviet Union was winning the hearts and minds of the peoples of Southeast Asia because of their ability to communicate with the peasants in the rice paddies and elsewhere, a capacity which was not present in the Foreign Service.

Q: This was partly as a result of a best selling book, "The Ugly American."

QUAINTON: Indeed. So, we were all asked to volunteer for three hard languages. I volunteered for Indonesian, Persian and Hindi. Indonesia being nearby, Persian because of its culture, India because I had been raised to think of British India as being something quite romantic. In any case I was chosen not for Hindi but for Urdu, the same language written in a different script, and returned to Washington in the summer of 1962. In August, I began a year of Urdu language training.

Q: It was for a year?

QUAINTON: It was the standard 10 or 11 month course. We went from August through June of the following year. There were three of us in the course. Two of us were assigned to Pakistan. One ultimately was assigned to New Delhi, and half way through the course was given an introduction to the written script of Hindi, which is completely different from Urdu. Our first teacher was a former aide de camp to the governor general of Pakistan, a rather dashing mustachioed captain of the Pakistan army, who had migrated to the United States. He spoke wonderful English, but not so wonderful Urdu, but it was good enough to get us through the first few months of the course. The other teacher, the principal teacher, was a Punjabi poet, who still lives here and who we still see 35 years later, called Hameed Naz, who became administrator of Montgomery County for a brief period. The third teacher was an Indian Hindu woman who had come here with her husband and taught both Hindi and Urdu at FSI.

Q: While you were taking this course, were you picking up any sort of lessons about this area? I think about this time I was taking Serbo-Croatian and I got a full shot of Serbian nationalism because we had two ex-Serbian royal army officers teaching us, and I was wondering because we are talking about an area where there are ethnic tensions were you getting any of that?

QUAINTON: Although there was enormous tension between India and Pakistan after the first Kashmiri war in 1949, this was not reflected in the classroom. The north Indian elites, from which the three teachers came, from the Punjab in northern India, saw

themselves as part of a single culture. They were still close to united India, which was less than 15 years away. They had grown up in that united India, and the cultural similarities between Hindus and Muslims were really very great and their ability to think of themselves as belonging to a common culture was still very strong. Already the two governments were moving the cultures apart as the sanskritization of Hindi and the Persianization of Urdu was going on, for example, on the national radio networks, but the language spoken by educated Indians and Pakistanis, Hindustani, a sort of a bridge language between Hindi and Urdu, meant that there was camaraderie among the teachers. They made a conscious effort to stay away from politics. There was some area training on Wednesday afternoons or something, but I can't remember it being of any great significance or depth. We were required to take it as a routine part of our course.

Q: You knew you were going to go to Pakistan?

QUAINTON: I knew I was going to go to Pakistan, so my wife studied Urdu as well, but only on a limited, part-time basis. We now had two children, the second one born just after we left Australia. The Department, then as now, was not very generous in financing language training for spouses, although it was available on a one hour a day basis and she did that. The three students worked very hard at Urdu. We set ourselves very high standards. We were told that you could not get to the 4 level unless you had lived in the country. We set out to challenge that dictum and, in my case, successfully. So, I came out of the course with 4/4 in Urdu. I don't know if it was really a 4/4 but I did have a pretty high level of ability to communicate and read, etc. Alas, that was a level that was not required in Pakistan. It was quite discouraging to discover that the Pakistani governmental elite with whom one dealt all spoke English and did their work in English and did not think in Urdu when it came to their professional work.

I went out as an economic officer. One of the strange anomalies of the Foreign Service is that I was made an economic officer even though I had almost no economics at university. I had taken a course and almost failed it and resolved never to have anything to do with economics again. Now I found myself in my first full-time substantive job doing economic work in Pakistan for three years. First, I worked for a year in Karachi, and then we were the first family transferred to Rawalpindi as part of the embassy move to a new capital at Islamabad. But, using Urdu turned out to be a great challenge and my efforts to use the highly Persianized vocabulary that I had learned at FSI was to no avail. My interlocutors would invariably translate the Urdu word back into English for my benefit.

Q: Our embassy was in Karachi until 1965, is that right?

QUAINTON: Well, it was really in Karachi until later than that. It was there the whole time we were in Pakistan. The ambassador never formally moved up while we were there. It was a big embassy. It is still our consulate general building in Karachi today. The ambassador, Walter McConaughy, was a very distinguished China hand. He had been our last consul general in Shanghai before the war and had a very distinguished career, having been ambassador to a number of countries of which Pakistan was but one. He

struck me as quite aloof, and I must say as a junior officer I didn't have very much to do with him. I occasionally was asked to play tennis. The ambassador was a keen tennis player, as was the Australian High Commissioner and a couple of other senior diplomats, and if they could not make up a foursome they would turn to more junior people in the embassy to join them on a Saturday afternoon at the very beautiful residence that we had in Karachi.

The economic work that I was given to do turned out not to be terribly difficult. It was all descriptive economic writing about particular industries which was something one could quickly learn to do. There were only three officers in the economic section, so it was not an enormous section. There was a counselor and two more junior officers. But, when I moved to Rawalpindi, I was the only economic officer. In fact, there were only seven diplomats in the whole diplomat corps at first - one Canadian, two Brits, and four Americans - a perfect size for a diplomatic corps.

Q: Before we move to Rawalpindi, on the economic side what were the issues?

QUAINTON: Of course agriculture was important. There was an agricultural attaché working on grain production. I don't remember very clearly what I reported on, to be quite honest. There were factories in Karachi but I don't have the recollection of visiting very many factories. When I was in Australia I visited a great many. I didn't mention this but one of the things I did as commercial officer in Sydney was to visit still mills, textile factories, etc. I got a feel for the economy of New South Wales, at least. In Pakistan, there was much less industry. We did cover a certain amount of the external trade. Economic problems with India was also the embassy's responsibility to cover. There was an economic trends report to write and I certainly contributed to that. It is not a period in which I have any strong recollection of the substance of the work, interestingly enough. Karachi was a fairly placid place. There were occasionally incidents around the country when Pakistanis would burn down USIS cultural centers, but we never felt threatened. There was still a substantial European residual elite in Pakistan. There was a Karachi boating club, rowing club, to which I belonged. My wife taught briefly at the American school in Karachi and then was one of the teachers at the Pakistan-American Cultural Center, which was a major USIS program in Pakistan.

Q: You were taking Urdu during the Indian-Chinese war, I believe.

QUAINTON: Yes, I was

Q: Did you have the feeling that the Pakistanis were trying to get us on their side? Was there any push/pull on the Indian/Pakistan problem or were we off to one side?

QUAINTON: Oh, we were always on the Pakistani side, even when we became more interested in supporting India after the Chinese invasion and Ambassador Galbraith's efforts to mobilize American military and other resources to support the Indians. But, the heavy tilt of American policy over the best part of 20 years was in the direction of Pakistan. Pakistanis, under President Ayub, were extremely pro-American. They allowed

us to do things from Pakistani territory, for example. U2s used to take off regularly to surveil the Soviet Union from our base in Peshawar. Gary Powers was launched from Peshawar. There was a strong sense that Pakistanis understood us, supported our Cold War aspirations and did not pretend to be non-aligned.

The Indians always hung on tenaciously to non-alignment as the central construct for their foreign policy and as a result were always at cross purposes with us even when we saw a common interest in limiting Chinese expansion in South Asia. Although Pakistan had a close relationship with the Chinese and sustained that throughout the 1960s, right up until they became the instruments for our own opening to China in 1971, we were not obsessed by it.

I was once asked to give a speech in Karachi to the Rotary Club on American foreign policy, the only speech which I gave in Pakistan on American foreign policy. Thinking of myself as an historian, I talked about the history of American foreign policy which I assumed was non-controversial. Unfortunately in discussing the open door policy I managed to generate a headline on the front page of "Dawn," the local paper, "American Diplomat For Open Door To China." Ambassador McConaughy called me in and asked what I had said. I was well aware that the policy of the United States was a closed door towards communist China. I explained the context and he counseled me to be more judicious in my choice of words in the future.

Q: In this initial entree into the subcontinent, did the Pakistanis have any of the attitude that I've heard about that the Indians and the Americans tend to preach past each other and there isn't much getting together on things? Did you find that at all with the Pakistanis or were they a different breed of cat?

QUAINTON: The Pakistanis almost never lectured us about the wickedness of our ways. They never engaged in the Indian propensity to site 5,000 years of culture as a justification for current policies. Pakistan was only 15 years old, very insecure in its own identity and looking desperately for friends. It was a military government with a president who was really very westernized as were most of his senior generals and most of the senior officials. This meant there was always a kind of openness and transparency in the relationship and this played very well in Washington. The Pakistanis made much of the fact that they were stalwart friends of the United States. If they thought we were wrong they would say so, but that was what friends did. It was always a bit contrived perhaps, but the Pakistanis self-consciously worked for an open and direct relationship, which appealed enormously to Americans. In contrast, we always found the Indians devious and patronizing in ways that drove us absolutely crazy throughout the ensuing years.

Q: What was behind the Rawalpindi move?

QUAINTON: The first stage of the move was to open a very small office in Murree, a hill station behind what was to become Islamabad. Two officers went there in 1960 or 1961. It was 20 miles up to the hill station and access was not very good and not very much of the government had yet moved to Rawalpindi, although Rawalpindi from the

time of independence had been the headquarters of the Pakistan army. It was the major cantonment town in the Punjab and had always had a major status in British India. But, President Ayub moved there and as a military man he felt very comfortable there. Washington decided that Murree was an unsuitable place to deal with a growing official presence in Islamabad, but at that time Islamabad had no residences. All that there was was the foreign ministry and scattered around Rawalpindi some representatives of the economic ministry, so we began to move the embassy first to a small house on the Peshawar road when there were first three, then four, then five American officers. We then moved on to a much larger house which we renovated and made into an embassy. It was really quite a substantial building and the embassy stayed there for a number of years. During my time the DCM and major counselors moved up full time but the ambassador still shuttled back and forth between Karachi and Rawalpindi.

I remember when the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 broke out and the Indians crossed the frontier at Lahore, the ambassador ordered us to review our emergency action plan. It was then only in draft and there was only a single copy. Unfortunately, in our zeal to prepare for the worst, we had burned it. Happily, the war concluded after 13 days, but not before all the women and children had been evacuated from Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar, but not from Karachi. There was great controversy inside the mission. We felt that it was unfair to evacuate some but not all, particularly since the evacuation took place on the 12th day of the war which ended the very next day. Surprisingly, the principal officer, Harry Spielman, decided that representation that went with his job was such that his wife would stay behind and would not be evacuated, to the great anger of other wives in the mission. Ironies of ironies, they were all evacuated to the nearest safehaven, which was Teheran, where they stayed for over three months, returning just before Christmas, 1965.

Q: What are your memories of this war? What did we see as the cause of it? Were you involved in it? What was going on?

QUAINTON: I think there is no doubt that the Pakistanis were highly provocative along the border. There had been a crisis earlier in the year in the Rann of Kuich in the southeastern corner of West Pakistan, and the Pakistanis were certainly testing the Indians all the time along the border. The Indians eventually responded with a major armored incursion into Pakistan with much more force than the Pakistanis had anticipated. The war, itself, brief though it was, was a real war. Rawalpindi was bombed. We all dug trenches in our backyards and had drills. There was a complete blackout throughout the war. Our cars had to be painted with mud so they would not be seen by Indians flying over - everybody's cars, not just those of diplomats. There was a lot of hostility towards the United States, the first real major turn in Pakistan against the United States was when we were accused of not having stood up to Indian aggression against Pakistan. We had been evenhanded, and since, in their view, they were the aggressed party, this policy was for them a pro-Indian policy. There were demonstrations and some direct hostility to American vehicles and people. It was the first time most of our people had experienced that kind of hostility in Pakistan.

Q: You were doing economic work in Rawalpindi?

QUAINTON: Yes, I was doing economic work. I was the only economic officer for the best part of a year. It was a wonderful job because the economic counselor and the second ranking economic officer, who were my two superiors, were over 1,000 miles away. So, I got to make almost all of the routine demarches on financial, commercial, economic subjects at very senior levels in the Pakistan government.

That was an extremely rewarding time for me in professional terms. There was a very good, if small, expatriate community. By 1965, the Russians had arrived, as well as some of the major Europeans. Even so, it was still very much an outpost where one was given broad responsibilities and lots of chance to do things. We were able to travel fairly extensively. I went a couple of times to Azad Kashmir in Pakistani-occupied Kashmir. That was a fascinating opportunity to report on a highly controversial area of the subcontinent. I did a certain amount of reporting on water issues. This was the time when the World Bank was building two of the largest earth-filled dams in the world, the Mangla and Tarbela dams. India and Pakistan had just settled the Indus water dispute. Water was a major subject for reporting and of significant interest in Washington.

Q: Did you pick up any of the feeling that there was a strong rivalry or localitis infection both in Karachi and New Delhi as far as reporting, etc.?

QUAINTON: Oh, I think in Pakistan we felt that the reporting out of India was disgracefully pro-Indian, under Galbraith after the China war and then, of course, under Chester Bowles, with whom I worked in my next assignment. We thought their attempts to portray the Indians as the great hope in Asia was hypocritical and specious. I am not sure it was, by the way, but certainly sitting in Pakistan and looking across the border you certainly got that feeling. And, the two ambassadors in Delhi and Karachi frequently exchanged tart messages criticizing the attitudes of the other. It is not that we didn't see Pakistan's faults, but we also saw the alliance relationship. One should not forget that first the Baghdad Pact and then CENTO were major elements of American foreign policy. Pakistan was our ally while India was non-aligned. At that time, those who were not with us were against us. So, we never understood this enthusiasm for India that radiated from embassy New Delhi, while we were dealing with a staunch and loyal ally throughout. That having been said, I think our reporting of the Indo-Pakistan war, both out of the CIA station and the embassy, recognized a significant degree of Pakistani responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities.

Q: What about the East Pakistan issue? Was that something we saw as a non-viable part of Pakistan? How did we view that then?

QUAINTON: There was always a question about the viability of the country with two widely dispersed wings. One of the big events in this period were national elections. President Ayub was reelected, I believe, in early 1965, running against Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, a wraithlike woman that glided across the political stage. But, Ayub carried out a very skillful campaign in East Pakistan as well as West Pakistan, even though he was seriously challenged by Miss Jinnah. Ayub

was much admired by us for defending family planning, for example, and for making a conscious effort to make sure a significant share of economic resources was deployed to East Pakistan. We did a lot of reporting about how the budget was allocated and resources divided between the two parts of Pakistan. And, indeed, I think, Ayub did all that was within his power to make sure that there was a reasonable allocation of resources. It was never enough, and was never on a per capita basis equal. The Bengalis always got less than the Punjabis or the Sindis did in per capita terms.

We went to East Pakistan only once on R&R, something no one would think of doing today. After the Indo-Pakistan war during after Christmas of 1965, we sailed around the Indian subcontinent on a freighter to East Pakistan, my wife and I with 14 other passengers. We sailed to Chittagong and spent a week or 10 days in East Pakistan traveling around quite a lot. We went up to Dacca. Took the *Rocket*, the famous river boat which goes from Narayangunj down to Khulna. We went up to the Kspysi dam. In short, we got a good feeling for East Pakistan. While Bengal was clearly culturally different from West Pakistan, there was still a strong sense that this was one country. At least it seemed so to us at the time. This was something on which the U.S. government kept its eye, but never thought the situation would flare up to the point of formal dissolution, as it did only five years later.

Q: How did you find mixing with the Pakistanis socially?

QUAINTON: We got to know a substantial number of mid-level officials. They would come to our house and we were entertained by them. There was a certain amount of getting together for tea. This was very much a Pakistani meal event, late afternoon tea. As a junior officer it was appropriate for me to call on senior people at the end of the day, and they would give me a cup of tea and a biscuit and we would talk. There was also a very close-knit, small, foreign community. There were a lot of British, Colombo Plan experts, people who were involved in designing and building the new capital in Islamabad. A great deal of the social life evolved around the expatriate community.

Pakistan was a relatively open place. Pakistani men drank as a rule and the women also drank some, but not a lot. They welcomed social interchange. We belonged to something called the Rawalpindi Club which was the military club in the cantonment. It was a relic of British India. It had all sorts of very nice facilities, tennis courts, squash courts, etc. The big event was "Friday prayers," the gathering of the expatriate community at the bar for gin and bitters at noon on Friday. So, there were two worlds. There was an expatriate world, largely British and still quite colonial in attitude, and a Pakistani world of younger officials and army officers. At that time, almost all of the officers of the Pakistani foreign service had done a year at Tufts, at the Fletcher School. It was part of their training. They were all sent to Tufts from independence until the late fifties. So there was also a group of congenial mid-level officers who knew the United States and were very accessible.

Q: You left in 1966. By the way, was the cranking up of the Vietnam war having any effect on you as far as explaining what we were doing, etc.?

QUAINTON: My only involvement with issues involving the Vietnam war came after my return from India to the India desk in 1969.

I should mention just a little by way of travel history. We went out to Pakistan by ship on the *S.S. Victoria* from Genoa, through the Suez Canal to Karachi. And, we went out to India by ship on the President Line from San Francisco to Hong Kong and then by plane to New Delhi. At that time, it was still possible for Foreign Service officers to travel by ship.

Q: What fun.

QUAINTON: The whole family went and it was a beautiful way to travel. When we first went to Australia we went by air, first class. Even the most junior officer traveled first class at that time. It was still a world of considerable privilege for diplomatic officers. They were an elite and they thought of themselves as elite and they enjoyed privileges that were not readily available to others.

Q: In 1966 whither?

QUAINTON: I was cross-posted from Rawalpindi to New Delhi. We came back to the U.S. and had home leave on the West coast and went out in the autumn of 1966 arriving in New Delhi in early December. You could take a long home leave then. I took two and a half months, then three weeks on the boat and still had a week's overlap with my predecessor, Jane Abel, who subsequently became our ambassador to Bangladesh. So, there weren't the time pressures then as now.

Q: You were in India from 1966 until when?

QUAINTON: Until the summer of 1969.

Q: Since these two posts have been a little like cats and dogs, could you tell me what your impression was of the embassy when you first got there?

QUAINTON: Chester Bowles abolished the political and economic sections in his embassy and redealt the cards to create an external section and an internal section. There was a counselor external and a counselor internal and a minister political/economic who was beneath the DCM but above the counselors. I was assigned to a position in the external section covering India's relationship with its neighbors. Now, this was essentially India's relationship with Pakistan, about which I knew something from my previous assignment, but also India's relationship with Nepal, Sri Lanka, etc. I covered not only India's political relationships but also economic relationships. Everybody in the external section did both political and economic work just as everyone in the internal section, whether they were previously economic officers or political officers, were expected to do both. So every economic officer had to do political reporting on at least one state of the Indian union and every political officer had to report on at least one industry or sector. An interesting way to divide up the embassy. It had many, many

beneficial effects in terms of people breaking out of some rather narrow boxes. In any case, I arrived as the Pakistan expert and consequently was regarded with some suspicion by Chester Bowles.

Q: Okay, let's talk about the job a bit more before we move on to other things. What was the general feeling within the embassy?

QUAINTON: The embassy was made up of the most talented group of officers that I served with over my entire 38 year career. It is not clear to me how they were all assembled, but both in the external and internal sections and in the CIA station there were a series of officers almost all of whom went on to quite remarkable careers. Many of the Foreign Service officers became ambassadors. They had remarkable careers and they were a very dynamic team of individuals. Indeed, one of them is now returning to India as ambassador, Dick Celeste, who went on to be governor of Ohio. He was one of the special assistants that Chester Bowles brought out. Bowles brought out some young non-career men whom he had heard about or knew, and he also surrounded himself with a very talented group of Foreign Service officers. I was never part of Bowles' inner circle. I think he regarded me with some suspicion as having come from the enemy. In the course of almost three years, I only set foot into his office twice, which is not very often for a third tour officer.

Q: For a third tour officer dealing with political matters you would expect to have a few more encounters I would think.

QUAINTON: He was very open, however, at the personal level. He cared about junior officers a great deal and had a series of small dinners at his house for junior officers and their wives where they got a chance to talk. He, of course, had such an extraordinary political career, himself, coming to New Delhi for the second time after having been under secretary of state. He was a man of extraordinary vision who passionately loved India. He genuinely believed that India was the hope for democracy in Asia and in contrast to the communist Chinese. He felt India was a country on which we should put all of our chips and he never could understand why Washington would want to put any chips on a military dictatorship such as that across the border in Pakistan. He inspired the embassy with his enthusiasm for India. It was not just a political enthusiasm but also a cultural enthusiasm. Mrs. Bowles wore a sari almost all the time, and quite a lot of the wives in the embassy also wore saris. The identification with India was extraordinary.

We were all encouraged to travel. There were a fair number of good language officers in both the external and internal sections who spoke Hindi and/or Urdu. The Bowles' were plugged into the cultural life of the country. There were Indian cultural events at the residence or Indian public monuments around New Delhi to which guests were invited. There was a real sense of excitement about India. Every new arrival in the embassy was to attend a week-long orientation course which promoted India, Indian culture and religion. It was far better than anything FSI did in terms of giving one an understanding for the culture. The result was that people with very few exceptions loved India, loved working in the embassy, and felt that they were making a difference. This was almost

entirely a result Bowles' leadership.

Unfortunately, I think, he did not have a lot of credibility in Washington or in the Indian foreign ministry. He was perceived as being a useful tool by the Indian government: their ambassador to Washington as much as our ambassador to them. Washington, I think, had the same perception. I can still remember at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Bowles immediately went to see the prime minister, Indira Gandhi, to lecture her on the importance of India's speaking out against the invasion. Shortly after, the ambassador returned from her office, the Indian foreign secretary called the DCM and wanted to know if the ambassador was speaking under instructions or not. Well, if they call up to find out, you know that they don't know when their "great friend" is speaking and when the United States government is speaking. I think there was always that question. Bowles could be quite tough with the Indians because he believed so much that they must take the right course in order to give the leadership of which their democracy was capable. The Indians were smart enough to know that he had been sent to India to get him out of Washington...

Q: This is very much the feeling that he represented a burr under the Johnson saddle.

QUAINTON: That's right, so he was moved out. He was already beginning to raise questions about the Vietnam war, etc. There was, I think, a sense within the embassy among some officers that he would go too far in pushing his views. We were inspected in New Delhi, and I was asked to give a dinner for the inspectors with mid-level officers invited. So, we invited eight or 10 mid-level officers from the external and internal sections. The inspectors asked, as they usually do, about morale and other things. At one point they asked what were the officers' impressions of Chester Bowles. One of the internal officers said, "Well, he is a wonderful man, but he is cooking the books." The inspector asked him to explain that. "Well, let me give you an example. We are trying to promote the green revolution..."

Q: Explain what the green revolution was.

QUAINTON: The major effort that AID was making at this time was to promote an agricultural revolution in major third world countries by the introduction of new grains and the encouragement of the use of inputs, fertilizer, water, advanced seeds. The goal was to raise production so that countries like India and Pakistan would be self-sufficient and not dependent on the outside world for food. In any event, the criticism of this particular officer was that in order to get USAID resources, the Indians were required to commit to massive development of their fertilizing industry. This officer said the Indian commitment was completely spurious. The Indians promised to produce by 1972, or whatever the date was, an enormous quantities of urea, and there was no possibility of that happening, in this officer's view. But, he asserted, the ambassador knew that what the Indians were promising was unachievable, but nonetheless told Washington the targets would (be met). His goal was insure the continued flow of AID resources. Well, that kind of mistrust, the overstating of the case, was the darker side of Bowles' enormous enthusiasm for India.

Q: What about you? You have been in the Foreign Service long enough to have some feel for things, what was your feeling?

QUAINTON: I was quite captivated by India. Having been in Pakistan helped because I was already accustomed to much of the culture, much of the way of organizing one's life with servants, etc. and the language was familiar. Many of the problems were also familiar, as I had worked on them from the other side. So, it was an easy transition into a country which we found endlessly fascinating culturally, politically, historically. The history of the Raj had always captivated my imagination. The culture of the country went back 5,000 years. One was surrounded by Mogul India, British India, Independent India.

My wife and I traveled to all corners of India while we were there. We found middle class Indians, with whom we interacted, fascinating and wonderful people to know, and we have retained a number of close friends over the years. We had our fourth child while in India (One of our children died in Pakistan while we were there in a tragic domestic accident.), so my wife was much engaged with our youngest daughter. But, she also wrote a literary column for a magazine called *The Weekend Review*, edited by a young journalist, Sarwar Lateef. There was a very much more open intellectual environment than in Pakistan. The Pakistanis were open in a social sense, but there wasn't nearly the same dynamism that you found in Indian intellectual circles. In New Delhi, there was an enormous range of newspapers, magazines, artistic programs, etc. which made Delhi a fascinating place in which to live and work. We had almost three years there before coming back to the India desk in the Department.

Q: How did you find dealing with Indian officials as opposed to say dealing with Pakistani officials? Did you find a different breed of cat?

QUAINTON: Indians officials were always less direct. At least for me, they were always pretty accessible. We rarely got a straight yes or no answer on things about which we were seeking their support. The whole stance of their foreign policy was critical of America: critical of our support for Pakistan and of our arming of the Pakistanis, of our policy in Vietnam, and of the Cold War stance adopted by the United States. So, there was always an edge to any dialogue with an Indian official because of their perception of the wrong headedness of American policy. It was not as easy, therefore, to deal with Indian officials as it was with the Pakistanis. Officials of the foreign ministry are a very self-conscious elite, very impressive people, but very status conscious. There was an occasion when we were invited to a dinner given by the external counselor, Galen Stone, who subsequently became our ambassador to Cyprus, at which a group of senior officials were invited with their wives. The most senior official, who eventually became foreign secretary of India some 15 years later, went around the table to see how the place cards had been distributed and moved himself to the right hand of the hostess because he had not been appropriately placed. He was by some months senior in service to one of the other joint secretaries that had been invited. It was quite clear that he was not going to let the hostess make a mistake about seniority. I think this attitude, this enormous sense they had of where they stood in their hierarchal system, was always a frustration in dealing

with the Indians.

Q: What about the attitude of those Indians you were dealing with towards the Soviet Union? The Indians often seemed to take a much more benevolent and tolerant view of the Soviets than we did.

QUAINTON: India's relations with the Soviet Union had many facets. The Soviets were prepared to provide India weapons systems which we were not. They were able to demonstrate their friendship in tangible ways which were important to the Indians. I think a lot of Indians thought that the Soviets were being constantly provoked by the Americans in the context of the Cold War. The Indians never thought much of communism but they certainly had a strong view about decolonization, and the Soviet Union was on their side. We were always much less strident in speaking out against colonialism and imperialism. The Indians had lived through both and this fact was absolutely central to their sense of who they were. They saw themselves as the leader of the process of change in the third world. The Soviet Union spoke the same language for their own reasons and that made for a relationship with Moscow which had an emotional dimension that could never be achieved with the United States, even though we, in other respects, shared many of the same objectives. We were always more nuanced in how we expressed our objectives, and, of course, we were supporting Pakistan.

Q: Did Vietnam intrude much as far as your work went?

QUAINTON: It didn't intrude at all. There was another officer in the embassy who handled Asia and it certainly wasn't a subject on which I spent any time at all. I really focused on India's relations with Pakistan and Nepal. I did have an opportunity to go on the first official delegation to Timphu, the capital of Bhutan. It was part of my reporting responsibilities and it was decided in 1967 that we should make an official visit. Ambassador Galbraith had crossed the border into Bhutanese territory but had not gone to any cities. The external counselor (Galen Stone) and I and the consul from Calcutta all traveled to Bhutan in 1967 and again in 1969. It was a small moment in history, the opening of U.S. relations with this very, very isolated little country. I still remember the counselor cashing the first traveler's cheque in the history of Bhutan. Calling on the finance minister in his office in a palace in the center of Timphu, the counselor asked how he could cash a traveler's cheque. The finance minister got a tin box the size of your tape recorder out of his desk and asked, "How much do you want?" It was a country with no banks. It was a historic moment. It was a lovely country with wonderful people, but very much under the influence of India. The Indian rupee was the legal currency at the time and everything operated within parameters set by the Indians.

Q: In this period of time, 1966-69, you were watching Indo-Pak relations. Were there any developments? Were we trying to play any role?

QUAINTON: I don't remember major negotiating issues. Kashmir, of course, was the central issue, always the central issue. Kashmir and the arms relationship were the subjects most frequently discussed. We never made any significant effort to resolve the

Kashmir dispute. I think the embassy in New Delhi accepted the Indian position that Kashmir was an integral part of India and that it should stay so because to have further partition along religious lines would be divisive of the secular democracy which the Indians stood for. So, we were not well placed to be intermediaries between India and Pakistan concerning Kashmir.

Q: Well, having visited Kashmir from the other side, what was your feeling towards the rights and wrongs of what is known as the Kashmir dispute?

QUAINTON: Fundamentally, I believed that the Indians were in the wrong on this. It was evident that Kashmir was largely Muslim and if given a choice would choose either independence or accession to Pakistan, and in the 1960s, probably the latter. The Kashmiris felt no great loyalty to either secular or Hindu India as represented by New Delhi. I accepted the Indian view that it was by sleight of hand that the Indians arranged the accession of Kashmir to the Indian union shortly after independence. In any event, the reality was that the Indians were there and clearly had no intention of leaving. The whole rationale of their modern secular state rested on their ability to demonstrate that Hindus, Muslims and others could live together within a common framework. That was not a subject on which there was then or now any possibility of compromise on the Indian side.

Q: Did you think that Bowles bought the Indian position?

QUAINTON: Most people in the embassy saw the injustice of India's trying to hang on to the Muslim population of Kashmir even though they would have liked to have gone elsewhere. On the other hand, we saw the force of the Indian argument for the preservation of the Indian union. Most people in the embassy were not directly engaged on this subject. It was a compartmentalized kind of embassy and everyone had a great deal of positive work to do. Kashmir was entirely secondary. Remember, in 1965-66, U.S. aid to India was over a billion dollars. Our programs were so big and our engagement with India so extensive that as long as they weren't fighting the Pakistanis, we were content to get on with our business.

Q: You were on the India desk from when to when?

QUAINTON: I began on the India desk in late 1969 and stayed there for three years until going to Paris in the summer of 1972. The first year I spent as the junior political officer responsible for Indian affairs. After a year, I moved up to be the senior of two political officers in the office of India, Nepal, and Ceylonese Affairs.

Q: What were your responsibilities when you first arrived?

QUAINTON: The office actually had four India desk officers, two economic and two political, as well as officers who handled Nepal and Sri Lanka. So it was quite a sizeable staff. Having just come from New Delhi I spent a good deal of time on India-Pakistan relations. There was always a constant need for briefing papers to go up to the deputy assistant secretary and the assistant secretary, Joe Sisco at the time. There was the

notetaking at meetings when the Indian ambassador would come or be summoned for a demarche of some kind. The ambassador or Indian DCM were the only two senior Indian officials who regularly came into the Department. I was a notetaker at a variety of levels, right up to the Secretary, although more typically it was with Mr. Sisco or the deputy assistant secretary.

Q: Coming from New Delhi where your universe revolved around India and Pakistan, where did you find interest in India in the Department? Did you see a difference?

QUAINTON: Well, in Washington it was fairly clear that India was not terribly popular. Notwithstanding the efforts that Chester Bowles had made to portray India to a Washington audience as the great democracy of Asia that deserved almost unreserved U.S. support, the India-Soviet relationship constantly reared its ugly head. Since our foreign policy was largely a zero sum foreign policy at the time and remained so for years thereafter, to the degree the Soviets were perceived as having an important foothold in India, we were perceived to have thereby lost in some significant degree. So there was a constant battle within the Washington community about the extent to which we should sustain our support for India, our extensive economic and our limited military assistance. There was always a strong Pakistan lobby because of the close Pakistan-U.S. relationship that lasted right through the entire time that I was on the India desk.

Clearly the three years that I spent there became increasingly difficult in political terms. The Indo-Pakistan crisis of 1971, which resulted in the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan, was a traumatic event, as was the tilt of Dr. Kissinger towards Pakistan, and the behind scenes efforts to establish a relationship with China through Pakistan. This negotiation with China was entirely unknown to us on the India desk throughout the crisis period, or at least until the time of Dr. Kissinger's actual visit to Beijing passing through Pakistan. On the India desk, we just couldn't understand why the U.S. was not speaking out against Pakistani actions in East Pakistan.

The 1971 crisis had been building throughout 1970 with the Pakistan elections, which Bhutto did not allow to be won by the Bangladesh leader, Sheik Mujibur Rahman. We were constantly surprised at the lack of criticism of Pakistan for the suppression of the results of the elections, particularly given our commitment to democracy, our interests in the area, and our support for Indian democracy. Instead, criticism of India became increasingly strident throughout the course of 1971 and on into 1972 for what Indian was seen to have done to bring about the dismemberment of an ally of the United States. Pakistan, as you will remember, was still a member of CENTO at the time. Indian policy played very badly in the Washington environment of the time and when Mrs. Gandhi came to the White House in the summer of 1971, she was received very coolly, even though she appealed for American understanding of the enormous burden India was carrying as a result of Bengali refugees into India.

Q: You mention the Pakistan lobby. The Indian leadership are very sophisticated people and I would think that they would know how to play the Washington lobby game.

QUAINTON: The Indians were never successful in playing our political system well. Nor were they successful in playing the American public very well. They fretted, chafed enormously under the constant bad publicity which they received focused on the poverty of the Indian masses, the alleged abuses of the Indian maharaja class, the complaints about the India-Soviet relationship, and their willingness to acquire advanced weapons systems, mainly MIGs and other advanced aircraft from the Soviet Union, and the constant drum beat of criticism of non-alignment. The Indians were inordinately proud of non-alignment. It had been Nehru's vision of the world which Mrs. Gandhi continued throughout her tenure as prime minister. India wanted to stand above the Cold War and in so doing tried to maintain a balanced relationship with the two super powers. But, in fact, we saw this attempt at balance as a tilt towards the Soviet Union. We didn't accept the concept of parity between the superpowers. The White House, i.e., Kissinger, believed those who were not with us were almost by definition against us. Kissinger saw India as a Soviet surrogate over which we could have very little influence. So, although the Indians tried very hard with a small section of the Congress to build a pro-Indian constituency, they were never successful. They made their case worse because of their constantly complaining about our relationship with Pakistan. Nothing we could do in Pakistan suited the Indians. Every weapon system, every spare part we provided was seen as aimed at them, and they constantly berated us for a policy of supporting an authoritarian military regime, which was hostile to India, when in New Delhi's view, we ought to be supporting a democratic regime in India.

Q: Did you find in India's non-aligned stance in this period a lot of criticism of the United States but not of the Soviet Union, which when you get right down to it was a rather nasty, brutish empire?

QUAINTON: There is no doubt that India's criticism of the Soviet Union was always extremely nuanced. They took it for granted that we would appreciate their democracy, since they were a democracy and we were a democracy we were on the same side, and consequently they didn't need to posture and play up to us. They never saw it as being in their interest to criticize the authoritarian regime of the Soviet Union. We were never comfortable with that posture. We always wanted to hear words of support, praise and encouragement for ourselves, and the Indians were reluctant to praise us. Rather, they were quick to criticize faults in our society, but not in that of the Soviet Union, as they eventually found faults in our foreign policy, particularly our policy in Vietnam, which they saw as a legitimate struggle for national liberation by the Vietnamese people, which we in the eyes of many Indians were brutally trying to suppress. So, they always gave the Soviet Union the benefit of the doubt, although Mrs. Gandhi did speak out strongly at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Q: In your contacts with people in the Indian embassy did they seem concerned about the fact that our two nations weren't really able to reach common understandings?

QUAINTON: Well, they were concerned because they saw the lack of rapport leading to a tilt towards Pakistan. They never understood our relationship with Pakistan. They refused willfully to understand it. They had already fought a couple of wars with

Pakistan. It was not surprising that there was a certain level of paranoia, and they had fought a war with the Chinese, who were closely allied with the Pakistanis, so from an Indian point of view, American policy seemed quite hostile. We were never willing to help them in substantial military ways, although we continued throughout this period to provide enormous amounts of food aid and economic assistance, but that aid never in their minds balanced out our failure to support their strategic interests. Dr. Kissinger's view, reenforced by the Bangladesh war in 1971-72, that India had hegemonic desires in the region that the United States ought to oppose Indian strategic interests at the same time we praised India for its democracy. We also found the Indian economic system much more like the Soviet system and constantly criticized it. Of course, there were enormous differences between India and the Soviet Union, but there was a strong statist tradition in India, major industries were in the hands of the state, and the rhetoric of the Congress Party was socialistic. All of this we found objectionable. So there were all sorts of grounds for our concerns about India, as they had found grounds for their concerns about us. It was, in short, a very unhappy time.

The most unhappy moment during this time was Mrs. Gandhi's official visit to Washington in the late summer of 1971 as we strove to pull the Indians back from their confrontation with Pakistan which had been building up over the summer as a result of the flood of Pakistani refugees into India. We believed that the Indians were stimulating the flow of refugees in order to create a pretext for an invasion. That view, I think, was the view of Dr. Kissinger, but it was not the view of the India desk, which took much more seriously the legitimacy of the problems that India faced from more than 100,000 refugees. India had a real interest of stanching the flow of refugees. But that was not the view seen at the top of the national security system. Indeed, there were serious divisions of view throughout 1971 about Indian policy and the extent to which we should acknowledge the legitimacy of the Indian problems. We at the State Department did not know that Dr. Kissinger was engaged throughout much of this period in building a secret relationship with the Chinese relying on the Pakistanis. He regarded that initiative as a transcendent U.S. national interest, much more important than any short term relationship with India. I believed very passionately that our policy was wrong and wrote a number of dissent channel memos at the time criticizing the thrust of our policy towards the subcontinent and the tilt towards Pakistan, particularly at the time of war between India and Pakistan.

Q: Did you feel at the time that you were on the desk that our relationship with India and Pakistan was being orchestrated from the national security council and Dr. Kissinger?

QUAINTON: To a considerable extent in the Indo-Pakistan crisis, Dr. Kissinger called the shots from the White House. I think it is also fair to say that although the State Department had a more nuanced view of what was going on, Joe Sisco disliked the Indians intensely. He was a man who could not stand to be patronized and the Indians were marvelous patronizers of American officials, always treating them as though they were slightly dim-witted when it came to understanding the true realities of the world in which we lived. This was a constant underlying irritant in conversations with the Indians. The tendency that they had, and still have to some degree, of preaching about the

tradition of Indian civilization, 5000 years against our cheeky 200. This constant Indian desire to put us down, perhaps arising from their own insecurity, cultural and otherwise, always made any dialogue with the Indians extremely difficult. We always saw them as posturing in ways that were not very agreeable.

In the Department there was not nearly the same enthusiasm for the Pakistani regime of Yahya Khan that was found in the White House. But, then the State Department was cut out, except at the very highest levels, from Dr. Kissinger's clandestine diplomatic efforts.

Q: What was causing the influx of refugees coming from what was then East Pakistan into Bengal?

QUAINTON: I think there was no question that a substantial part was the direct product of a very brutal regime of the East Pakistan military governor. Indian propaganda efforts may have encouraged that flow or at least made people more fearful of their lives and more disposed to flee. The migrants were almost exclusively Hindus. But the conditions in East Pakistan were really pretty difficult. There was a lot of internal fighting and reprisals against the Hindu population which led them to flee a truly oppressive and abusive Pakistani military government. This all has to be put against the background of the extraordinary migrations of only 25 years before in which millions of Indian Muslims and Hindus fled across the border mainly in the Punjab in the west but also across the border in Bengal.

Q: You were saying that elements in our government thought that the Indians were encouraging this refugee flow. Where was that coming from?

QUAINTON: I am not sure I can tell you the answer to that. Intelligence played an important role throughout the crisis. I think embassy reporting, our reading of the Indian press, and what we learned through our intelligence sources suggested that the Indians were not entirely unhappy that there was such a large refugee flow. Certainly at the time of the actual war and the despatch by us of the *Enterprise* to the Bay of Bengal it was Dr. Kissinger's very strong belief on the basis of the intelligence that he had seen that India was prepared to march into West Pakistan with a view of breaking up the West Pakistan state as it had already succeeded in breaking up a united Pakistan. I think those of us who saw the same intelligence felt it could be read in different ways, that contingency planning did not necessarily indicate intent, but that was a debate which was not joined until the United States was already committed to a particular policy with regard to the Indo-Pakistan conflict.

Q: So, the Dr. Kissinger school felt from its intelligence readings that India was planning to absorb East Pakistan, is that right?

QUAINTON: No, we were fearful that India was going to dismember West Pakistan. Certainly the Pakistanis fed us a great deal of information to that effect. There was close intelligence cooperation with the Pakistanis, and they were quick to report the machinations of Indian embassy officers. There was a large new Indian consulate general

in Dacca, and this fanned the fears in Washington that the Indians had entirely nefarious intentions when it came to the existence of Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger and other believed that it was their desire to disable the Pakistani state permanently so that it would not pose any future threat. I don't think the Indians had such grandiose plans, but the Pakistanis certainly feared the Indians and used those fears to play on our own dislike of Indian policies in other areas.

Q: Was this a policy issue that was being fought within the Near Eastern bureau by various people within the bureau?

QUAINTON: There were differences of view in the Near Eastern bureau, particularly in the South Asian part which was composed of the two offices of Indian affairs and Pakistan affairs. There only other players were the assistant secretary, Joe Sisco, and the deputy assistant secretary, Chris Van Hollen. There was certainly a fair amount of difference of view between the two office directors and their staffs, although less than in the field where the two embassies became very passionate defenders of their respective governments throughout this crisis. The ambassador in Pakistan, Joseph Farland, a political appointee, was a strong believer in the good intentions, in the word of honor of Yahya Khan.

Q: Was it at that point that Arch Blood, who was the consul general in Dacca, was taking a different approach?

QUAINTON: That's right. He certainly described to Washington the brutality of the West Pakistani military in East Pakistan, and he documented it well. He urged on Washington a strong policy critical of the Islamabad regime, a policy which was not at all popular at the time.

Q: How did this play? Within the Department of State, if you have a professional consul general who is making a case which was not fabricated, there was a nasty Pakistan government regime there, and you have a political ambassador in Islamabad which would tend to make him somewhat suspect as an objective reporter, I would think that the professional ranks would tilt in the favor of India.

QUAINTON: I think the professional ranks did tilt in favor of India. Even so, Blood was perceived as being too emotionally engaged, and the image of dispassionate analysis, which the Foreign Service cultivates was not served by his strongly expressed views. I think he was conveying accurately the reality that we were dealing with, but his passion reached a level which led Dr. Kissinger to discount the reporting from East Pakistan as an extreme case of localitis and Arch Blood as somebody who couldn't see the larger picture, the totality of U.S. security interests. Of course, the China dimension was just as unknown to Arch Blood as it was to us on the desk.

Q: How did Mrs. Gandhi's visit turn out?

QUAINTON: The visit went extremely badly in substantive terms. Mrs. Gandhi was very

feisty, very critical of the United States' tacit support for Pakistan. She denied any intention of using military action against West Pakistan but certainly didn't rule out the use of force in East Pakistan, notwithstanding our strong urging that she exercise restraint. She did not see us as willing to play a constructive role with Pakistan in stopping the flow of refugees or doing things that met India's immediate economic or political interests. We saw her as someone who had made up her mind to go after Pakistan. There really wasn't a very effective dialogue between the two governments at the time, although on the surface the visit seemed to have gone quite well, culminating in a formal state dinner at the White House.

Q: Was this a full state dinner?

QUAINTON: No, this was an official visit. But it was done with some style and the President gave a dinner in her honor.

Q: But, this was set up especially to try to work on this problem?

QUAINTON: Yes, she was invited to come.

Q: Did you get involved in the visit?

QUAINTON: Oh, we were deeply involved in the preparation of papers for the visit. Whether they were used or not one never knew. Certainly no one at the desk level sat in on the meetings. I think the country director was involved, Dave Schneider.

Q: On the India side of things did you find yourself having trouble dealing with Joe Sisco?

QUAINTON: No, actually Sisco was an officer who liked plain talk. He certainly was capable of it himself. He didn't try to suppress dissenting views within his own bureau. How far he reflected them above him I can't say. He did not, himself, have an entirely happy relationship with Dr. Kissinger. I think Dr. Kissinger saw him as one of the few State Department officers capable of independently managing an area of foreign policy. Joe Sisco didn't ask for a whole lot of advice from those above him. I still remember a meeting in the Situation Room at the White House called to discuss the Pakistan crisis. I was there as a Department notetaker. The meeting began not discussing South Asia but a problem of which I had no knowledge, dealing with the Egyptians. Sisco on his own authority had cabled the ambassador instructing him to see the president of Egypt on some matter or other. Dr. Kissinger came into the meeting and said, "Before we start talking about South Asia, I would like to comment on Egypt. Joe, I saw your cable which unfortunately was not cleared by the White House. I want to remind you of one thing. In this government we sing as a chorus, there are no solo voices." The great solo voice, himself, speaking. So, there was a fair amount of stress between Kissinger and Sisco, more in personal terms than in policy terms, but it ultimately spilled over, I think, into the policy arena.

Q: The Indians sent troops into East Pakistan?

QUAINTON: They did indeed.

Q: How did we react to this?

QUAINTON: We put tremendous pressure on the Indians to stop their advances. It was all over within a matter of days. East Pakistan fell, Bangladesh was proclaimed and then our efforts were to get the Indians out as quickly as possible. It was clear to us that there was no possibility of recreating a united Pakistan, although we didn't recognize Bangladesh for some time. I forget the exact timing. Our primary goal then was to get the Indians out as quickly as possible.

Q: Did we see Mrs. Gandhi, the prime minister, as somebody who was going to be around for a long time? Were we looking for more friendly people?

QUAINTON: Historically, we had always looked for sympathetic voices in the Congress Party. We assumed Mrs. Gandhi was firmly rooted, but it had been a constant effort, I believe, of some elements of the U.S. government to try to support less radical elements in the Congress Party than those represented by Nehru and then by Mrs. Gandhi. One of the great shadows over her visit was the fact that she had learned some time before the visit of covert operations against her father during the 1950s and felt that this was indicative of the real intentions of the United States government towards her and the Congress Party of which she was the leader.

Q: How did this come out that we were doing something against her father?

QUAINTON: Well, I think she learned of politicians who had been his opponents had been helped by the United States government in a variety of ways, financial and otherwise, which she thought was entirely improper. I never knew the details. Clearly these were not things publicly discussed. She certainly believed we had acted in this way, but whether or not we did is not a matter of public record.

Q: During this 1969-72 period was there any way that you on the desk were thinking about other ways to make the Indo-Pakistan situation better?

QUAINTON: To be quite honest, we were consumed by the Indo-Pakistan crisis much of this period. We were trying to stop the inexorable march of events towards war and then we were concerned to pick up the pieces after the war. There wasn't a lot of time to say, "How can we promote better relations with India?" The Indian relationship was truly multifaceted. USIA had an enormous exchange program, big cultural centers all over India which were very active. There was a very large pro-India group in the United States, mainly in the universities, but which had very little political influence on either the congress or the White House. Those contacts continued. But there was a kind of suspicion in political circles of people who loved India. There was a constant effort to keep the traditional programs going, and I think by and large they were kept going. AID

began to fall off, but it was still very substantial throughout this period notwithstanding our political differences.

Q: Were you aware of the sending of the aircraft carrier, Enterprise, up into the Gulf of India?

QUAINTON: This was a decision taken by the Washington Special Action Group, which no longer exists, but was in fact a committee of the national security council under Dr. Kissinger's chairmanship. The dispatch of the carrier was designed to intimidate the Indians. We never had any intention of taking military action against India. But it was certainly seen by the Indians as enormously menacing to send an aircraft carrier into their backyard. It was part of the strategy to keep pressure on the Indians to get out of Bangladesh or limit their involvement.

Q: It may have signaled something, but as a practical measure, an aircraft carrier sailing up and down the coast of India made no sense at all militarily. I was told some Indians in the higher reaches were saying, "Well, we are happy to have it call at any port." It obviously couldn't do anything.

QUAINTON: I think that is right. But, this it was a kind of gunboat diplomacy designed to demonstrate the reach of American power against India. It was not a peacekeeping effort in the region. It could only be interpreted by the Indians as being somewhat menacing. The Indians weren't capable of saying, "It doesn't really matter. They can threaten us all they like but they can't do anything." They took the *Enterprise* as a serious projection of U.S. intentions.

Q: Were we ever looking at our CENTO treaty to see if this applied or not?

QUAINTON: My memory fades on this. This was a major issue in the 1965 war between India and Pakistan. The Pakistanis asserted we were obligated under CENTO to its defense if attacked by India. Both we and the Pakistanis did a great deal of textual analysis trying to figure out what was the intent of the CENTO treaty. The most common U.S. view, although we never wanted to say this explicitly, was that this was exclusively an anti-Soviet treaty and our commitment to come to Pakistan's aid was only if the Soviets came down through the Khyber Pass through Afghanistan and on to the Indian plains. But the language is not that clear. It doesn't say that. It certainly implied a broader commitment, and the Pakistanis continually tried to engage us in honoring our commitment in light of the treaty.

Q: Were the Soviets making any moves during this time that came to your attention?

QUAINTON: I'm sure they did. The Soviets were quite stridently critical of Pakistan in this period. The Soviets, first of all, did not like the U.S.-Pakistani relationship and the fact that the Pakistanis had made available facilities for intelligence gathering against the Soviet Union. They didn't like the fact that the Pakistanis were cozying up to the Chinese. And the longstanding Indo-Soviet relationship led the Soviets to take a very pro-

Indian position throughout this crisis.

Q: The person on the desk can become almost too identified with one side or another in country disputes; within the Department did this cause you a problem or not?

QUAINTON: We tried very hard in NEA to work as a team. The two offices shared everything. We saw each other's traffic and demarches, etc. Inevitably, there was a slightly greater sympathy for Pakistan on the Pakistan desk and for India on the India desk. But, my recollection of the papers produced for the Gandhi visit was that we didn't have great difficulty clearing each others papers. The facts of what was going on were generally understood and agreed on by the Foreign Service officers involved. What we should do about them and the extent to which we were likely to succeed by leaning on the Pakistani or the Indian governments varied at different levels of the Department.

Q: In 1972 you left this very contentious area. Whither?

QUAINTON: In 1971, the desk job being a two year assignment, I had looked at the possibility of moving to another assignment in the Department. I was offered a position on the Soviet desk as the head of the internal political unit in a very layered and complex office, which was SOV at that time, with the promise that after a year I would go to Moscow as the number two in the internal political unit. This looked to be quite a few layers down in the Moscow pecking order, and I eventually turned the job down in order to stay another year on the India desk. Of course, it turned out to be an extraordinarily exciting period there.

Q: There is nothing like a good war in the Foreign Service to stir the blood, is there?

QUAINTON: That's right. Joe Sisco had in his pocket a job which was the African/Near East job in the embassy in Paris. The tradition had grown up over the previous decade or so that every other incumbent would be appointed by the assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, the alternate appointments would be made by the assistant secretary for African affairs. It was Sisco's turn to choose, and he called me up and said, "As a reward for three years in the trenches, how would you like to go to Paris?" Being his man in Paris seemed like a wonderful idea. I had French. We went off to Paris expecting to stay for four years. I was in the huge political section of 15 officers of whom 8 or 9 were doing external political work. We were all divided up by geographic regions and there was a political counselor in charge of it all. I had the NEA/AF portfolio dealing with the French government.

Q: You were there from 1972 to when?

QUAINTON: To 1973. I was there for just a year because in the summer of 1973 Bill Cargo, who had been the DCM in Pakistan when I was in the economic section, was appointed ambassador to Nepal and he asked me if I would consider being his deputy chief of mission.

Q: Before we go to Nepal, let's talk about Paris. How did this 15 officer political section in Paris dealing with all these different geographic areas work?

QUAINTON: The mega embassies, London and Paris, were structured similarly with very large sections. It was assumed that the French and the British still retained global interests. Indeed, the French at that period had as many embassies as we did around the world and certainly played a very important role in Francophone Africa, even in the Middle East, where they had historical relationships with Syria, Lebanon and elsewhere. They were important players. We cared about what the French were doing. We also cared about what they were doing in Southeast Asia. We cared what they were doing in political military terms with respect to NATO. A lot of officers were interested in internal politics. There were half a dozen of us doing full time external work. There was nothing going on in the world that we didn't want to know what the French thought. So, the job was essentially one of going back and forth to the Quai d'Orsay inquiring about French policy in Gabon or Lebanon or whatever, in places where we had interests that intersected with the French. Keeping in touch with the French African and Middle East establishments, journalists, academics, etc., I also stayed in touch with the Elysee, because the French presidency had a separate department dealing with Africa under a man called Foccart, who over the previous 20 years had managed intelligence throughout French Africa.

So, it was an exciting job because it brought one in touch not only with professional diplomats in the French foreign ministry but with the Presidency, leading French newspapers, and academics. So, for a mid-level first secretary, it was pretty interesting. There was a lot of reporting to be done. I was quite autonomous. My job was clearly defined. The political counselor, Alan Holmes, was interested in what I did, but he was not a micromanager, so each member of the section had a great deal of latitude in defining his own turf based on instructions from Washington, requests for demarches, need for reports, etc. It was a very traditional Foreign Service job in a very large embassy with lots of other agencies represented. Both the political and economic sections in Paris had an importance which does not always exist in smaller embassies. It was a challenge. The greatest challenge of working in Paris is the French. Like the Indians, they have an extraordinary capacity to patronize the United States.

Q: I was thinking that of any two countries those two would be the most patronizing.

QUAINTON: And, there was always the problem of language. I think there is no doubt that of all the places that I served, the ability to communicate in the local language was the most difficult in Paris. The French did not want to talk to anyone in English, although many of the leading figures could and sometimes would with the ambassador. The ambassador for most of this period was John Irwin, who had been deputy secretary of state, and succeeded Arthur Watson, who had been head of IBM and got caught pinching a stewardess on an airplane and was removed. Watson spoke good French, but Jack Irwin did not speak French and was constantly being put down by senior levels of the French government. I still remember going with the ambassador to discuss some important Middle East question with the secretary general of the Quai d'Orsay, Geffroy de

Courcelles. He was an extraordinary French diplomat, having served as ambassador in London. He had been educated in England and spoke perfect English with the fruitiest of Oxford accents. Irwin made the demarche he was supposed to make and de Courcelles looked at him and said in his very British voice, "Mr. Ambassador, I regret to say that I regard the policy of the United States as entirely pusillanimous. I may have the wrong word, you know, but then English isn't my native tongue." I always suspected that Irwin had no idea what pusillanimous meant, and so the comment sailed over his head.

The first time I went to the Quai d'Orsay, I went to see a rather senior sous-directeur (deputy assistant secretary) to inquire about French policy towards Libya. The officer concerned listened to my demarche, which I had prepared with some care. I had looked up all the appropriate words in the dictionary and got through the demarche without too much difficulty. He smoked Gauloises and kept one lit between his lips throughout his entire response, moving it from one side to the other without opening his mouth and talking at the same time. It was a wonderful technical tour de force and left a young diplomat absolutely spellbound like a rabbit watching a search light. I understood not a word he had said, and I returned to my office knowing I had to write a cable on the French position. I consulted the political counselor, asking him what he supposed the French position was because I had had this extraordinary experience with Mr. Rouillon. He never played that game again, but it was a good lesson to a young diplomat. The tour in Paris turned out to be a prelude to a later stage in my career in Africa. One of the things that I did in Paris was to take the ambassador to call on the President of the Central African Republic in his hotel room in Paris, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, where I was later to be accredited. Bokassa wanted American astronauts to come to Bangui and we faithfully conveyed his request to Washington. I later learned that his request was received positively and that two astronauts went and were received with all the honors of a head of state!

Q: During this brief period was it sort of the general feeling that the French were concerned about keeping the Americans from messing around in their Francophone places, or was that a problem?

QUAINTON: Africa and the Middle East were quite different. They considered Africa as their backyard, and they saw American ambassadors pursuing policies everywhere designed to undercut French influence. They were very concerned about that. In the Middle East, they were less concerned, although French relations with North Africa were clearly equally privileged. I must say I always found the French, among all the diplomats with whom I dealt, the most professional and indeed quite open in describing French policies and interests. I felt I had a good relationship with them in Paris and with French ambassadors with whom I subsequently had to deal as colleagues and friends in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Q: Okay. Let's pick this up next time when you go to Nepal as DCM.

QUAINTON: Fine.

Q: Today is February 19, 1998. Tony, how did you get Nepal?

QUAINTON: I was holidaying with my family on one of the Italian lakes when I received a phone call from Bill Cargo, who had just been named as ambassador to Nepal and for whom I had worked in the economic section in the embassy in Karachi some years before, asking me if I would be willing to go with him as his DCM. It was a hard decision because we had been only a year in Paris, expecting to be there for at least three and possibly four. To uproot the family again was not entirely popular with them. And yet the chance to be a DCM was one that we all agreed was an important opportunity. I went as Bill Cargo's DCM, with no training, no experience. I had not supervised anybody in my Foreign Service 14 year career at that point, not even a secretary. I knew absolutely nothing of management.

Q: That is remarkable.

QUAINTON: I had shared a secretary at several posts but never had been the supervisor of anybody. There wasn't a DCM course, and I read in on Nepal on the Nepal desk. I knew many of the Washington players, of course, from my time spent in Southeast Asia and on the India desk. The political and economic agenda was familiar to me, although I had never been directly involved [with] Nepal. But, the managerial aspects of the job were a complete mystery and I was forced to learn by doing.

Q: You were in Nepal from when to when?

QUAINTON: I arrived in Nepal in late 1973 and left early in 1976. I was there roughly two and a half years, not completing my three years because lightning struck and I was asked to go Central Africa as ambassador. For a country of relative isolation and seemingly insignificance, the embassy in Nepal was a large one. There was a big AID mission, a substantial Peace Corps presence of over 100 volunteers, and the usual array of political and economic officers. So, it was in fact, a very interesting managerial job. The ambassador allowed me to do most of the managerial work, although that was not always easy. Part of the problem was that I was quite junior. I was not in the senior service at the time, I think I was a class three officer under the old system.

Q: The equivalent of colonel.

QUAINTON: Yes. The AID director, Carter Ide, was a career minister, which made him the same rank as the ambassador. He took directions from no one. That was always a problem. He was very able and managed the AID mission skillfully, but there was always a certain amount of tension with the embassy as the result of the autonomy that the AID director insisted on maintaining and because of the very high access levels which he had in the Nepalese government.

Q: This sounds a little bit like a throw back to the fifties and forties when the AID directors had essentially this autonomy and the money. But supposedly this had changed

when the Kennedy letter to the ambassadors came out saying they were in charge.

QUAINTON: I don't know if it was a throwback. The reality is that if you have resources and programs you have access. That is true today. That was also the time when the United States was greatly concerned about Nepal as a buffer between India and China. It was on the border of Tibet and there were large numbers of Tibetan refugees in Nepal and we had a certain number of programs working directly with the Tibetans which gave other members of the embassy privileged access to the highest levels of the Nepalese government. The government was an absolute monarchy at the time, although there was some limited local self government through local councils or "panchayats." But, the fact was that the king took all important decisions and the officials at the palace were our principal interlocutors. The only other Nepalese player of any significance was the finance minister, who subsequently became ambassador to Washington and is now ambassador in India. He was western educated at Claremont, and the AID director dealt with him on a daily basis.

Q: Were we interested at this time in trying to promote "democracy?" Did we have any policy towards this particular aspect of Nepalese life?

QUAINTON: There was no significant effort made by Washington or us in the mission to promote democracy and persuade the king to be more liberal in his policies. It may be that the ambassador raised this issue from time to time. It certainly was not a salient feature of our policy. We were much more concerned with preserving the independence of Nepal from what we saw as the predatory intentions of its two large neighbors and in helping Nepal, one of the most backward countries in Asia, develop momentum in its economic development. We were much engaged at the grassroots level through the Peace Corps and the many AID programs which we had in place. But, the political agenda focused on ways to strengthen Nepal vis-a-vis its neighbors, and to mitigate tensions with India in particular.

Q: What was the Peace Corps doing there mainly?

QUAINTON: The Peace Corps was doing essentially rural development and English language teaching. The rural development was down in the lowlands bordering India and some of it was in the mountains - small water projects, cooperatives, etc. There was a considerable effort to teach English as a second language, a program which existed in many other countries. Nepal was a particular challenge for the Peace Corps because of its extraordinary terrain and the lack of roads. It was Peace Corps policy at the time not to post a volunteer more than a twenty four hour walk from the nearest road.

Q: Were you more or less able to do that or was there a lot of fudging?

QUAINTON: No, we were able to do it. Quite consciously we knew what the distances were. It was important to be able to get Peace Corps volunteers out because they often had accidents and illnesses. We had a helicopter on lease which was available to rescue volunteers. It was a time when the Peace Corps maintained the maximum distance from

the embassy. That isn't to say that the Peace Corps director wasn't a member of the embassy's country team, but the volunteers didn't see themselves as working for the United States government. I can still remember, I guess it was in 1970, when there was the swearing in of a new batch of Peace Corps volunteers, a substantial intake. They refused to take the standard oath of allegiance to the Constitution, insisting on writing their own oath to the ideals of the Peace Corps and the government of Nepal. This caused the ambassador some considerable concern and instead of being present at the taking of the oath, he sent me, his deputy. Of course, the volunteers had to sign the constitutional oath if they wanted to get paid, but they refused to take it in an open, public setting. So, there was a little bit of tension between the Peace Corps and the embassy, although individual volunteers whom we got to know out in the countryside were very friendly.

Q: Did you have any problems with the Peace Corps?

QUAINTON: No significant problems. There were the logistic problems of maintaining a program scattered around a very mountainous country. A much greater set of problems arose from world travelers who came to Nepal. There were large numbers of young Americans who were there for the drug scene, the Buddhist scene, and to live in "esoteric Asia." They often got into difficulties with the authorities by overstaying their visas, by getting into scraps with the police, etc. The consular officer was very busy dealing with the problems of the world traveler.

Q: How did your consular officer deal with the problems of people involved in drug related incidents which might include fighting with the police, etc.?

QUAINTON: Very few ended up in jail. The Nepalese were fairly tolerant of drug consumption if those involved were not unruly and didn't commit other types of illegal acts. Usually, drug problems were medical problems. Young Americans who fell ill would have to be repatriated and their families would have to be informed. That was more of a problem than dealing with the Nepalese authorities. Many of the world travelers looked for jobs, including as teachers in our cultural center, where there was an extensive English teaching program sponsored by USIS. My wife ran this program for USIS throughout almost the entire time that we were in Nepal. Getting visas for these world traveler teachers was a constant problem.

Q: What was AID doing?

QUAINTON: AID had had a whole series of programs over the years. They had done a fair amount of road building in an attempt to break down some of the country's isolationism. They had agricultural development projects in various parts of the country and were particularly concerned about the deforestation of the country. If I am not mistaken, they also had family planning/population programs. Nepal had a very high rate of population growth, which created serious economic problems, particularly in the hills.

Q: Was there any political issue about family planning programs in those days?

QUAINTON: No, the Nepalese are mainly Buddhist and there were no religious or political leaders opposed to family planning. A fair amount of education was required because family planning was not part of the culture. I am not sure how successful our programs were, but there was no official resistance to the AID programs that I can remember.

Q: How did Ambassador Cargo use you as the DCM?

QUAINTON: He used me to supervise the reporting of the substantive officers. I also did a fair amount of internal coordination. He did more of the direct coordination with the AID director, but I was certainly expected to maintain good relations with all the agencies at post because as at any other post the DCM becomes chargé for long periods of time when the ambassador is on leave, etc.

Q: Cargo was there the whole time?

QUAINTON: Yes. He came several weeks before we did and stayed for some months after we left.

Q: What was your impression of the king?

QUAINTON: I didn't see a great deal of King Birendra. There was a tradition in Nepal that once a year the king would come to dinner with the American ambassador, and he also had dinners once a year with the British and Indian ambassadors. These were highly contrived affairs. The only other guests were members of the royal family, two or three embassy officers, usually the ambassador, DCM and political officer and their spouses, and the king, and his two brothers, and their spouses. The king was very young. His coronation took place while we were in Nepal. He spoke good English. My sense was that he was not an entirely self-confident person. His father had been king for a very long time. He had been a strong figure in Nepal and had allowed Nepal over the last five years of his reign to move towards democracy, but full parliamentary democracy was still far away on the horizon.

Q: You mentioned that he would dine with the British and Indian ambassadors too. What about the third shoe, the Chinese?

QUAINTON: He may also have dined with the Chinese ambassador. They were the only four countries of any significant presence and importance to Nepal, although the Germans, French, and Israelis had embassies, as did other South Asian countries. But for geopolitical reasons, the two big neighbors and the United States, and for historical reasons the British, were the countries with significant access in Nepal.

Q: What was the feeling about China that you were able to gather during this period?

QUAINTON: The Nepalese always tried to play the Chinese off against the Indians. The Nepalese were obsessed with India and feared Indian domination and hegemony and the possibility that they would be overrun if India's population was allowed to come across

the border and settle. The government was obsessed with a desire to protect the Nepalese people from the mountains, or the hills, as they were euphemistically called. Krishna Rasgotra, the Indian ambassador, was a very able man who had already been minister to Washington and was later to be ambassador to Washington and foreign secretary. He was very much a proconsul who regarded India as having a special relationship with Nepal and not adverse to squeezing the Nepalese in economic and trade terms if that were necessary to assure that Nepal did not stray too far from the Indian path by developing overly close relations with the Chinese. The Nepalese, on the other hand, tried to maximize their relations with the Chinese as a counterweight to India. The Chinese relationship was quite a warm one.

Q: Did Bangladesh play any part?

QUAINTON: There was a Bangladeshi ambassador in Kathmandu. The Nepalese, during this period, developed air service to Dacca. They were always concerned that their only road and air access to the outside world was through India. Tibet in the seventies was not an open area. They were anxious to establish air links with Dacca and Thailand in order to be able to bypass Delhi.

Q: Did you get any feeling that during this time Nixon and then Ford and Henry Kissinger had any interest in Nepal. Did it figure in their calculations?

QUAINTON: Well, only to the degree that Nepal was seen to be an important buffer against Chinese encroachments. Because of this Nepal got rather more attention and resources than other countries of comparable size in the third world.

Q: Did the mountain climbing challenge reach over to the embassy? Did you find yourself supporting American mountain climbers?

QUAINTON: There was a little bit of that. Mountain climbing was more limited then than it is today. There were a couple of Mt. Everest expeditions during the time we were there and, of course, expeditions to some of the other major peaks. These expeditions were always a worry. There were a couple of cases where Americans lost their lives on expeditions. In general, the mountain climbers were highly professional and skilled. They had trained for their expedition. It was the world travelers who walked the mountains without equipment who tended to be much more of a problem. Mountain climbing or trekking really was a great embassy pastime. Almost all of the officers in the embassy did some trekking, and the ambassador and I strongly encouraged it in order for officers to get a feel for the country. The only way to see the country was on foot. I certainly did some trekking with my family and with embassy local employees.

Q: Were you feeling any of the glow from the opening to China which happened shortly before you arrived there?

QUAINTON: Dr. Kissinger had gone to China in 1971, and we arrived in Nepal a little more than a year later. We could travel up to the Chinese border, but there was still no

access for Americans to China. There was virtually no diplomatic contact with Chinese embassy officials in Kathmandu. They had a large embassy watching the Indians. Our relations with the Chinese were correct when we met them at diplomatic gatherings, but there wasn't much more than an exchange of courtesies at that stage. By 1976, that had begun to change and the ambassador was invited to the Chinese ambassador's for dinner.

Q: How was the situation in Tibet with Chinese occupation refugees reflected in Nepal while you were there?

QUAINTON: I don't believe there was much of an influx of refugees in the 1970s. When the Tibetans came out in the 1950s, they went to India or Nepal. There were substantial colonies of Tibetan refugees in Nepal. They were fairly well settled and had set up small cottage industries. But there wasn't any steady flow of Tibetans into Nepal.

Q: Did we ever find ourselves having divergent views which became evident within Nepal with the Indians?

QUAINTON: Oh, yes. India was quite heavy handed in its dealings with the Nepalese. There were annual trade negotiations, the access negotiations with Nepal. The Indians always took a very hard line and the Nepalese always complained to us about the Indians. In New Delhi, our embassy tried to persuade the Indians to be somewhat softer in their position in order not to push the Nepalese in the direction of the Chinese. But, the Indians were not susceptible to advice on relations with their neighbors, particularly the Nepalese, anymore than they have been in regard to Pakistan and Bangladesh. They were not going to have the United States tell them how they should comport themselves. Ever since the crisis of 1971, in fact, they saw our policy as being strongly hostile to Indian hegemony in South Asia. They felt we failed to recognize India's legitimate privileged relationship with its neighbors and were always trying to undermine Indian influence.

Q: What about the little principalities?

QUAINTON: Well, there were Sikkim and Bhutan. I mentioned earlier that I was on the first delegation that went to Bhutan and also on a delegation that went to Sikkim. Sikkim was semi-autonomous and governed by the "chogyal." India already regarded it as part of India. Bhutan was nominally independent although under very strong Indian influence. India until the 1960s took little interest in Bhutan whatsoever, allowing the King to exercise effective control. They did worry about Sikkim because the "chogyal" was married to an American, and she had quite a following in the United States and constantly stirred up American domestic opinion about the plight of the Sikkimese under India. Eventually the Indians closed down the Sikkim's limited sovereignty, as they had of the other princely states shortly after independence.

Q: Was there any particular crises or any great problems that you had during this time?

QUAINTON: There were no crises but the big social event of this time was the coronation of King Birendra. The President sent a personal friend as the head of the U.S.

delegation, Philip Buchen, and a group of other friends, including a woman who subsequently became ambassador to Nepal, Marquita Maytag.

Q: The lady with the tent in her back yard where she used to entertain her friends.

QUAINTON: Yes. The Nepalese set a limit to the number of people who could come in the delegation. We exceeded that limit by some order of magnitude. Ms. Maytag and others were not able to attend the coronation, and it fell to the DCM to entertain the disgruntled members of the President's party. The lucky ones who attended were overjoyed by the exotic nature of the coronation. But, others, who were not so lucky, were less happy with the embassy's performance. In fact, the embassy got a great deal of criticism in Washington for its failure to produce invitations for all those in the President's party.

Q: How did you handle this?

QUAINTON: Well, there wasn't much we could do except to go back over and over again to the Nepalese, telling them how important it was that all these people to attend, but to no avail. We explained to the Americans that the palace courtyard where the coronation was to take place was very old and small and located in the center of the city, and there literally wasn't extra space. Eventually they understood that, although they felt much aggrieved having been dragged halfway around the world without being able to attend the coronation. It wasn't a real problem, but to the ambassador it was a major crisis.

Q: Did you have any congressional delegations?

QUAINTON: There were no congressional delegations, although several members of congress came for the coronation. One was a southern congressman who insisted on teaching Sunday school while he was there. There aren't very many Christians in Nepal although there were some American missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant. There was a Protestant church in Kathmandu run by missionaries who also ran a hospital. He said he had never missed teaching Sunday school in 30 years and wasn't going to miss it in Kathmandu, and he didn't miss it.

Q: You left there in 1976. You said that lightning struck. How did this come about?

QUAINTON: Some time in 1975, Dr. Kissinger noticed that the average age of American ambassadors was quite high. Even in places of considerable obscurity and unimportance, we were sending career officers just before retirement as a kind of golden handshake at the end of their careers. He suggested to his colleagues that perhaps there were younger officers who might be sent to some of these smaller places to see whether they had the necessary skills to be chiefs of mission and to advance in the Service. He looked around and identified four or five officers who were about 40 years of age. I was one of the lucky ones whose name came up, I suspect, partly because I had known and worked with Carol Laise, who was then the director general. So, I was asked if I would be willing to go to

Bangui as chief of mission.

Q: Bangui being?

QUAINTON: The capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), later to become the Central African Empire.

Q: How did your colleagues in the Foreign Service react to your getting an ambassadorship?

QUAINTON: I don't remember any particular reaction except "How lucky you are." There were not a whole lot of people who particularly wanted to go to Bangui per se. It was the heart of darkness in almost every sense of the word. The CAR is a small country: in population, smaller than Nepal, although larger in area than Nepal. Although I was asked in the fall of 1975 if I would like to go, I didn't actually leave Kathmandu for some time because of the paperwork and clearance process. I actually got to Bangui in mid-February, 1976.

Q: How did your family react to this? Having been pulled untimely out of Paris and going to Nepal and then going to Bangui.

QUAINTON: It was very hard in family terms because education in Nepal was already a problem for our children. There was no American high school in Kathmandu, although there was an American school that went up through the eighth grade. So, we had already been separated from our eldest daughter, who went to boarding school in England during the latter part of the time we were in Kathmandu. She had stayed on in Paris with a colleague for the first year that we were in Nepal. And then we went to Bangui, where there was no American school at all, and we were forced to send another child to boarding school. Our youngest daughter went to school in Bangui in the French system, as did our son for the remainder of the 1976 school year, after which he also went to boarding school in the United States. So we were without two of our three children most of the time we were in Bangui. They came for vacations, etc. My wife had been able to work in Kathmandu as wife of the DCM. She ran a very large English language training program under contract with USIS. There was no such opportunity in Bangui. Bangui is a very small place. Everything was dominated by the French and the only opportunity she had to work was as an English teacher in the French lycée. Technically, she was an employee of the French embassy, which caused some consternation in French official circles.

Q: You were in the Central African Republic/Empire from when to when?

QUAINTON: From February, 1976 until the summer of 1978. In theory, it was a three year posting, but in the spring of 1978 I received a cable from Secretary Vance telling me that I had been chosen to be the Department's coordinator for counterterrorism and asking me to come back on two weeks notice. I said I could not do that for family reasons. He asked if I would be able to take up the job in June and after further

negotiation, we agreed I would start in July.

Q: What was the embassy like and the living conditions like at that time?

QUAINTON: The embassy was very small although much bigger than it is today. There was one part-time consular officer, a part-time economic officer, a DCM, a couple of secretaries, a couple of people from another agency, a small Peace Corps, and an administrative officer. There were no military, USIA, or AID. The AID program was tiny and, with the exception of the ambassador's self-help fund, was managed out of the Cameroon. So, it was a very small operation reflecting our very limited interests. Our primary interest was that Bokassa vote with us in the United Nations against the Soviet Union, which he always did. There was a little bit of American economic interest. There was an American diamond company which mined alluvial diamonds. There was a little uranium in the country which the French and Swiss were trying to exploit. And, there were a hundred or so American missionaries almost all Protestants from three different denominations, a handful of Lutherans who were left behind when the Germans left the Cameroons and two small groups, the Independent Baptists and the Grace Brethren. They had come up the Congo River in 1919 together by boat and when they got to Bangui they divided the country in half. The Baptists went east and the Brethren west, and they agreed not to poach in each other's territory. That is how it remained throughout most of the ensuing 50 years, although as time passed, as in so many developing countries, people flocked from the rural areas to the city and brought with them their form of Christianity and in Bangui there was a certain amount of competition between these two groups, which in the countryside had been separated. So, I spent a good bit of time dealing with the missionaries. They had very few problems, although occasionally they would be expelled because the president thought they had done something wicked. They were very hospitable hosts to us and to members of the embassy as we moved around the country. The CAR is about the size of France, with a very poor infrastructure, so the hospitality of the missionaries was very welcome.

Q: The French influence was very strong there?

QUAINTON: Yes, it is great. The French subsidized about 50 percent of the government's budget, some 50 million dollars a year. They called almost all the shots, although they couldn't always control the president. Bokassa had been in the French army. He had been chosen in the late 1930s by his great uncle as the next chief of his tribe. His family thought a good way to train the future head of the tribe was to send him to Brazzaville, where he was made to enlist as a simple soldier in the French army. He had a very successful career in the army, unlike some of the other African leaders who only served in colonial regiments. He rose to the rank of major and served at Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam and also in North Africa during the Second World War. He was a man of considerable military experience. In 1961, the French made him the commander of the Central African Republic's army; his uncle became the first president of the country. In a coup a few years later, Bokassa became president for life and steadily promoted himself. By the time I got to Bangui, he was a seven star field marshal. His next step was to move beyond being a president for life, and he decided to convert the regime into an empire of

Napoleonic proportions, which he did. The French, to the great surprise of many people, paid the cost for converting the country from a republic into an empire, and for making simple soldier Jean-Bedel Bokassa into his Imperial Majesty Bokassa I.

Q: This must have been the cause of a certain amount of merriment at the time?

QUAINTON: Well, there was a comic opera aspect to life in Bangui, but there was also a good bit of anxiety. As I was traveling out to Bangui with my family, we were held up in Paris on instructions from Washington because Bokassa had just executed the embassy's general services officer [GSO]. That event put a certain damper on our relations. The GSO was a third country national who had worked for 20 years in the embassy and who was associated with a young man who had thrown a hand grenade at Bokassa at the airport. There was no question about who threw the hand grenade, and there was no question about the business ties between the grenade thrower and the GSO. However, there was no evidence suggesting the GSO had been involved in the attack. But Bokassa was both unforgiving and paranoid. There was a public trial and a public execution in the presence of the diplomatic corps. All of this took place before I got there. So when I arrived, there was not a happy feeling in the embassy about our relations with Bokassa. Subsequent relations were often shamed and we went through a series of crises.

Some months before I got to Bangui, Bokassa had slapped the Italian ambassador in public for not providing sufficient economic assistance. The Italians withdrew their ambassador and left their embassy in hands of a code clerk. From Bokassa's point of view, this was quite an effective technique of intimidation. Most ambassadors to the Central African Republic were relatively junior; you didn't send your most senior and experienced diplomats, and none of us wanted to be sent home in disgrace for having been hit by the head of state. There was always an air of uncertainty about what might happen next.

Over the course of the time we spent in Bangui, there was a series of very dreadful incidents. A Peace Corps volunteer was bicycling past one of the imperial palaces on the wrong side of the road. He was ordered to stop, but his French wasn't very good and he didn't stop. He was then taken into custody, brought before the emperor who threatened him with his cane, tore off his glasses and stomped on them with his boot. It took us some time to get the Peace Corps volunteer out and, of course, the Peace Corps became rather jittery about what might happen to their volunteers. Notwithstanding this incident, the volunteers just loved Central Africa and went on with their work, and, although they were scattered all over the country, in general, they had no problems.

Two American journalists were arrested by Bokassa. One, Michael Goldsmith, was the Africa correspondent for the Associated Press. The other was Jonathan Randall of the *Washington Post*. Goldsmith had been rather indiscreet. He had filed a story about the wickedness of the Bokassa regime from the local post office to South Africa where his bureau was headquartered. The document was taken to Bokassa as evidence of sinister columns against the regime by foreign journalists. Both [were] arrested. Randell got out quite quickly. We made a lot of strong interventions on his behalf, and he hadn't written extensively enough to get himself into big trouble. He was only kept under house arrest.

But, Goldsmith was actually taken to prison, where he was kept in a very small cell. He lived for several weeks on a diet of bananas and water. This happened just as my wife and I were going on home leave. We went on leave. I got out to California only to discover that Michael Goldsmith was married to Lyndon Johnson's niece and the White House wanted him freed. So, I was sent back to Bangui to get him out one way or another. I was briefed in transit at Dulles Airport. So, I went back to Bangui, but at first Bokassa wouldn't see me, realizing I was going to say very tough things. Eventually I was called to see him. I went to his palace in the countryside. I made my presentation demanding Goldsmith's release. Bokassa shouted at me and raised his cane, saying that I had plotted his overthrow ever since I had come to Bangui, that I was a tool of the CIA, and that he wouldn't pay any attention to these threats from the American government. I was quite discouraged at this response, but in fact Bokassa had listened. In addition, a major campaign was mounted from Gabon and the Ivory Coast to get him to let Goldsmith go.

None of this appeared in public. But, various people were persuaded to intervene directly with Bokassa, including Maurice Tempelman. Eventually, the incident ended in typical Bokassa fashion. Goldsmith, on his release, said that one day his diet suddenly improved. Shortly thereafter, he was summoned to the imperial presence and told that he was going to be released and sent on the night plane to Paris. He was ushered into the imperial presence and given a glass of champagne. Bokassa said it was all a mistake and he was terribly sorry, these things happened, but all was forgiven. If it hadn't been for the American ambassador plotting his overthrow, this never would have happened. Bokassa kept Goldsmith drinking champagne for several hours and told him stories about the war in Vietnam in a very engaging fashion, interspersed with attacks on me, the American ambassador. The departure time of the plane came and went, but the airport was instructed not to let the plane leave. Eventually, it left a couple of hours late, Goldsmith having been delivered to the airport in the imperial limousine. Goldsmith got back to Washington in a state of complete shock. He told everyone that Bokassa was a lunatic and that I was at great risk. Neither I nor my DCM thought that Bokassa would do anything rash, and he, of course, did not.

The next time I saw Bokassa, he kissed me on both cheeks and said that he was committed to eternal friendship with the United States and would like to pay an official visit to Washington to demonstrate his love for the United States. To my great surprise, as we were quite interested in his vote in the UN, a special envoy was sent from Washington. Not a very high level envoy, Tom Buchanan, director for Central Africa, but he came out with a personal letter from Dr. Kissinger inviting Bokassa to the United States at some unspecified time in the future. Bokassa was touched by the Secretary's expression of understanding and support. We gave a small dinner for Tom Buchanan and during Buchanan's call on the Emperor, Bokassa said, "I understand you are giving a dinner tonight. It is a pity I can't come, but I have instructed the government to go in my place." I said that I would be honored. I went home and tell my wife that the government was coming to dinner. She was planning a small dinner for 12 and the government was made up of 14 ministers but we couldn't find out which members of the government were coming. There was no way to find out. None of the ministers had ever set foot in the

residence before. Nobody could come to the American ambassador's or to any other ambassador's without special permission from Bokassa. The only contact they had with the diplomatic corps was in their offices. But that night they all came. Dinner was at eight and at seven the national television cameras arrived. The journalists knocked at the front door and said that they had been instructed to come to the dinner and to film it for national television. We were a bit taken back, but we let them come in and they set up in the dining room. As each course came out, the klieg lights went on, and there was a live broadcast of the American ambassador's special envoy supping with the government. It was a highly bizarre place, as you can see.

In the latter part of my stay, the big question was human rights. Bokassa had a justified reputation for doing terrible things to his citizens and, as I have described, to Americans and foreigners. At this time, the Carter administration had just come into office and made human rights a priority. American ambassadors were expected to speak out on human rights. Central Africa was no exception. In 1977, every ambassador to the host government was instructed to deliver the President's declaration on Human Rights Day. Thinking that it was a waste of time sending this particular document to Bokassa, I sent it under cover of a diplomatic note to the foreign minister, saying "We know that your government is most interested in the policy of the United States with regard to human rights, and the embassy would be grateful if you would pass this statement on to His Imperial Majesty." Nothing happened for some time. However, on Christmas Eve, the minister of information arrived at my front door. He said that Bokassa had read Jimmy Carter's declaration and wished to associate himself with it and to declare publicly that the American policy on human rights was his government's policy. The evening news would carry his decision.

So, I turned on the local news. There was no declaration, only a very cryptic remark that a "very important statement" which was to have been made would not be made. No one in the country except me had any idea what this was all about. I thought, "Oh, well, this is a pretty funny place anyway." The day after Christmas, the minister sent his secretary general, his number two, to the residence. The official explained that they couldn't get all the details arranged by Christmas Eve, but that Bokassa had decided that that evening I would speak to the nation on human rights. He asked me to show up in half an hour's time at the national television's studios. I showed up at the station and, sure enough, after the evening news, they announced their support for the Carter Declaration and I was put on camera to talk about the importance of human rights to the people of the Central African Empire. I got a fair amount of credit in Washington for something over which I had no control. But, of course, nothing changed. The regime was totally indifferent to human rights, but if the Americans wanted an endorsement, it would do no harm to put the American ambassador on TV to talk about the subject.

Q: The next time, we will talk more about the coronation of Bokassa, his relations with the French, the human rights incidents, and what he kept in his food locker, etc.

QUAINTON: Good.

Q: Today is March 4, 1998. Tony, would you like to begin with the coronation?

QUAINTON: It might first be worth saying a few words about the French role in Central Africa. The French played the predominant role in the Central African Republic and indeed in the Empire after it was proclaimed, as part of a larger strategy of promoting French culture, language, influence and strategic interests in those parts of the continent where they had been the colonial power. The Central African Republic had been an extraordinary backwater in the colonial era. Before independence, it was the territory of Ubangi Shari. If, as a French official, one washed up there, one was at the end of the line or the end of one's career. This was not a place which was known for its importance in the French Empire. Nonetheless, the French maintained a very substantial presence. The French ambassador was clearly the most important figure in the diplomatic corps. He was a senior, experienced Africanist. The embassy's staff was made up of a wide range of French officials, not all of them from the Quai d'Orsay. France provided direct resource transfers to the Central African government, oversaw a whole range of Central African policies and tried as best they could to manage the country in French interests. There was also a substantial French commercial community which ranged from French companies making a variety of wood products to companies prospecting and mining for uranium, but the French were also engaged in the very basic services in the society. The supermarkets, the hairdressers, the barbers, the hotel keepers were still all French. So, the French community was an important one. It was not supplemented at this time by any French military presence, although there had been such a presence earlier on, and there was one again after Bokassa was overthrown, but at this period there was no French military base in the Central African Republic. There were a substantial number of French "cooperants," essentially Peace Corps volunteers, volunteers who were doing their national service in Africa. A lot of them were teachers in the local schools, keeping French language and culture alive.

In early 1978, Bokassa decided that his status as a seven star field marshal and president for life did not give him sufficient recognition in the world of post-colonial Africa, so he proposed to make himself emperor. The first indication we had of that was when his wife gave birth early in 1978 to a little girl, her name was Anne, and it was announced in the local press that she was the Princess Anne. This implied royal paternity. There were many rumors about the empire, what kind it might be. It was assumed early on in 1978 that Bokassa would try to model any empire on one of the great medieval empires in Africa, picking on the great tradition of chiefly rule, but dressing it up in a more modern kind of royal framework. In fact, he decided what he wanted to be was not the successor to any chief in Africa, but a successor to the pharaohs and to Napoleon. So the style of the empire was Napoleonic; the pedigree of the empire was pharaonic. Bokassa announced that he had traced his ancestry back to the pharaohs. When the empire was actually established, it did not look at all Egyptian. Rather, it was a black version of Napoleon's empire. That, of course, was a very expensive proposition. The French were very reluctant to back it. They disapproved of Bokassa's Napoleonic ambitions, but did not insist that he be an African-style king. They ultimately agreed to pay the full costs of

his imperial coronation - costs that ran, according to some accounts, to something on the order of 45 to 50 million dollars.

Q: Why would the French pay that much? Was it worth that much to them?

QUAINTON: They had no alternative to Bokassa. Bokassa had a claim to French nationality by virtue of his service in the French army. He had been a loyal friend of France on all African issues. He was a great admirer, publicly and otherwise, of Charles de Gaulle. He was a regular hunting partner of the President of France, Giscard d'Estaing, who came annually to the Central African Republic to hunt elephants with Bokassa in the eastern portion of the country. It also testifies a good bit to the personal qualities of Bokassa, which have not been much commented on by history. He and the highly intellectual President of France could spend two weeks on safari in the countryside together sharing war stories, reminiscences and discussing the affairs of the world in a way that was entirely satisfactory to the President of France, who later received a famous necklace of diamonds as a gift from Bokassa, which eventually created a great scandal in France. So, there were many ties; Bokassa was a loyal friend of France, a loyal member of the French army; he had a chateau in Sologne in the central part of France; and the French felt a certain loyalty to him notwithstanding his quite extraordinary idiosyncracies. Not that they approved of everything he did, but they saw no reasonable alternative to him at that time, although in 1979 they brought about his overthrow by the introduction of French paratroopers. But, this was only after another bizarre set of incidents involving the shooting of high school students in the center of Bangui at Bokassa's personal direction.

Q: Can you tell me what was the reaction back in the Department of State on your saying, "By the way, we are going to have a Napoleonic empire here in the Central African Empire?" Was it a problem of keeping the titters from getting too loud?

QUAINTON: Clearly Bokassa's decision was thought in Washington to be the most extraordinary piece of foolishness. On the other hand, Washington was very cautious, since we had limited but real interests in terms of Bokassa's support for us at the United Nations and our limited economic assets in the country. The embassy tried not to make fun of Bokassa in the messages and cables that we sent in. I must say I consciously tried to describe events with as straight a face as possible. It was easy to make cheap and rather amusing comments about this kind of exotic regime, but the end result might have been to put individual Americans, missionaries and business people, in peril.

Q: I would think that would be a problem because in a way, from the American point of view, it would be so amusing that it would be very hard not to have stories about it circulate the Department's corridors and get to newspaper people because people would think it was funny, and you have to really watch that.

QUAINTON: We tried to avoid too many quotable quotes, although I think there were times when we did allow ourselves to describe with a certain tongue in cheek quality the political evolution of the Central African state. The republic took some months to die or

the empire some months to be born, during which Bokassa began the preparations for the coronation. He invited the Pope to crown him, as the Pope had been invited to crown Napoleon. He developed a new court protocol for the empire. He consulted a number of ambassadors on the subject, not including the American ambassador, as we weren't thought to have any particular wisdom about imperial practices. He consulted the Greek ambassador resident in Yaounde on the court procedures at the court of Constantine Palaeologus, someone whom he felt might be an appropriate model for his own empire.

Q: Constantine Palaeologus was the last of the Byzantine emperors.

QUAINTON: That's right, in the 15th century. The Greek republican government had some difficulty coming up with anything that was useful for the new empire. Court protocol was, however, developed and we were sent appropriate instructions in a diplomatic note on how to comport ourselves in the presence of His Imperial Majesty, including instructions as to how far we should stand from him, what kind of bow we should make, how we should answer questions from the imperial personage (the answer to any question, we were instructed, was always to be "Yes," but if that left something to be desired, you were permitted to say, "Yes, but.")). It was announced, although never enforced, that all those who went into the presence of His Imperial Majesty would retreat backwards. Bokassa took all this as a great joke himself. I think he had great fun writing it all up and sending instructions around to bemused governments as to how they should behave in his presence.

There was a great question as to how the United States should be represented at the coronation. Bokassa invited the President, as he invited the Pope and the president of France, and there was a certain amount of exchanging of views among the diplomatic corps about the level at which we were going to be represented at this solemn occasion. At the end of the day, the French decided to send a minister, Mr. Gallet, who was then the Minister of Cooperation, the French aid minister, and his wife. Most other governments were represented by their resident ambassadors, although there were some ministerial delegations from other African states. If I am not mistaken, President Mobutu came up from Zaire to be present at the coronation.

Having decided on the level of delegation, there was then the problem of the ceremonial gift that one was expected to give on the occasion of his coronation. This posed some considerable problems for us. The office of protocol had only a limited supply of gifts for coronations and they were generally not suitable. I had started my tour in Central Africa with a gift for the then president. His birthday was the same day as George Washington's and as it was the beginning of the bicentennial year, 1976, when I arrived. I had brought with me a rather beautiful Limoges bowl inscribed with the arms of George Washington and the bicentennial years - 1776-1976. I took it on my inaugural call, which took place only two days before Bokassa's birthday and I thought, tongue in cheek, it was appropriate to give him a token of my esteem. He looked at the bowl bemusedly and said how beautiful it was, looked at the dates, 1776-1976 and said, "Ah, what a long life George Washington had." But, he noted, they were both generals and founders of their countries.

With that as background, the office of protocol came up with two plates from the Franklin Mint. Sometime in the 1970s, the Franklin Mint had produced a series of very elegant silver plates engraved in gold with portraits of the presidents of the United States. Some of them were long since gone - John F. Kennedy, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, etc. - but Chester Arthur and Millard Fillmore were still in stock, and I received two plates to give to the emperor on the occasion of his coronation. He kept me waiting for some hours to present our official gift because I was way down in the protocol list of coronation delegations. Ministers got in first. But eventually he got to me. He expressed enormous pleasure, real or feigned, and said that the plates would have a prominent place in the imperial state museum when it was created. Alas, it was never created, and the plates have long since disappeared.

The coronation was indeed a splendid event. It took place at a sports palace built by the Yugoslav government some years before as part of their aid program. It was a rather handsome basketball stadium seating several thousand people. There was a great golden throne in the shape of an imperial eagle. Bokassa, himself, wore a Roman toga embroidered with a hundred thousand pearls. He came wearing a gold laurel wreath in his hair, and an imperial toga and staff. As in the case of Napoleon, he crowned himself in the presence of his family, visiting delegations and selected guests. He then drove in a coach pulled by the six white horses, which had been flown from Paris to draw the new gold coach from the sports palace to the cathedral.

The cathedral was a rather charming brick church built before the Second World War. Bokassa's first cousin was the archbishop of Bangui and in a solemn mass the coronation was graced by Cardinal Silvestrini, who had been sent to represent the Holy Father on this grand occasion. The cathedral had been decorated, I exaggerate not, from floor to ceiling with cut flowers flown in from France. This was a very lofty church and there must have been tens of thousands of flowers which covered the walls. Cardinal Silvestrini sat on his throne to the left facing the altar and Bokassa sat on his throne to the right. He, of course, wore an ermine cape of Napoleonic proportions decorated with "Bs" for Bokassa. It was all rather splendid. The irony of it all was that Bokassa was no longer a Catholic, but had become a Muslim some months before, during the republic, when he was visited by Muammar Qaddafi.

It is probably worth saying something about the visit of Libya's Muammar Qaddafi to the Central African Republic because it has a number of interesting aspects. Qaddafi was invited on an official visit. Perhaps he offered himself up as a sacrificial lamb, but I think he was anxious to come. This was a period in which Qaddafi was aggressively promoting Islam in subsaharan Africa. He came to Bangui with a very large amount of cash. It was said Bokassa was given a million dollars to become a Muslim and ministers \$100,000 and civil servants \$10,000. In this impoverished country, there was a considerable rush to convert to Islam. Jean-Bedel Bokassa became overnight Salahuddin Ahmed Bokassa. The man who is today the president of the Central African Republic, Ange Patasse, also became a Muslim but has long since given up. Orange juice became the drink of the day for several weeks, notwithstanding the president's enthusiasm for Chivas Regal, but the

prohibition on alcohol also passed when Qaddafi's visit receded into the past.

Qaddafi did a number of things during the official visit. There was a marvelous state dinner at which Bokassa organized a local dance troop of bare breasted maidens dancing erotic African dances. Qaddafi was not much amused, but Bokassa thought that it was an appropriate tribute for a visiting head of state, to give them some of the local culture. But it was not the austere Islamic kind of culture to which Qaddafi was used to on visits. He met with the diplomatic corps. I am one of the few American diplomats in recent times who have actually met Qaddafi. I talked to him over tea with five or six colleagues. He speaks some English and was rather gracious, not particularly fanatical in his personal address. The day after the state dinner, he spoke to the assembled members of MESAN, the principal and only party in the Central African Republic, at the same sports stadium in which Bokassa was later to be crowned emperor. He gave a several hours long exhortation about the virtues of Islam, asserting that Islam was the religion of the oppressed, the religion of the black man, while Christianity was the religion of the oppressor and the white man.

Finally, he brought with him a movie called "The Message" made by his government, filmed with the approval of religious authorities in Cairo. It was a film was on the life of the Prophet. It is quite a remarkable movie with some very considerable esthetic merit in which Anthony Quinn plays the part of the Prophet's uncle. The Prophet never appears, it being sacrilegious to show a picture of the Prophet. The Prophet is heard speaking at various points, quoting from the Koran. It is a desert western in many respects. There are camels galloping across the sand converting heathens to Islam. It is, in fact, very skillfully done. It was shown in a movie theater in the African quarter of Bangui. However, the movie with Anthony Quinn was all in English and there was no one in the government of the Central Africa Republic who spoke English. So the movie, after it was turned on, was immediately turned off while Bokassa ordered a translator to be found. A university student was eventually produced who had the daunting task of doing simultaneous translation for a Hollywood quality movie. The highlight of the movie was a moment in which Bilal, an African slave converted to Islam - indeed, he is often claimed to be the first of Muhammad's converts - is engaged in a battle in the desert outside of Medina and every time that Bilal cuts down an enemy of the faith, all of whom are, of course, desert Arabs, everybody in the audience rose up and cheered. The view in Central Africa, as in other parts of subsaharan Africa, is that the best Arab is a dead Arab. I remember being bewildered by this until I was reminded that slavery for Central Africa was Arab slavery, not European slavery. Arab slave traders raided from the Sudan southward and westward, and memories of the Arab people were not happy memories for the black population of Central Africa. Qaddafi was unaware of this history and was rather bemused throughout it all.

Q: Did Qaddafi have his famous corps of women bodyguards?

QUAINTON: I think there must have been bodyguards, but I was not aware of a heavy security presence around him. In any case, by the time of the coronation, Bokassa was still a Muslim and the Church had excommunicated him. So, it was all the more

remarkable that Cardinal Silvestrini was there. The Roman Catholic priests of the empire, almost all of whom were European, solemnly protested to the Vatican the extraordinary decision to send Silvestrini to the coronation. They regarded this as a sacrilege and refused to participate in the coronation ceremonies.

The other highlight of the coronation was the choir. There was a choir of children who had been trained for some months to sing Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, unfamiliar to most of the children of Central Africa, the irony being that the coronation concerned is the coronation of the Virgin, not of some lay figure of note. There was a spectacular party which ended with a state dinner. In front of every guest was a bottle of vintage Dom Perignon champagne. There were many courses elegantly served, fireworks followed and the empire was launched at the expense of the French taxpayer in a rather grand way.

Q: I take it you were the representative?

QUAINTON: I was the representative. The Central African desk officer came out to join the delegation. I neglected to mention that not only were we instructed on protocol, but also on the dress. Men were expected to be in full court attire, top hat, morning coat, and striped trousers, the only problem for me being that I had rented my morning coat in Paris which was designed for a cooler climate and was of a rather thick flannel. In the 100 degree temperature of Central Africa, it was oppressive. The ladies had all been instructed on what to wear by the empress, who invited the ambassadors' wives to a tea party to explain how they should be dressed. Long pastel dresses were favored by the empress along with broad, rimmed hats. So, all of the wives came appropriately attired. Unfortunately, when the French minister's wife came with her husband at the end of the ceremony to present the French official gift, the court protocol officer decided that her dress was not sufficiently long and she was sent away. Although the French were paying for the event, the French minister was told that he could not come until his wife was correctly attired for the imperial presence. The French were furious, but Madame Gallet changed. I was kept waiting to present the U.S. gift while the French observed court protocol.

Q: I would think that on something like this in the diplomatic corps it must have been tested to the utmost as far as trying to keep from making comments about what was going on. You are standing there in a herd watching this and seeing something of this nature I would think there would be an awful lot of asides and it would be very difficult to keep a straight face.

QUAINTON: That was, of course, true. There was a great deal of that. In a quite extraordinary way it was all solemn and beautiful. If you spend enough money on arrangements you will have something that is quite magnificent in its way. We clearly mocked what was happening and deplored the waste of resources. The amount spent on the coronation was roughly equal to one year's budget for the entire country.

Q: Who was the scene director of this?

QUAINTON: There were Frenchmen at every level who designed the show. Not only

were there clothes to be designed, there were the imperial china, the imperial glassware, jewelry for the emperor and empress, all produced and designed in Paris. There is a most beautiful set of Limoges china with the imperial seal on it, of which I acquired a piece after the fall of the empire. It was all done by French artisans and businesses. I would guess the French taxpayers got a fair amount of money back from this event. Without a doubt, it was one of the most bizarre events in modern African history.

Q: Did Bokassa change at all? Did this change anything particularly?

QUAINTON: If anything, he was somewhat more aloof, but this was a man who was enormously gregarious. He loved people, loved to dance, loved to drink. While things tightened up in terms of access to him, he was still accessible. But, he was not seen about as much with a multiplicity of women and friends as he had been in the days of the republic.

There is an interesting, again horrifying story, about his two principal wives, one who became the empress and who was known originally as La Maréchal. He also had a Romanian wife who was called La Presidente. The African wife was absolutely stunning, a beautiful woman in her mid-20s who had six children by the age of 24. She really was a person of considerable charm. The Romanian was a glamorous blonde who had come to the Central African Republic on an officially sponsored Romanian government dance tour of Africa. The Romanian ambassador arranged for this group to give a private performance for the president. Bokassa was entranced, as he always was with a pretty new face. He kept the troupe over a long weekend and apparently worked his way through it three a night and then kept the most beautiful of the dancers to be his wife, to the horror of the Romanian government and ambassador. She became the number two wife of the president of the republic. She faded into obscurity with the proclamation of the empire.

The other great story related to Bokassa's family was that during his time in Vietnam when he was an officer in the French army, he fathered a child whose name was Martine. He went back to Vietnam later on to find his daughter. A girl came forward who claimed to be Martine, who was obviously of mixed African and Asian blood, and he immediately adopted her. Then another girl with a better claim came along and he adopted her as well. So, there were two Martines in Bangui on the social circuit, both of whom were claiming to be the president's daughter. He set them up in private houses. There was a kind of romantic streak to Bokassa. He loved the thought of himself coming to the rescue of a lady in distress.

Q: You are describing all this, but the thing that has come through to, say me, just by listening to reports and never having served in Africa was about the cannibalism. Where did this sort of thing get started?

QUAINTON: The cannibalism story surfaced after Bokassa was overthrown, the year after I left. I left in the summer of 1978 and Bokassa was overthrown the following year, 1979, after the student disturbances I mentioned earlier. It was said that in the freezer at

Berengo, which was the palace Bokassa had some 25-30 miles outside of town on the edge of the forest, the French discovered body parts which were designed for the imperial table. I regard that as highly speculative. In my time, there was certainly no suggestion of cannibalism in a country which was rife with rumors and where one might well have heard such things. There is no doubt that Bokassa was a person capable of great brutality and one who had no scruples about violence when it suited him. Cannibalism, however, seems to me to be most unlikely.

Q: After he became emperor, were there any other developments concerning our relations or your life there before you left in 1978?

QUAINTON: There was a moment when Bokassa was actually helpful to the United States government. It was in 1977, when Idi Amin held hostage a group of American missionaries.

Q: Idi Amin being the dictator of Uganda.

QUAINTON: Uganda was a neighboring state on the east, although there was virtually no contact between Bokassa and anyone in Anglophone Africa. When Amin prevented these missionaries from leaving the country, we interpreted this as a hostage threat. Washington cast around for ways to bring pressure on Amin. It occurred to them, I think naively, that one crazy brutal president could influence another. So, I was asked to go see Bokassa and ask if he would intervene with Amin to let these American citizens go. I went down to Berengo and saw the president with my instructions in hand. He called in his prime minister, who took notes. I made my demarche and Bokassa listened. Then, to my rather pleasant surprise, he said he would do what his great friend, the United States, wanted, and then he read back to me almost verbatim the talking points I had given him. He then instructed the prime minister to draft the cable to his brother president Idi Amin immediately conveying his personal desire and the desire of the American government, to have the missionaries released. They were released. Whether this was as a result of Bokassa's intervention, one will never know.

Q: What were Bokassa's external relationships? Looking around, he has Zaire, Congo, Cameroon, Chad, and the Sudan. Did he have much of a relationship with these other countries?

QUAINTON: Yes. He had an exceptionally close relationship with Zaire. He and Mobutu came from closely related tribes. They regarded each other as brothers and he would refer to Mobutu as "mon frère cadet," my younger brother, and Mobutu referred to him as "mon frère aîné," my older brother. Bokassa was also very close to Houphouët-Boigny in the Ivory Coast and called him his father. He was fairly close to Bongo in the Gabon. He was not very close to the Cameroonians or the Chadians and I am not sure why. The more Frenchified the ruler, the more likely it was that Bokassa would feel a bond. Bokassa was enormously proud of his French and what he had done for France. He spoke quite elegant French and found an affinity with African leaders of the old school. Indeed, when he was thrown out by the French, he was deposited in the Ivory Coast, where Houphouët-Boigny

allowed him to live for several years before Bokassa climbed on a plane and flew to France to live in his chateau when he completely ran out of money. To everyone's surprise, he returned back to the Central African Republic with his wife. He was immediately clapped into jail.

Q: Is he still there?

QUAINTON: He died last year after living for many years under house arrest. In the end, he was virtually a free man, much diminished in health and spirit. When he came back, he thought he was going to be greeted by an enthusiastic nation waiting for his return after many years of exile. Perhaps the Napoleonic image still lingered in his mind.

Q: Returning from Elbe.

QUAINTON: Yes.

Q: His overthrow did not come while you were there?

QUAINTON: No.

Q: Well, then in 1978, where did you go?

QUAINTON: In April, 1978, I received a telegram from Secretary Vance telling me that I was his choice to be the director of the office for counterterrorism, and instructing me to be back the following week. That was not only personally impossible but also physically impossible. After some negotiations it was agreed that I would stay on until June or July. So, I didn't take up my job until late July/early August. I took 30 days of home leave. I was surprised to have this move so soon as I had not been in Bangui for the scheduled three years.

Q: You were in charge of the office for counterterrorism from 1978 to when?

QUAINTON: From 1978 until the late summer/early autumn of 1981 when I entered Spanish language training in preparation for an assignment as ambassador to Nicaragua. So, it was a little over three years.

Q: When you arrived there can you describe the office and where it fit into the system and how long it had been around?

QUAINTON: It hadn't been around terribly long. I think less than five years. There had been four previous incumbents, the first being Armin Meyer who came out of Turkey where he was ambassador. He held the job for a very brief period of time. He was followed by Lou Hoffacker, Doug Heck and Heyward Isham. They all moved through the office fairly briskly. Isham was there less than a year having incurred the wrath of Cyrus Vance for reasons that I never fully understood, hence the vacancy to which I was called. The office was created after the series of hostage incidents beginning in the late sixties with the kidnaping of John Gordon Mein in Guatemala. He was assassinated in August,

1968 and was the first ambassador to be killed. Then there were several others in the course of the 1970s who died in the Sudan, Lebanon, and Cyprus. One was killed on my watch, Spike Dubs in Afghanistan.

Q: Who did you report to and where did this office fit during your time?

QUAINTON: The office originally, when I took over, reported to the Deputy Secretary, Warren Christopher - D/CT. It was then thought that the deputy secretary didn't have sufficient time to devote to supervising and the office in 1981 became M/CT and I reported first to Ben Reed and then to Dick Kennedy, who were under secretaries for Management. In fact, it was a very small, autonomous operation with only six officers. I had a deputy and four staff officers and two secretaries. It was a very compact organization which subsequently grew after my departure to the rather large office that it is now. It is now S/TC and comes directly under the Secretary. I think this is rather absurd, but many people thought the office would be more important if we had a diagram that shows a direct link to the Secretary, who has little time to spend on the subject, instead of a link to someone who has some time.

Warren Christopher was a very good boss. I would report to him two or three times a year on what I was doing. He was not a micromanager. Neither was Ben Reed, I might add, although he took a closer interest in what I was doing.

Q: Here you are in a small office in the Department of State with a glorious title of combating terrorism which was a major, major problem in the world at that time and continues to be. How had the office been approaching the subject before you took over when you arrived?

QUAINTON: The job had really three or four distinct elements to it. On the one hand the director chaired the interagency working group on terrorism which brought together some 25 different federal government agencies that had an interest in terrorism. Everything from the Post Office, concerned about letter bombs, through to the CIA and the intelligence community. But, there is hardly an agency in government which does not have some part of the terrorist agenda. The FAA for hijacking, the FBI for hostage situations, the INS for keeping terrorists from crossing into the country, etc. You could put together a very large list of agencies that were concerned. The D/CT director had no authority over those agencies but was able through regularly scheduled meetings to coordinate and get information shared among the agencies that were developing programs, plans relating to counterterrorism.

The second function was to be the U.S. agent for the negotiation of International Counterterrorist Agreements. That became a very active part of the agenda when the Summit of Seven in Bonn agreed on a declaration on terrorism. They called for greater consideration. But it was always easy to get the seven to agree on the basic principles for handling terrorism, or on negotiation principles. I was much involved in the negotiation of 6-7 declarations and the follow on to them. There were regular meetings of representatives of the seven in various capitals, and I led the U.S. delegation. That gave

me a more traditional diplomatic role.

The third aspect, and the one which was the most taxing, and for which none of us were particularly well prepared, was the crisis management function. Every time there was a hijacking or a kidnaping, the Department established a task force in the operations Center. At that time (It is very different now.), the Office for Counterterrorism directly ran the task forces and indeed provided a very substantial part of the staff. The seven of us often were the staff around the clock. We got some help from the geographic bureaus concerned and sometimes from the bureau for consular affairs, but there was not the highly organized task force mechanisms that now exist and which actually shifted the emphasis for most crises to the geographic bureaus.

There were a large number of incidents over the three year period. Some of them, hijackings, were for a very short duration, while others, kidnappings, went on much longer. The kidnaping of Ambassador Diego Asencio in Bogota went on for 60 days. It was a very contentious incident because Asencio, like other ambassadors who had been kidnaped at the Dominican Republic embassy, believed he was still in charge of his embassy. He was allowed to call out twice a day, once to his wife and once to his DCM. Ambassador Asencio, like the others, gave instructions, but those instructions were often countered by instructions given to the embassy from Washington. We regarded him as operating under duress and he indeed was under duress. The terrorists were members of the M-19 and although quite ruthless, they allowed the ambassadors some leeway. Asencio wanted to negotiate (as did the Israelis and the Vatican). We in Washington took a very much harder line. Asencio has never fully forgiven me for getting in his way, even though they were finally released.

The Dubs and Asencio incidents were significant because they both, in different ways, put to the test the basic U.S. policy, which was then as it is now - no negotiations, no concessions, no ransom. In neither case were we in control of the situation; there were other countries to deal with, some friendly and some not friendly (The Cuban and Afghan governments). Our ability to deal directly with the situation in Afghanistan was extremely limited although we had an open line to the embassy in Kabul at the time and did our best to try to dissuade the Russians from using force to rescue Ambassador Dubs. In the end, they took the matter into their own hands, and there was a shootout in which Ambassador Dubs was killed. On the other hand in Bogota, the outcome was a pacific one, partly because the families of the hostages organized a very substantial ransom notwithstanding our policy not to do so. In both cases, I received a lot of criticism from people not involved for the outcomes. It was a job in which there were few victories.

Q: I have read that during the kidnaping in Khartoum and the Sudan of our ambassador and DCM, Cleo Noel, as well as an American in Mexico, there was a lot of posturing by both President Nixon and people at the NSC to try to micromanage things to show how tough they were which was not at all helpful, because something like this has to be nuanced and it is not something you use the press to show that you are really tough. Did you have problems being able to keep it at certain levels so that it didn't get into the hands of the politicians?

QUAINTON: Yes. It was interesting that whenever there was a crisis we always set up our crisis center and depending on the nature of the incident we were always in touch with the appropriate agencies involved as well as the White House. I had a very good relationship with Bill Odum, then in charge of terrorism on the NSC staff. That helped a lot because by staying in touch with the person who had the responsibility in the White House for such issues, we were able to mitigate the pressures from the Cabinet level to demonstrate rapid results. The pressures were nothing like anything that occurred during the Iranian hostage situation which we can talk about another time.

The only incident during my tenure of any duration was the Asencio incident. Oh, I take that back. There was a Peace Corps volunteer who was held for a year and a half, Richard Starr, who was also ransomed but through the good offices of Jack Anderson. He used his personal foundation to raise money and one of his staff carried the ransom money to Bogota. Starr was eventually released. But, there was very little political interest in Starr's case. His mother tried very hard to create interest, to stir up the government. We were under some pressure to do something to get him out, but it was always manageable. Interestingly enough, Asencio was the ambassador who was responsible for managing the incident on the ground. But even in the Asencio case, the White House was fearful that there would be major concessions from the Colombians, that they would release prisoners as requested. Happily they never did that. The terrorists got money and safe passage to Cuba and all the hostages got out safely. But, there was pretty much a consensus of what ought to be done, and I must say I never felt enormous pressure to do things differently.

Only afterwards in one case, the Dubs case, was there any significant second guessing of what had happened. I was the target of an article in *The Washington Post* written by a former deputy assistant secretary of State, Steve Pieczenik, who claimed that I had given the order to the Russians to go in and shoot Dubs. There was no truth to that story, but it did lead to a very protracted investigation inside the Department trying to get a hold of all the people who had been sitting around the table that night and finding out what I actually said. But, inevitably when life is lost there is always the question of whether something could have been done differently.

In hijackings we were almost always secondary players because they were usually under the jurisdiction of the FAA or the FBI or both. In one case, we were able to provide a critical piece of information that enabled the U.S. government to manage the incident. An Irish airliner was hijacked flying from Dublin to Paris. On board there were a lot of people with names like O'Neill, etc. who might or might not have been Americans, so we took great interest in this case. The plane was forced to land on the French coast at Le Touquet by a terrorist who claimed to represent the Third Secret of Fatima. This was a group unknown in the counterterrorist files. The CIA did a great deal of research to figure out if this was a terrorist group. Happily, one of the members in my task force said he thought he knew the answer. He said that the terrorist had to be a crazy Catholic because the Third Secret of Fatima was the third of the three messages given by the Virgin Mary to the little girl at Fatima in Portugal. The Third Secret has never been revealed. It has been sealed and held by the Vatican ever since. And so it was. The hijacker was a deranged former monk who was trying to hold the Vatican ransom in order to get the

Third Secret of Fatima.

Q: I might say I have interviewed Bruce Flatin who was outside the hotel room where Spike Dubs was killed and Bruce said that we had made every effort to hold the Russians off, but they went in and afterwards he was of the impression that this KGB guy went in and killed Dubs. It is not proved, but the point is that there is some evidence that this might have happened.

QUAINTON: Yes, that is right. We never knew what actually happened. We thought they were going to hold off and they didn't, of course, and there was a terrible loss of life.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point and we will pick it up again by talking about the Iran takeover, the consequences from that and also Islamabad.

QUAINTON: And perhaps the development of a military counterterrorist capability which I had some involvement in.

Q: Other questions I would like to ask would be, during this whole time, what was the extent of the participation of the Soviet Union in this business.

QUAINTON: Okay.

Q: Tony, we are in counterterrorism and the things we want to cover are the Iran affair, Islamabad and then the Soviet participation in supporting terrorism and maybe that of some other countries, and you mentioned the building up a military capability response to terrorism.

You were in counterterrorism from when to when?

QUAINTON: From 1978 until 1981. The first year, before the hostage taking in Iran, the events that we dealt with were various hijackings of aircraft and the hostage taking involving a Peace Corps volunteer, Richard Starr in Colombia. Starr was eventually released in a very bizarre ransom payment. As a U.S. government employee the United States government was not a position, as a result of its policy, to engage in ransom negotiations, but Jack Anderson, the noted columnist, who had his own personal foundation, became interested in Richard Starr's case at the request of Richard Starr's mother, who lived in Washington State. She called us almost daily and used every contact she had to keep the question of the welfare and whereabouts of her son before the United States government. Jack Anderson did not have the same constraints as the U.S. government. He was willing to help Richard Starr's mother to find funds and we and the embassy, although not participating in the negotiations, in fact facilitated the access of one of Jack Anderson's associates bringing the ransom to Bogota and his contacts with the terrorists in Colombia.

The hijackings were all fairly routine affairs. They all were resolved peacefully. In each case we set up a task force in the operations center. The office for counterterrorism was responsible at that time for all task forces, and as the director I led them. It later changed and the responsibility passed to the geographic bureaus for managing incidents in their region. So, we developed slowly a crisis response capability drawing on the resources of other government agencies as appropriate.

In the course of 1979, one of the major concerns of the interagency counterterrorism working group was the adequacy of our response capability to deal with terrorist incidents. The Germans had already had a notable success in Mogadishu using the GSG9. The Israelis had had a great success at Entebbe using their counterterrorism force. The British had developed the 22nd SAS, a highly professional counterterrorism rescue force. And the French had also developed such a force, the GIGN.

Q: Did these forces do a lot of training and learning from each other?

QUAINTON: Indeed, there were very close relations. The British were considered the pioneers, but the Israelis and Germans, having had conspicuous successes, were regarded as very competent. I, in fact, during the course of 1979 visited all of these counterterrorism units and had discussions with their commanders and were shown examples of their capabilities. The United States, at that time, did not have a qualified counterterrorism unit, that is in 1978-79. There was an ad hoc group (Bluelight) which had been set up at Fort Bragg, but it was just that, an ad hoc group. It was quite proud of what it could do but did not have the same qualities of the other international units that I have mentioned.

At some point in 1978 or 1979 it was decided to create what has since become known as the Delta Force to replace the ad hoc group. Ironically, the commissioning exercise for the Delta Force took place on the same night that the hostages were taken in Iran. Our own capability came on line just at the moment that we were for the first time faced with a major hostage rescue situation. There had been individual Americans taken hostage before and some of them had died as you know in a variety of situations: in the Lebanon, the Sudan, and Guatemala where our ambassadors had been kidnaped and killed. At the time and indeed for some considerable time afterwards, the United States government did not acknowledge that there was anything called the Delta Force, and that may still be the official policy although so much has been written about Colonel Charles Beckwith and his men that it is hardly possible to say there is no such unit.

I was the principal point of contact for the Department of State with the military planners on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon and with the counterterrorist group at Fort Bragg. Very quickly after the Iran hostage incident broke out I was contacted by senior levels at the Pentagon asking whether I could be of help in a variety of ways, getting photographs out of Department records of all the hostages, etc. This was something that I could quite easily do, but I was quickly told at the very highest level that the Secretary of State would handle all contacts directly with the Pentagon with the Deputy Secretary acting as his deputy for the purpose of managing this crisis. This was a considerable shock to the

military planners who had been used to dealing at the working level with myself and others on my staff and were very reluctant to take routine requests for information up through the cabinet level to get decisions. But, as the crisis unfolded, as you may remember, it became an enormous political issue for the President and as decisions evolved towards a hostage rescue attempt, planning was handled by a very small group of people not including the office for counterterrorism. We were not participants in the planning in any way, either diplomatically or militarily.

We were somewhat involved with the task force that was created at the very start, for the first 24 hours, which was under my direction but it quickly developed into a political crisis of such importance that a whole separate team was brought together. It was a very large team which was organized within two or three weeks and operated around the clock for over 440 days until the hostages were finally released in early 1980. So, the office for combating terrorism was really kept aside from the Iran hostage situation, which was not in fact an obvious case of international terrorism as understood by classic counterterrorism theory.

Q: When this was being set up was a State Department expert in the country built into the system? I always think there is nothing worse than putting a bunch of very clever efficient military men into a foreign environment without somebody letting them understand what the environment is and that means really a State Department person.

QUAINTON: I can't answer that question. There may have been State Department officers who were seconded to this effort, although I don't believe there were. The effort relied very heavily on the CIA and, of course, they had considerable expertise in Iran as a result of their longstanding relationship with the Shah. There were many Farsi speaking CIA officers. Much of the preparation for the failed rescue relied on clandestine techniques and the establishment of all sorts of in-country capabilities which was handled by the CIA. The State Department was largely marginalized, as far as I could judge. Obviously the Secretary and Deputy Secretary were very much involved in discussions at the highest level. In fact, the Secretary resigned because he disagreed with the decision to attempt a rescue using the special capabilities that had been created in the course of that period from November onwards.

Q: In the judgment of your office during these 440 days, before the Delta Force made its effort to free the prisoners, was there a feeling that this was the type of situation where a rescue operation would work?

QUAINTON: We talked about this informally in the office without being privy to the details of the planning. I think it was seen by those of us who had been working for a year or more in the field that this would be enormously difficult and would depend to a very substantial degree on the intelligence which could be obtained about the location of the hostages within the embassy compound where they were being held. In fact, in all successful hostage rescue attempts, the key has been the ability to identify with great precision where the hostages are located. In fact, we never got to that point in the case of Teheran because the rescue force never got to Teheran. I'm not sure anyone could have

anticipated the dust storm, etc. Professional counterterrorist officials certainly didn't think of those sorts of problems but rather the specific problems of surprise, intelligence, location, etc. We were kept busy throughout that year on other counterterrorism business, so we didn't have any lack of work.

Q: What were some of the other issues that you were dealing with?

QUAINTON: Well, there were two other major incidents for which I had lead responsibility. One, was the kidnaping and subsequent execution of Ambassador Spike Dubs in Afghanistan, where I chaired the task force. It didn't last terribly long, less than 12 hours from the time he was captured until the Soviet military units stormed the hotel room in which he was being held and during which he was killed. The other was a 60 day long incident involving the hostage taking of our ambassador in Colombia, Diego Asencio, who was held with a dozen or more other ambassadors for two months in the embassy of the Dominican Republic.

The first incident was handled as a classic case of hostage taking. That is, we did what the text books recommended. We opened a line to our embassy, were in constant communication with them and they in turn were in constant communication with the hotel. There was a minute by minute dialogue with the embassy on what was going on and what could or could not be done to persuade the Russians and the Afghans to use restraint. In the end, of course, they didn't use restraint. We were never in control of the situation. As I have already mentioned, it was subsequently alleged in an article in *The Washington Post*, by a former deputy assistant secretary of State, Stephen Beczanic, that in fact, the task force and its director, myself, had ordered the Soviets to assault the room in order to free Ambassador Dubs. This caused a fair amount of consternation, particularly his charge that we were untrained amateurs. He was in the room as an advisor to the under secretary for Management. He was a trained psychiatrist as well as a Ph.D. in international relations, an extraordinarily able man who constantly chivvied the Department for its failures to develop a really professional crisis response capability. He believed this was a case of bungled crisis response, that we had not handled it as we should have. It is hard for me to be terribly dispassionate on this point; we did what we could, but we were not, it is fair to acknowledge, highly trained professional crisis managers.

Q: I have interviewed Bruce Flatin and Jim Taylor, both of whom talk about the efforts to try to stop this. They were in the hotel. Actually, Bruce had some rather disquieting thoughts about this that he is not quite sure that Spike was killed by the random shooting but right afterwards.

QUAINTON: Yes, we don't know. This has never become clear. Bruce and others were at the hotel but when the Soviets went in with some force there was a great deal of firing and the circumstances under which Ambassador Dubs was killed will always remain obscure.

The incident did lead to greater emphasis on the need to have better coordination and led

to the development of systematic crisis management exercises. We began to emphasize the concept that embassies ought to be prepared for hostage taking and other kinds of crises and be ready to organize themselves to deal with them. The Dubs kidnaping was the fourth, including an ambassador, and all four had ended in tragedy.

When Ambassador Asencio was taken hostage, we were better prepared. But the Asencio case was quite different from the others where the target was the American ambassador. In Bogota, Asencio was one target among many. There were a number of other cases involving Foreign Service officers who were kidnaped, usually individually; several of them ended successfully.

In the case of the take over of the Dominican Republic embassy by the M-19, the embassy was a target of opportunity as was the Japanese embassy in Peru 20 years later. Both were very carefully planned operations. Diego Asencio has written a book describing the incident called "Our Man Inside," which comments again rather pejoratively about the management of the crisis from the Washington end. This was a very different situation than the Dubs case where time was short, events moved very fast both from our perspective and the perspective of the embassy, and the ability to influence events was greatly limited. In the case of Colombia, however, the incident dragged on for two months and there was plenty of time to develop a strategy for dealing with the Colombian government, for dealing with other governments who had ambassadors inside, of which there were quite a number, and for coordinating everything with the embassy on a fairly meticulous basis.

Perhaps this wasn't true in the first few hours when we thought this was a very dangerous situation. There were quite a number of terrorists, they were playing football outside, and in their jogging suits they broke out their weapons and charged the embassy and took it over, eventually letting all of the hostages go except for some 15-16 ambassadors and a journalist who managed to stay there for some time taking pictures of the happy days inside. The terrorists eventually whittled down the numbers to a manageable one, keeping the ambassadors they thought were important, including our ambassador but also the Israeli, Egyptian, Vatican, and those of a number of Latin American countries.

The Uruguayan ambassador escaped causing great consternation among the remaining hostages who regarded him ever after as a traitor putting their lives at risk. The standard view is that you shouldn't try to escape unless you can get everybody out at the same time, because it would make conditions worse for those who remain. The Uruguayan got out safely through a bathroom window and the terrorists made sure that people didn't get out of that window again, but, in fact, it didn't change the day-to-day life of the other hostages.

The terrorists wanted money and the release of prisoners from Colombian jails. We were very reluctant to press the Colombian government to make concessions. I did not press them to make concessions on either of these points, but the hostages had a different point of view, including the United States hostage. They believed that with a little flexibility on the part of the Colombian government they could all be gotten out safely. There were

negotiations eventually set up under the auspices of the Red Cross in a trailer outside the door of the embassy in which the Mexican ambassador became the lead negotiator with the American and one of the other Latin Americans at his side. They, of course, were very keen to negotiate an outcome with concessions on the part of the Colombian government. This caused a great problem for us because we did not want to see a negotiated outcome which would result in concessions being made to the terrorists. And, yet, our man inside was quite enthusiastic at that prospect.

The instructions that he was given to stand back a little bit were very ill received by him. We gave these instructions to him through his DCM who was running the embassy. The ambassador took the view, however, that he was still ambassador and the DCM was not chargé. He was still in the country and hence gave the DCM orders and not the other way around. We regarded the situation, as you might expect, as one in which the ambassador was operating under duress, was not a free agent, and hence not the effective leader of the embassy. The DCM, Frank Criegler, who went on to be an ambassador himself, was the point of contact with the Colombian government.

Settlement was finally reached after 60 days. The ambassadors were released after their wives were able to raise something on the order of a quarter of a million dollars each for a package deal of several million dollars which was given in cash to the terrorists prior to their departure to Cuba. Again, this was not something that American counterterrorist policy favored, but events moved outside our control in terms of managing this aspect of the negotiation.

Q: How would ambassadors' wives be able to pick up a quarter of a million dollars?

QUAINTON: I venture to say if you have to find a quarter of a million dollars you can find a quarter of a million dollars - mortgage your house, borrow money from friends and others, etc. The same would be true for many diplomats who came from fairly wealthy backgrounds, Latin American diplomats for example. That was not an issue; it was how much they were going to put up and whether it would be sufficient. We were not a party to that in any way.

Q: What about the Israelis? The Israeli ambassador was there most of the time.

QUAINTON: He was there for the full time. The Israelis through a special envoy they sent out from Tel Aviv pressed the Colombian government very hard to make concessions. The Israelis do not have a no concessions policy. They, themselves, have made concessions and released prisoners when their own officials have been taken hostage and their view is rather different from ours. The two countries who were most keen on concessions were the Israelis and the Vatican. The Vatican was very anxious to get their nuncio out. They also sent in a special envoy, their nuncio from Argentina, Pio Laghi, who subsequently became the apostolic delegate and then the first nuncio to the United States.

But there were all sorts of bizarre twists to this story. The journalist who was inside managed to get some of his photographs out through the food packages and other things

that were sent in by the Red Cross. Among the pictures that were shown in the Bogota press was a picture of the nuncio washing dishes. The Vatican exercised considerable pressure on the Colombian government to get the issue suppressed. Archbishops are not to be seen washing dishes, at least in a Catholic country. This, in Rome's view, was not an appropriate way to display the Pope's representative in public. What had happened was that the hostages developed a rota, and everybody shared responsibilities to keep the place clean and the cooking done. There were no first class citizens in this regard.

Q: Was there a review of our policy which always sounds so tough - we don't pay ransom? You know it goes back to Jefferson's time - millions for defense but not one cent for tribute. We actually did pay to get the prisoners out of the Algerian hands, or when the Philadelphia ran aground. I have talked to people who have been on the ground dealing with a couple of situations. Tony Gillespie, for example, in Mexico. You had the Kissinger/Nixon guys talking tough when maybe it would be best to keep quiet.

QUAINTON: We consistently talk tough. For the best part of 20 years, it has been the policy of both political parties through various administrations to maintain a no concessions policy. That hasn't stopped us, as I have indicated, from winking at concessions made by others who were not directly under the control of the U.S. government. Indeed, when it came to ransoming Richard Starr, there were discussions on how the money, which Jack Anderson had raised, would be brought into the country. A consular officer went to the airport to make sure that Anderson's associates' luggage was not searched by overzealous customs officials who might be taken aback by the rather large amounts of cash being brought in. So, we were ambiguous on this. Every case of this kind went at least to the deputy secretary for guidance. It was always a very hot political issue as to what we should do, but we pretty much stuck to our policy throughout the three years in which I was involved in counterterrorism. We have now tried very hard to project this policy onto the international stage, and I think it was at the Bonn summit, one of the first of the group of seven summits that terrorism was put on the agenda and an effort was made to develop common counterterrorism policies on issues such as negotiations. The G-7 countries, in turn, worked closely in the Special Committee on Terrorism in the General Assembly to get tough resolutions passed which would reinforce the international consensus against terrorism and against making concessions to terrorists.

Q: There was a mob attack on our embassy in Islamabad. Was this again one of these things that happened so quickly that there was hardly time to have any response or result before anything could have been cranked up?

QUAINTON: It was over quite quickly. A major lesson was learned which led to further refinements of our crisis planning guidance for embassies. It turned out that both the ambassador and DCM were not in the embassy when the mob took it over, and it was not clear who was in charge, who was to manage the internal defense of the embassy. Was it the senior military officer, the political counselor, or the security officer? Various aspects of the defense were handled by different people. This was of great importance once they withdrew into the vault and were in danger of actually being fried to death in a building

that was burning around them. It is now an absolute requirement that there be a chain of command at every embassy that goes beyond the ambassador and the DCM, so it is understood in advance who will give the orders and who has the authority to do so.

This was not a terrorist incident in the traditional sense. This was a mob worked up in the aftermath of an incident in Mecca, if I am not mistaken, in which the United States was popularly thought to have been involved. As in Teheran, it wasn't carefully planned; there was no political purpose except to say how wicked the Americans were. They weren't holding the Americans to get something, but just to make a point. This is very different from all the other cases that I have mentioned over the years, where there were specific demands being levied on the victim country.

Q: This was also a period when you had home-grown student radicals. I was in Italy from 1979-81 and I know we were very concerned about the Red Brigades who were going around doing nasty things mainly towards Italians but eventually went after one of our generals. I don't know if the Bader-Meinhof gang was still going around but at least there were similar gangs around.

QUAINTON: The Bader-Meinhof, the Red Army Faction, the Japanese Red Army. There were a whole series of these extreme radical groups, all small and bent on total destruction of the modern capitalist state.

Q: Really anarchists, but well armed anarchists.

QUAINTON: That's right and there was a whole series of killings and kidnappings in Germany by the Meinhof gang. Terrorism in that period really had three dimensions that we worried about. One was Latin American terrorism, largely Colombian and Central American. There the terrorists were radical, presumed to be supported by the Cubans through the Soviets. Then there were the three radical groups I just mentioned, the Red Army Faction, the Red Brigades and the Japanese Red Army. They were all small, disciplined with no pretensions to take over government. The Latin American terrorists groups all hoped ultimately to become the government of the country.

A third group which we haven't mentioned were the Palestinians. They were composed of many groups which engaged in terrorism, the Population Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Fatah, the militant branch of the PLO. There were a whole series of Palestinian radical groups whose purpose was to gain Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people. They believed that it was necessary to take reprisals against those states who supported the state of Israel, notably the United States. They were a very difficult set of groups to deal with.

A fourth group, which had an American connection at the time, and which seems a long way away today, was the Irish Republican Army which did almost all of its fund raising in the United States, in South Boston and elsewhere. We were very reluctant to take any action to control this fundraising, even though the British repeatedly pointed out to us that the money so obtained was used to purchase weapons that were used to support

terrorist acts against British forces in Northern Ireland. We stood back for domestic political reasons and because we were never in the middle, and were not targeted as we had been by almost all the other groups.

Among the real questions that were always on the table were, should you spend time thinking about the causes of why people embark on violence, could you anticipate situations, which lead to violence, could you find solutions to the problems that promoted violence. In most cases there was no easy answer for the United States. The demands of the Basques, the Corsicans, the Palestinians for the creation of political units out of existing states was one that we never could support. It was equally unlikely that we would support the radical groups whose antipathy was to the whole concept of modern capitalism, even though they had no territorial agenda.

One of the issues that was also out on the table and which I mentioned at the beginning was whether this was all orchestrated from Moscow. Were the Soviets behind it all? There were profound differences of view on this point. Clare Sterling wrote a book which demonstrated to her satisfaction that virtually all of these groups were in fact agents of the Soviet Union...

Q: Including the assassination attempt on the Pope.

QUAINTON: The evidence in my view was circumstantial. There were very few groups where you could convincingly argue that they acted at Moscow's direction. Certainly, there were a lot of groups who received financial assistance from Moscow or from the German Democratic Republic or other Eastern European states. Broadly, these groups had objectives which were consistent with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. But, I think, there is no question that we also recognized that getting rid of the Soviet Union wouldn't eliminate the Palestinian terrorist threat.

Q: But, you do as we have seen get rid of a certain infrastructure for particularly some of these other terrorist groups, including some of the Palestinian types who were in Eastern Europe having training, etc.

QUAINTON: Yes, that's right. There were training bases all over the place in the Yemen, Syria, Iraq. Those were places where training was done for some of the Palestinian groups. Now you can say the Soviets supported the Syrians and the Iraqis. There was a sort of chain that went backwards. They were sympathetic to groups that could plausibly be described as national liberation movements, and the Soviets took the position pretty consistently that struggles of national liberation were not terrorism, they were wars and in wars violence was one of those things that you might deplore but that you couldn't escape, particularly in a cause that was just. We always tried to take a position, pretty successfully, that if innocents were being targeted it didn't matter what the cause was. You have to protect the innocent even in circumstances where the underlying equities of justice were not necessarily clear.

Q: We have that attitude except where it was inconvenient. We come back to the Irish

thing where you have all these Americans, including Senator Kennedy, who were absolutely unwilling to see that the IRA was not a benevolent organization.

QUAINTON: This was the one case where Americans saw justice on the side of the people using rifles, and our posture was therefore less clear cut than it was with other kinds of terrorism. The whole concept of innocence is a very tricky one. In the end, almost all of our successful international efforts focused on aviation terrorism. There are a series of conventions, the Hague, Montreal, etc., designed to get a consensus that hijacking and bombing of aircraft were not legitimate under any circumstances. And there we got fairly wide consensus even from countries that otherwise supported terrorism that hijacking was an inappropriate tactic to use to achieve political agendas. But, when you get to the Middle East, for Palestinians at the time, there were no innocent Israelis, so you couldn't define the problem in terms of people in uniform. We, of course, never accept that there were no innocents.

Q: This was some years before, but we went through a spate of airplane hijackings in the United States. The hijackers would try to go to Cuba. It seemed that the police had almost the policy of whoever did it, as soon as they had a chance to get a hijacker in their sights, they would kill them. A significant number of hijackings ended with a sniper picking off the hijacker. This was not during your time but earlier on. All of a sudden, those incidents died out.

QUAINTON: Well, in fact, hijacking became much more difficult by the early 1980s, when there was a spate of hijackings from Cuba to the United States. There was a real reluctance to prosecute the hijackers because many Americans were sympathetic to their political cause which was to escape from communist Cuba and come to the United States and freedom.

Q: Was Libya a problem as far as you were concerned?

QUAINTON: Libya was considered one of the principal patron states of terrorism. In fact, I was sent on a mission to Tripoli after several American embassies had been attacked. In Tripoli, our embassy was besieged by an angry mob and the Department closed the embassy. Before that happened I met with the foreign minister who assured me that the government of Libya had no interest in terrorism and had a policy that it would not allow hijacked aircraft to land in Libya, wouldn't make concessions to terrorists, etc.

Q: You were there not to look at the political problems but to make sure efforts were made so people wouldn't get kidnaped or taken hostage or to make clear there would be some response?

QUAINTON: That's right. M/CT had essentially three or four roles. One was the leadership of the interagency working group on terrorism which brought together all agencies that had some responsibility for combating terrorism domestically and in foreign environments and for making sure the lead agency's responsibilities were clearly understood - the FAA for hijacking, the FBI for domestic terrorism, etc. That was an

important role because when you had over 25 agencies with a counterterrorism role you wanted them all to sing from the same music or at the very minimum understand what others were doing.

Second was the international function of trying to build an international coalition through the United Nations and the Group of Seven. Third was what you quite rightly described as making sure that at least for our own diplomatic establishments we had in place appropriate guidance and policies so if a mission was faced with a terrorist incident or was itself attacked, it would be able to act in an expeditious way with minimum guidance from Washington. Contingency planning took up a lot of our time. And the fourth part of our work was, of course, the actual crisis management function which throughout this period we carried out for the Department.

Q: I talked to people who have been in war games where State Department and military do things jointly. One of the things that happens is that the State Department people are more willing to use force than the military and the military turn to diplomacy. As you were in on the relatively early stages of this office, I was wondering whether you saw any reflection of that attitude as you were dealing with the military?

QUAINTON: If anything, the reverse. So much attention was given to the development of a military counterterrorist capability, first the Delta Force and then the Joint Special Operations Command which resulted from the hearings which were held following the failure of the rescue attempt of the hostages in Teheran. In that case, clearly the principle organizational problem was the lack of adequate coordination among the various services that had partial responsibility for logistics, transport, etc. This was all rectified in the aftermath. Another result was that the exercises which were carried out were usually led by the military who wanted the scenario to end with use of force in order to test their ability to move people in a variety of carefully constructed ways to a target, assault the target and get the hostages out safely. It became the role of the State Department players in such exercises to stress the political difficulties in getting host government authorization for military use in a wide variety of contexts.

I remember one exercise incident that we did jointly with the Canadians simulating a takeover of our consulate general in Toronto in which the Canadian crisis management structure participated fully. They had a national structure which to this day we do not have. Cabinet members were involved and it operated out of the cabinet crisis room in Ottawa, in this case with the full participation not only of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but also the provincial police in Ottawa. As we played this through on the American side, questions arose about whether we could use our military capability. The Canadians were horrified that we would even consider doing such a thing in their country. But, the whole structure that we had created presupposed, if not the use of military capability, the pre-positioning of it. The worst case scenario approach always led to military deployment to the nearest possible place. We at the State Department were constantly in the position of raising red flags and saying this wasn't going to be so easy in this country or that country. I think the State Department was very skittish about the use of the military and always felt, with the legacy of the failed Iranian rescue attempt in

mind, that the risks were very high and that the political costs of failure would be equally high. So typically counterterrorist philosophy was to play for time, more time and more time until such point as the terrorists themselves gave in, or by taking lives provided a bases for the use of force.

Q: Some of the successful efforts on the part of the Germans and the Israelis were in places like Uganda and Mogadishu, places where quite frankly we didn't care much about what the country cared about. We would care about Canada or something happening in Juarez or someplace like that.

QUAINTON: That's right.

Q: When you left there in 1981 did you feel the structure for dealing with counterterrorism was a better structure than when you arrived?

QUAINTON: That question was put to me by President Reagan's team in February, 1981. I was called one Saturday by Secretary Haig, shortly after the administration had taken over and told that on Monday at 1:00 I would be briefing the President and the National Security Council on the state of our readiness. The President wanted to find out whether we were better off or worse off, what progress we had made in developing a policy and structure for dealing with terrorism. The Secretary then asked me, "Tell me what you are going to say to the President." So, I told him. Some of it was that we had come a long way in terms of improving our military capability and that we had in place a pretty good coordination mechanism which defined crisis roles in a variety of scenarios. I gave that briefing to the President, who was joined by the Vice President, the head of CIA, the head of the FBI, and a number of National Security Council members. They seemed reasonably satisfied. The person who took the greatest interest in the briefing was Ed Meese who asked a number of pertinent questions. After a couple of jelly beans, the President dozed off. That in itself was quite unnerving.

Q: Mease was the attorney general.

QUAINTON: Yes. He was genuinely interested in what could be done to improve the quality of our coordination and our response capabilities, etc. I thought that was a very good approach. I stayed on for another six months so there was no dramatic change made by the Reagan administration.

One other aspect of counterterrorism planning that is worth commenting on was that already in those years, certainly by 1981, we were interested in the whole question of chemical and biological terrorism. We had a number of exercises, scenarios developed by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, which began the process of getting the United States government thinking about how we would handle these very difficult issues. These issues had become more complex as it has become increasingly apparent to senior policymakers that the ability to develop chemical biological weapons was very much easier than anybody had previously thought. This was apparent to us in the counterterrorism world in 1981 when several ineffective efforts were made by criminals

to poison food and bottled drinks, but the basic focus always remained on the kind of terrorism which we had experienced in the past, hostage taking, hijacking, bombings of various kinds.

The other area where there was great concern was the vulnerability of offshore oil. Oil platforms were thought to be very vulnerable. Also electric power grids. You don't hear very much about either of those these days, but the Navy developed Seals with the capability of dealing with hostage taking on oil rigs or ships at sea. Some thought was given to problems of electric power grids, although protecting them turns out to be extraordinarily difficult, as difficult as it is to deal with chemical and biological weapons, because a few rifle shots in the right places will do an enormous amount of damage. To protect against any possibility of that sort is very hard.

Q: I would like to go back to the briefing that you gave to the President and his group. A new President coming from the right of the spectrum. Going back to the Nixon/Kissinger time, these were two men who were talking very tough and one had the feeling that it was political posturing and they were making the job more difficult rather than helping. Were you concerned beforehand that you might get into something of this nature?

QUAINTON: It was interesting that before I went to the White House for the briefing, the Secretary told me that I might be met with some suspicion by the President and others because I will be seen as the Carter counterterrorist and the Carter administration was seen as weak on terrorism. I don't think it was weak, but certainly the perception of Carter was a very negative one in the incoming administration.

One of the things that did change was that almost from the first day he took office, Secretary Haig announced in a message to all our ambassadors that counterterrorism would become a major priority of the administration. The interesting result was that we were inundated with messages from our ambassadors around the world explaining what good things they were doing in terms of counterterrorism. It was reminiscent of the arrival of the Carter administration and the announcement that human rights was the major Department policy concern of that administration, when ambassadors immediately sent messages on what they were doing on human rights.

One of the things that is most striking to me looking back over a long career is the desire of career ambassadors to be highly responsive to political leadership. The day that political agendas change, career officers do the maximum to show that they are on board and that people are not fighting the new administrative's agenda, although many in the new administration would like one to think that career people are wedded to the agenda of the predecessor administration.

Q: You left in the summer of 1981?

QUAINTON: Yes, early summer of 1981. I was assigned as DCM in Rome to work with Maxwell Rabb, who was to be our ambassador. I met Rabb a number of times and he eventually chose me. I started studying Italian. Then Tom Enders, assistant secretary for

Latin American affairs, called me and asked if I would like to go as ambassador to Nicaragua. I told him I wouldn't, having spent many years in the trenches of the third world, I would prefer to stick with what I had been assigned to, which was three or four years in Rome as DCM, an excellent large management job. I thought no more about it until some three weeks later I met Enders on the steps of the Department one evening and he said, "Oh, I was going to give you a call, Tony, Secretary Haig has fixed it for you to go to Nicaragua." I said, "Well, if that is what Secretary Haig wants to do that is what I will do, of course." So I then shifted gears. I had never served in Latin America. My wife and I went into an intensive five months of Spanish study while the paperwork confirming me as ambassador went forward. I didn't in fact get to Nicaragua until March 15, 1982, the first day of the secret war, because of a variety of bureaucratic and congressional delays.

The background to my arrival was that the Reagan administration had decided to pick up on a number of "findings" that the Carter administration had put in place allowing covert operations to go forward against the Sandinista government. But it took quite a long time to crank these operations up and in fact the first one did not take place until March 15, 1982, the very day we arrived. Prior to that, I watched the evolution of our policy as I was studying Spanish and reading in. Tom Enders went to Managua and made a major effort to cut a deal with the Sandinistas, a deal that was much criticized by some quarters in the administration as going too far in offering a deal on condition that the Sandinistas desisted from their support for the FSLN in El Salvador.

Q: You were in Nicaragua from March, 1982 until when?

QUAINTON: Until May of 1984.

Q: Could you give a quick background of what was the situation in Nicaragua by the time you arrived and why it was like that?

QUAINTON: The Sandinistas came to power in July, 1979 with considerable American support. Larry Pezzullo, whose place I had taken had engineered the withdrawal of Somoza and his regime. In the first period after the Revolution, there were quite cordial relations with the Sandinistas to whom we provided a considerable amount of economic assistance. There was a Peace Corps program. The Carter administration was very hopeful that the Sandinistas would turn out to be acceptable friends of the United States. During the two and a half years that ensued from the revolution to my arrival there had been a fairly steady erosion of American support for the Sandinistas. There were a number of reasons for that erosion. The rhetoric of the Sandinistas remained extremely hostile to the United States. They constantly reminded the people of Nicaragua of the history of United States intervention on the side of all sorts of powerful Nicaraguans, most recently the Somozas. There had, in fact, been a predisposition of the United States to intervene. Marines had been in Nicaragua for much of the 1920s. This left a very bitter taste and the Sandinistas exploited this legacy on every possible occasion. They put a lot of pressure on American businesses, and many of them withdrew, although at the time I got there there were still some important American businesses in Nicaragua including

ESSO which ran the country's only oil refinery and controlled all of the petroleum in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas put increasing pressure on the small political parties who were on the fringes of the political system and growing pressure on the one independent newspaper, "La Prensa," which was run by the son of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, who was murdered a year before the revolution. His murder was one of the triggering events that brought the middle class over to the side of the Sandinistas in the period immediately before the triumph of the revolution in July, 1979.

So, relations were already souring and at the same time in Salvador things were not going terribly well. The Salvadoran guerrillas were getting substantial support from Cuba, but from Cuba through Nicaragua. So there was a real desire in the Reagan administration to put the screws on the Sandinistas, and I think already by the time I arrived there were those in the administration who believed that the only solution to the Central American problem was to remove the Sandinistas from power. It is, of course, an impossible situation for a diplomat: to have two policies in effect. One policy was that of the State Department, the Secretary and Tom Enders, which ultimately said, "Yes, let's put pressure on the Sandinistas, but let's find a deal under which they will change their behavior in exchange for a decent relationship with the United States." In the White House, there was no deal. There the domino theory was much in vogue and many White House officials believed that if we did not get rid of the Sandinistas, revolutionary Marxism would roll from Sandinista Nicaragua through Salvador to Guatemala and into south Texas. There was never very much evidence for the likelihood of that happening, but it was passionately believed by many in the administration, particularly by the director of CIA, William Casey. He became a very critical figure and advisor to the President on this issue in terms of the analysis that he provided and ultimately the covert operations that were launched in support of the Contras against the Sandinistas beginning in 1983-84.

The Secret War began on March 15, 1982, when the CIA, using Nicaraguan agents, blew up the bridge that connected Nicaragua with Honduras. I stepped off the plane with my wife in a blaze of klieg lights and microphones and was asked what I thought about the developments that morning, the blowing up of the bridges and how that would affect bilateral relations between the United States and Nicaragua. I had not been told that this event was to take place on this day, although I knew that the President had approved a finding which would allow for certain "harassing" measures against the Sandinistas.

Q: How did you respond? Was there any feeling on your part that this was designed for the activists to hurt the American ambassador's ability to deal with the situation?

QUAINTON: No, throughout the time I was there the covert operations that took place were rarely constrained by any sense of timing in relation to other political events that were going on. The CIA had a planning process of their own out at Langley. A good example of that, which comes much later in my stay, was the visit by Gary Hart and William Cohen, both distinguished senators, to Central America. Cohen was a member of the Intelligence Oversight Committee. On the day that they were to arrive in Managua a small plane flying out of Costa Rica bombed the airport in Managua and crashed into the

VIP waiting lounge. It crashed because the little plane carried two 500 pound bombs, and when they were pushed out the door the plane flipped over because of the change in weight and crashed. It was not a very distinguished operation. In any case, Hart and Cohen were in the air en route to Managua when this event took place. Nobody in Washington thought that this might be a bad day for this operation. The Sandinistas took great advantage of this miscue. I can still remember, after a flurry of messages with our embassy in Tegucigalpa where Hart and Cohen were, that we got authorization for them to come ahead as there wasn't any significant damage to the airport. They arrived and the Sandinistas immediately showed them the VIP lounge in which they would have been waiting had they come on schedule as well as the crashed plane and pilot's body parts strewn around. This created a very negative attitude in those two senators about the quality of the covert operations of the CIA.

There was no suggestion and never has been that the day of March 15 was chosen to embarrass me. I don't think the CIA knew when I was going to arrive.

Q: I take it you waffled?

QUAINTON: Yes. I said that I looked forward to discussing these difficult issues with Commandante Ortega.

Q: Before you went to Managua you said you had five months to learn Spanish and get yourself into the situation. Was the split apparent between the true believers within the White House and those within the State Department who were trying to come to an agreement?

QUAINTON: It was clear to me that, particularly after the Enders mission failed and when what was promised by him to the Sandinistas was not delivered in the late autumn of 1981, there was a faction that did not want to cut a deal with the Sandinistas. On the other hand, it was politically impossible to make that public policy as early as 1982 and so there was a series of secret efforts throughout my tenure to explore a deal. Richard Stone, a former senator, was made a special envoy, and Tony Motley, who had been a political appointee ambassador to Brazil and replaced Enders as assistant secretary, also came down on an unpublicized mission. There were a variety of efforts which the State Department made and supported to see if there wasn't some way to get a negotiated outcome rather than to continue down the track of violence and Contra supported efforts to overthrow the regime. These efforts by 1984 already were highly controversial, highly costly and in fact provided great plausibility for the hostile rhetoric of the Sandinista regime. The short term effects were to make life very much more difficult for the friends of the United States inside Nicaragua, the private sector, church and others. So, in order to provide cover for the administration's policies of support to the Contras, the State Department was allowed to try the negotiating track, although there was never really serious support from the White House for this effort.

It was a very difficult situation for me. I remember on the third anniversary of the revolution in 1982, the Sandinistas celebrated in Masaya, one of the towns just south of

Managua, and there was an extraordinary speech by Daniel Ortega of incredible hostility toward Reagan personally which accused him of having Nicaraguan blood on his hands. I got up and walked out of this particular speech to a fair amount of attention. As the American ambassador, I had to. The event, however, was more than just a speech against the United States. It had a very powerful religious quality to it. At some point early on before Ortega spoke, one of the other nine commandantes of the revolution read out the Sandinista mythology. It surely had the flavor of the early church. The first name of each soldier who had died for the Revolution was read out one by one, and after each one, this huge audience of a quarter million people would shout “presente,” they live still, they are alive. There was the sense of the saints marching together to the promised land. It was very powerful. One of the most common slogans all over Nicaragua at the time was “Sandino ayer, Sandino hoy, Sandino mañana” (Sandino yesterday, Sandino today, Sandino tomorrow - an echo of St. Paul). There was a conscious effort to play on the fervor of those who had been part of the Revolution. They were very young, of course.

Almost every young person in Nicaragua had been affected by the Revolution. The year before we got to Nicaragua in 1981, the Sandinistas organized a literacy campaign. It was an extraordinary event. The high schools of Nicaragua were closed and every high school student was sent into the countryside to teach literacy to the villagers. In fact, the Sandinistas got a UNESCO medal for this campaign. It had a tremendous impact on the young people of Nicaragua, particularly the middle class who, had seldom been in a village in the interior. Now they had spent a year teaching Spanish to villagers. Many of the young were caught up in the Revolution. Even those who hadn’t fought were tremendously impacted in this early stage by the rhetoric of the revolution. That changed, of course, as Contra fighting built up and the Sandinistas were forced to impose conscription in order to combat the organized army coming down from the north. And, of course, conscription was very, very unpopular. It forced a lot of kids to fight who had no desire to fight and whose parents did not want them to fight either. There were casualties which were not popular. Across the entire political spectrum, the sense of martyrdom, which existed in a profound way when people died in 1977-79, began to evaporate.

Q: Senator Jessie Helms was a very powerful figure. Central America was almost the red meat that had been thrown to the right wing of the Republican Party. This is where they concentrated. How did you fare during your confirmation hearing?

QUAINTON: There was no hostile questioning. I think it helped having been associated with counterterrorism for three years because that was a very popular program with Republicans. Inadequate as they may have thought the counterterrorist program to have been, it gave me quite good credentials for dealing with what the Republicans perceived to be a kind of terrorist regime. In fact, there was never a security problem involving the American embassy. The Sandinistas went out of their way to make sure that nothing happened to us. They were much affected by the incident of Grenada. They perceived that the United States was looking for excuses to intervene directly with its own military forces. I don’t think they ever were at risk, but I can still remember the interior minister, Thomas Borge, who was designated as the principal point of contact with Americans, calling me over to his house and saying, “Look, we have been watching Grenada and we

want to assure you that there will be no provocations here. There will be no American hostages, and indeed, if you tell me how many buses you would need to evacuate the Americans if you want to evacuate them, I will make sure they are permanently at your disposal.”

Q: When you arrived, what was your assessment that you were getting both from what you read and from your staff at the embassy of the Sandinista regime and did this change over the years you were there?

QUAINTON: The people who had been there for several years, and there weren't very many of them, were increasingly disillusioned with the Sandinistas. They had come with high hopes. They had believed the Sandinista's populist rhetoric and they saw that rhetoric being betrayed. People who came about the time I did, in the summer of 1982, were still predisposed to give the Sandinistas the benefit of the doubt. I certainly was. The rhetoric in Washington seemed to be out of line with the reality. There was still a very vibrant private sector. Land was largely in private hands. The cotton and coffee industries were functioning pretty well. There had been none of the overt hostility to the church that had been seen by the third year of the Cuban revolution. By the third year of the Cuban revolution all foreign missionaries had been expelled. Like Cuba and many other Latin American countries, missionaries, Catholic missionaries in particular, were predominant in the local churches. The Sandinistas tolerated a whole range of missionary activity. It seemed to me to be a situation which was very fluid and open, but there was a real tendency in Washington to put a label on it, to call Nicaragua another Cuba. It wasn't another Cuba and it never became another Cuba. But, some people, I suppose, would differ about that.

I quickly got to know the leaders of the revolution. I knew three or four of the commandantes quite well. I got to know top economic figures both inside and outside the government. All in all, I was quite sympathetic to the Sandinistas and what they were trying to do in Nicaragua. It was a country that had suffered greatly under the Somoza regime, and I was inclined to give the Sandinistas the benefit of the doubt. Nicaragua needed a revolution, or at least that was how it seemed to me.

The embassy was quite divided. Some of my colleagues shared my views and some were already of the view that this was a Marxist-Leninist regime and that we had to do whatever we could to stop it or thwart it. It was very difficult situation actually because there was always tension as we talked about policy choices and what we could or should do to influence the Sandinistas. There was quite a spectrum of views represented, much more than you would find in a normal embassy.

Throughout the time, I maintained an open door policy. Any American citizen who wanted to come and see me could do so. There were enormous numbers that came. They came from all sorts of different perspectives, although the vast majority were hostile to the Reagan administration. There was a steady stream of journalists, church men and women from all the major denominations, etc. They were very suspicious of the Reagan administration's policy towards Central America. They were much caught up with social

justice agenda which was propounded by the Sandinista government. I remember one of the very first groups that came to see me was a group of priests and nuns. After I had laid out for them our policy with regard to Nicaragua, they asked if they might pray. This was a new experience for me, at least in the ambassador's office, but we all stood up. They asked to join hands. So there was the American ambassador holding hands with a group of nuns and priests [who were] praying for the overthrow of the Reagan administration! After that, I decided I would always be accompanied by at least one junior officer who needed this exposure to the views of his/her fellow citizens. Every Thursday, there was also a demonstration outside the embassy by Americans. Sometimes it was very large and sometimes it was small. These were not crazies, but fellow citizens deeply disturbed by the trend of American policy. Their hostility intensified as time went on. As we mined the ports, blew up Nicaragua's oil pipeline, and did a whole series of bad things, the anti-American rhetoric of the Americans became more shrill. This, in turn, exacerbated the tension inside the embassy. Many officers were resentful at these groups which were coming down to lecture us about the regime, when we, in fact, knew better than they.

I remember one delegation that came from Hollywood. They were really wound up ideologically, much more so than the church groups. I didn't meet with them in my office, as I normally would have, because the group was too big. At the end of my presentation, one of them put up his hand and said it was a fascinating presentation and he had never heard so many lies in one presentation before. He wanted me to know that the next time there were Nuremburg trials, I would be guilty.

That was heady stuff for an ambassador, actually. This constant drumbeat of moral indignation which came from both sides was hard to take. There was the moral indignation from the White House at what the Sandinistas had done to the church, etc. and there was the indignation of the American churches about the violations of international law, etc. It was the only post that I served in over a long career where there was constant questioning of the rightness of American policy, both in its detail and overall substance. Even people who were anti-Sandinista in the embassy often thought that sending a plane to bomb Managua on the day of the Cohen and Hart visit was screwy beyond belief. Washington's tactics were often criticized. But, the CIA had the ear of the president and convinced the National Security Advisor, Judge Clark, who had been not a particularly distinguished deputy secretary of State and who was not very knowledgeable, that covert operations would bring the Sandinistas down sooner rather than later.

Q: There are a couple of questions I would like to ask and then we will move on. Did you have problems with junior officers and mid-grade officers who wanted to go off on a different tack? Sometimes they are not as professional and maybe blasé as one gets later on. That is one question. Two, you obviously had a CIA operation. What was your feeling about what they were doing and what you were being informed of? And then, could you give me an estimate of how you viewed the Sandinista leadership when you arrived in March, 1982 and how you saw them develop during that period? And then we will pick up essentially what was going on during this period there.

QUAINTON: I would like to go into all of those things, and of course we will want to

say a fair amount about the visit of the Kissinger Commission to Central America, which came in November, 1983 and which ultimately led to my recall from Nicaragua. This will remind us of things to cover next time.

Q: Today is May 4, 1998. Tony we have already discussed how you became ambassador to Nicaragua and something about going there. So, we are now at the core of how you dealt with it. How did you view the leadership of the Sandinistas?

QUAINTON: The Sandinista government operated at several different levels. There were the nine commandantes of the revolution who represented three separate ideological factions. Of those nine only one went back to the very origins of the FSLN, the Sandinista Liberation Movement, and that was Tomas Borge, the minister of the interior. The Ortega brothers were very powerful figures. One was a member of a triumvirate that was the nominal head of state; the other was the minister of defense. There was a troika, composed of two non-commandantes - Rafael Cordova Rivas, a leftist, fuzzy-minded cattleman; the other, a novelist, an intellectual; the third was Daniel Ortega himself. I presented my credentials to Rafael Cordova Rivas, who was part of this troika, head of state, but my important dealings were always with the commandantes. Daniel Ortega was, in fact, the real head of state. Every visiting delegation made a call on him to express either their solidarity or their outrage about Sandinista policies, depending on the nature of the delegation. Tomas Borge was designated by the commandantes to be the point of contact with the United States government, and in my second year, he came to my Fourth of July party surrounded by other senior Sandinistas. We took this to be a gesture, an effort to see whether there could not be some limited improvement in the relationship between our two governments. The third Commandante with whom I dealt was the intellectual of the group, Bayardo Arce, perhaps the most radical of the nine commandantes. He and I frequently met and talked frankly and freely about policy issues. He was probably the smartest of the commandantes, although another, Jaime Wheelock, with whom I had almost no dealings, also had the reputation for very considerable brains. Luis Carrión was the only one of the nine who had been educated in the United States. He had gone to Exeter for a year and spoke English, although he never spoke English with me. He had been chosen by President Somoza as the smartest boy in Nicaragua and was sent away with a gold wrist watch and a full scholarship to Exeter for a year. Then he was at Rensselaer Polytech for a period of several years thereafter. But the three that I mentioned were the ones with whom I had the most to do. They came from different factions. I knew all of the others to one degree or another, but they were not central to U.S.-Nicaragua relations.

At the same time, there was also a whole network of private sector organizations with which I maintained contact led by the organization of industrialists in Nicaragua (Cosep). The then head of Cosep is now the vice president of Nicaragua.

So, there were always two large groups of people, the opposition and the government, with whom I was in contact on a daily basis and with whom I discussed the substance of

U.S.-Nicaraguan issues. The most important issue throughout the time I was there was Cuban aid to Salvador, much of which passed through Nicaragua. We were extremely adamant that that aid flow would have to stop, if there were to be any major improvement in relations. Actually, by 1983 the Sandinistas did not believe that even by stopping the aid to Salvador our animosity to them would decline. At one point, I was called in by the minister of interior, Tomas Borge, and confronted on this issue. He asked what it would take to improve relations. I told him that it would take a termination of the direct support by the FSLN of the FMLN. He said with a twinkle in his eye, "I don't believe you. I don't think that could change anything. But, for the moment let's assume that there is such aid and that we would stop it. What would you do if we did?" I said, "Well, I certainly think Washington would respond in some positive way." He looked at me and said, "Well, consider it done. Your government has the capacity to monitor everything that goes in and out of this country and El Salvador. Come back in a month's time and tell me how things are going."

I reported this to Washington in a very limited distribution cable which got even more limited distribution once the text was scrutinized by people in the White House. For a month, in fact, there were no discernible shipments of arms out of Nicaragua to Salvador, but nothing changed at the Washington end. Borge called me in again and said, "What did I tell you? This was just a pretense." Now you can argue, of course, whether one month is long enough, whether there was anything serious in the change, but their perception by the middle of 1983, when their ports had been mined, and their oil pipeline had been blown up, was that it was going to take a great deal more than just accommodation of the Salvadorian issue before we would live with their regime.

The single most important event that took place prior to the arrival of the Kissinger Commission in the late autumn of 1983 was the visit of the Pope to Nicaragua. I think if anything changed American attitudes, official and private, towards the Sandinista regime it was the way in which the Sandinistas dealt with the Pope's visit. The Sandinistas were anxious to have the Pope come. There were endless negotiations about how the visit would be handled and whether he would be treated as a head of state, and where the papal mass would take place. He was in Nicaragua for a full day. He came in the morning and left in the late afternoon, so there was time for one central mass plus another non-Eucharistic celebration in Leon to the north of Managua. The issues were complicated by the fact that there were two priests in the government - one the minister of foreign affairs and the other the minister of culture - and the Pope was reluctant to deal with either of them. Their role was severely circumscribed in the course of the day's events.

Things went reasonably well on arrival. We were all at the airport in a huge line, the entire government, the diplomatic corps, etc. The Pope was greeted by Daniel Ortega who introduced him in turn to the members of his government, other high officials and the diplomatic corps. When the Pope reached Father Cardenal, the minister of culture, the minister went down on his knees in front of the Pope seeking a blessing. The Pope wagged his finger at him. Only later in the day when I had a chance to ask the minister what had happened, he told me that the Pope had said that he was to regularize his status with the Church, not with the government. I asked what he had answered and he said,

“Yes, Holy Father, yes.”

As the day went on, the Pope met with the government. Then he went to Leon, where there was a large gathering. It was not a mass but an ecumenical celebration, which passed off very well. The bishop of Leon was less hostile to the Sandinistas than many, and pro-Sandinistas were allowed to present petitions to the Pope. There were prayers for peace and reconciliation, and I think everyone felt that the visit was going quite well. The Pope then returned to Managua for a mass before half a million people, which turned out to be a complete and utter disaster looked at it from the point of view of the Sandinistas. Five hundred thousand people were arrayed in front of a large platform on which an altar had been set up. The three members of the ruling junta and other members of the government sat to one side of the altar while the bishops of Nicaragua celebrated mass with the Pope. In front, there was this vast array of people all carrying flags, Sandinistas carrying the red and black flag of the Revolution, anti-Sandinistas carrying the blue and white flag of Nicaragua and the yellow and white flag of the Holy See. It was like a mediaeval pageant. There was a great deal of cheering and chanting of various slogans. It was obvious that the organized Sandinistas were a minority in the gathering, but they had the forward positions.

The mass began without great incident, but as it got time for the Pope to give his homily, slogans began to be chanted by the Sandinista portion of the congregation, notably “We want a church on the side of the poor.” This became so loud that, in fact, the Pope was drowned out. You had the extraordinary figure of the Pope standing at a microphone that had mysteriously gone dead shouting “Silence, silence” to this vast array of people. I think he formally finished his remarks but they were not heard by most people. He was extremely angry, having never had a Papal Mass disrupted in this way before. But, he carried on through the consecration.

It was then time to distribute communion. The church intended to use virtually all of the priests in Nicaragua to distribute the consecrated bread, but before that could happen, a group of mothers, some 20 strong, marched forward to the front of the altar carrying portraits of young men draped in black cloth and ribbon, martyrs who had been killed by the Contras in the previous week in the northern part of Nicaragua. The women demanded that the Pope pray for those who had given their lives for Nicaragua. Of course, this unanticipated event caused considerable consternation on the part of the Papal organizers. The women also demanded to receive communion, but were denied. The Pope then announced that nobody would get communion, which was quite extraordinary. The whole event ended in considerable confusion.

The pro-Sandinistas were angry because they felt the Pope had not understood what they had suffered. The anti-Sandinistas felt that the Pope had been insulted and that this demonstrated the anti-religious quality of the Revolution. The mass got enormous publicity all over the world, particularly in the United States. Even among people who were sympathetic to the Sandinistas, it raised serious doubts about how they were comporting themselves. Indeed, the Revolution’s confrontation with the Church was a constant source of discussion in diplomatic circles in Managua. I spent a great deal of

time talking to the Papal Nuncio, who was caught between the two sides and who tried his best to mediate within the divided church. The bishops were by and large against the Sandinistas, but not all. The foreign religious orders working in Nicaragua, many of them Americans, were very pro-Sandinista, as were substantial numbers of laity. So, relations with the church in many ways dominated the agenda of the Sandinistas in 1982-3.

Q: You were at this mass.

QUAINTON: I was at the mass.

Q: Were you watching the commandantes as this went on? Were they understanding what they were doing?

QUAINTON: The ministers all became very agitated and began themselves to shout pro-Sandinista slogans demanding a church on the side of the poor. I think they expected from what they had seen earlier in the day that the Pope would speak to the basic Sandinista concern, which was a preferential option for the poor, something which was much talked about then. Certainly the liberation theologians all over Latin America supported the Sandinistas. But, the Pope spoke almost exclusively of the obligation of the faithful to be loyal to their bishops and to the cardinal. That was seen as a direct challenge to the Sandinistas rather than as an understanding of the social dynamics in Nicaragua. His sermon, in fact, only further exacerbated the polarization in Nicaraguan society. I certainly felt that it could have been handled better on both sides. It was not just a simple question of the Sandinista disruption or Papal intransigence, but that the two sides were locked in such profound ideological conflict. It was impossible for either to fully adequately judge the ideology of the other side.

But, the Sandinistas were not above doing very provocative things. The other extremely outrageous event of this period was the depiction of the archbishop's spokesman on television nude: absolutely nude, without a stitch of clothing. It was an extraordinary incident, needless to say, in a Catholic country. Father Bismarck Carballo was the spokesman for the archdiocese of Managua. One day he was having lunch with a single lady who was active in the charismatic movement of which he was the chaplain. That they had lunch together is certain; but from there on the facts are in dispute. What is clear is that sometime after he arrived for lunch, a man broke into the house brandishing a gun and Father Carballo ran out of the house with nothing on at all, not even his socks, to be greeted by a television crew which "happened" to be filming in the neighborhood. The archbishop, of course, was angry beyond all belief. It turned out subsequently that the woman was an agent of the Ministry of the Interior. It is not clear whether Father Carballo indeed had any clothes on when the intruder entered. There are different versions on that point. Some believed the priest was surprised in flagrante delicto. Other asserted that he was forced to strip at gunpoint. In any event, the incident polarized the church and political life, making it ever more difficult for the two sides to talk to each other.

Q: As you are looking at the Sandinistas doing this, provoking the church, provoking the

United States, was it ideology that seemed to be driving them on or was this felt to be just a very good way to win the support of the media, following, or what?

QUAINTON: It was hard to assess their motives. I think they were convinced that the archbishop and a substantial portion of the church wished to see them ousted. There were, of course, a substantial number of priests on the side of the Revolution, who were very passionate about it. They saw the hierarchical church as an enemy in league with the United States. Any time that I visited the cardinal or went to mass in his church, I was likely to be newsworthy. People would note that the American ambassador was hobnobbing with the opposition. Of course the opposition press always played up the fact that I was there. It was impossible to keep one's personal religious life separate from the politics of the day.

I think also the Sandinistas felt passionately that they were in the right. It was not exactly a very clear ideology but the Sandinist vision certainly had heavy ideological overtones. Their view was a Marxist one, that they were doing history's work, that they were fulfilling a kind of plan which entailed overthrowing bourgeois institutions in order to create a more just society. There were also undoubtedly cynical individual power hungry members of the FSLN, but there was an enormous streak of idealism that animated most Sandinistas in terms of social justice. They saw themselves as reversing the policies of the pretty brutal previous regime, the Somoza regime, which we had supported over much of the previous 50 years. So, the Sandinistas always thought that they were in the right, and that the Church was in the wrong, and that the United States was in the wrong. Their constituency demanded that they show that they were standing up to those who were against them.

What was clearly true was that it was difficult for the two sides, whether inside Nicaragua or outside, to talk the same language. Not that they didn't understand each other in Spanish, but that the agenda that each side brought to the table was never adequately reconciled. By that I mean that Sandinistas came to power with a very aggressive agenda of social justice. They nationalized properties which belonged to the Somocistas, who had fled to Miami. They nationalized some businesses, but not a whole lot. They created a whole network of what they called popular institutions designed to mobilize the ordinary people in their own defense. So, for them, social justice was at the heart of their agenda.

For their opposition and for us, the primary agenda was not justice but freedom and how to get to participatory democratic institutions or free market institutions. The Sandinistas would argue that you couldn't have freedom until you had justice, and we argued you couldn't have justice until you had freedom. Because the agendas didn't intersect, it became very hard to put together any kind of meaningful dialogue. Indeed, there was such polarization that the two sides virtually never met. One of the realities was that the American ambassador's residence was one of the very few places where both the Sandinistas and the opposition could come together and talk. We had a number of dinners to which we invited prominent opposition people and prominent Sandinistas. Many had gone to school together at the Central American University or one of the local private

schools, but since the Revolution three or four years before had not talked to each other at all. A wall had come down between the two sides and prevented any kind of dialog. In the whole structure that existed, there were no mechanisms for dialog which might have made it somewhat easier to come to some common resolution of the political situation.

Q: How did you feel about the ideology that you were getting from the Department of State? I would have thought given the Reagan administration it would have been almost impossible for an ambassador to find a common ground here.

QUAINTON: It was impossible during the time I was there. The State Department, on various occasions, with White House support, tried to get a dialogue going. Six months before I arrived, they had sent Tom Enders to Nicaragua to try to cut a deal. Later, Richard Stone was sent as a special envoy and then Tony Motley, the assistant secretary, came to Nicaragua. There were sporadic, but repeated, efforts to engage the Sandinistas in some kind of discussion of the Salvadoran question and on other issues such as human rights and political freedom. The bottom line was always Salvador because the White House perceived that we were facing a series of dominos which, if they were allowed to fall, would lead to Marxism in El Paso. If the Sandinistas could not be stopped, if the FMLN could not be stopped, if the Guatemalan revolutionaries could not be stopped, etc., revolution would cross into Mexico and end up on the Rio Grande. In my judgment, this was a vast misinterpretation of the reality in Central America. The conditions that had given rise to the Sandinista Revolution were not replicated anywhere else, not even in Salvador, and the likelihood of revolutionary movements succeeding in Honduras or Costa Rica seemed to me to be quite limited. But, this is what many believed. So, the whole question of Sandinista aid to the Salvadoran guerrillas became the touchstone for our policy.

By the time I had been there less than a year, the White House had given up on the prospects of any dialogue. Egged on by Bill Casey of the CIA, it believed that the only way to solve the problem was to get the Sandinistas out. The means for doing that was an elaborate covert action program. At first, it was presented to the congress in an extremely disingenuous way. The administration argued that harassment would make life uncomfortable for the Sandinistas, would keep them from consolidating their power, and would bring them to the negotiating table. They would see that there were unacceptable costs to their economy if they did not negotiate. The CIA argued that this was the only way to persuade them to change their policies. As with other covert operations elsewhere in the world, it didn't seem to have the promised immediate effect. If anything, the CIA actions stiffened the Sandinista resolve to hold out against the United States. The trade embargo, the violent acts along the coasts, both on the Atlantic and Pacific side, and then, finally, the training and equipping of an army to fight against the Sandinistas out of Honduras led to a situation in which there was very little room for maneuver and dialogue.

Q: What were your relations with the CIA within the country?

QUAINTON: Well, I had cooperative relations with the local chief, although he was expelled after I had been there a few months when one of his colleagues was caught

accepting documents from an agent on a park bench in downtown Managua. It was a front page story. He and the officer who had been caught with the documents were expelled in a tremendous hullabaloo. For good measure, the Sandinistas also expelled the political counselor, Linda Pfeifle, who was very active working with the legal political opposition. It seemed to me at the time to be a case of rather sloppy tradecraft. I was kept informed about the things that were planned although I was not always informed about the exact timing. It was clear to me that an exaggerated hope was being put in their covert operations. I remember at one point shortly after the offshore oil pipeline was blown up, I was in Washington and went to see the National Security advisor, Judge Clark. He asked me about this recent event, which had taken place about a week before. I said, "Well, the pipeline is out of operation, but it will be back in operation in about 10 days." This was what I had been told by the Esso Caribbean headquarters in Miami. Judge Clark expressed some surprise, and said that he had been told that the Sandinistas would be without petroleum for six months. He expressed the further hope that I was doing nothing to speed up the repair process. I assured him that I was not speeding up the process, but that replacing a damaged pipeline was a simple piece of work, sending divers down, cutting out the damaged bits and putting in new bits. And sure enough, the Sandinistas were pumping oil again after two weeks.

But that was indicative, I think, of what the White House expected. I think the President was assured that if we mined Nicaragua's ports, there would be a collapse of the economy. This didn't happen. I think the CIA constantly assured the highest levels of the U.S. government that these operations cumulatively would have devastating effects. In fact, what they did was to harden the attitudes of the Sandinistas. The sabotage and the mining did give hope to the opposition, so in that sense they had a positive psychological effect on our friends in Nicaragua. There was no doubt about that. But, even the opposition became pretty skeptical about the quality of our operations, which seemed half-hearted and incompetent.

A lot of things were done which were not very carefully coordinated. A good example was the visit to Nicaragua of Senators Hart and Cohen. The Senators were to have arrived one morning in Nicaragua on a tour of Central America when, as they were flying in from Honduras, they were told the airport was closed in Managua because a CIA plane had just bombed the airport. And, indeed, a plane from Costa Rica had flown over the airport and pushed two 500-pound bombs out of a side door. It was a very light plane and as a result of the shift of weight the plane flipped over and crashed literally into the VIP lounge. No other damage was done to the airport, but considerable damage was done to the credibility of the United States. When several hours later Senators Hart and Cohen arrived, they were shown the VIP lounge in which they would have been waiting and where now lay the remains of a plane and the body of the pilot. This made quite a negative impression, and called into question the coherence and skill with which the CIA managed its operations. A lot happened which was not, in fact, even coordinated by the Agency. Money was given to a number of opposition people and they went off to do the best they could to disrupt the Sandinistas.

Q: Did Ollie North cross your horizon?

QUAINTON: He crossed my path only once and that was during the visit of the Kissinger Commission in the autumn of 1983. At that time, he was a fairly junior staff member of the commission and had been working in the White House.

One of the great dilemmas in this period was how to get the facts of what actually was going on. Two examples might be indicative of this dilemma, and the way in which the information was skewed by partisans on one side or the other. One of the main issues in the course of 1983 was an allegation put out by B'nai B'rith that the Sandinistas systematically persecuted Jews in Nicaragua, had driven all of the Jews into exile, and had desecrated the one synagogue in Managua to make it over into a revolutionary center with pictures of Qaddafi and other heroes of revolution on the wall. This story appeared in the *New York Times* coincidentally with the visit of human rights activists from the United States. In their honor, I was giving a reception to which I invited both the Sandinista human rights commission and the anti-Sandinista human rights commission. I said to my staff that they should go around and find out what the human rights activists thought about this story, because we had never seen any previous allegations of this kind. Not surprisingly, the pro-Sandinistas said there was no truth to this allegation, but even the anti-Sandinistas said there was no truth to it. Nicaraguans, everyone agreed, had never shown any anti-Semitism. Both sides agreed that the vast majority of the Jews fled for their own personal reasons, because of their relations with the Somoza family.

So, I became quite interested in the subject and got the political officer to do a more in-depth report. He went and looked at the synagogue and talked to people there. It was a childcare center without pictures of Qadhafi. He found that there were not enough Jews in the city to hold a service and that the synagogue had therefore been closed. He interviewed some of the remaining Jews, who said they had not been harassed as a result of their faith. Everybody also agreed that the Sandinistas were violently anti-Zionist, pro-Palestinian; there was no question about that. So, I put this into a report, which made the B'nai B'rith very, very angry. The embassy got a fair amount of criticism for trying to protect the Sandinistas.

Eliot Abrams, who was then assistant secretary for human rights, came down and demanded to meet with members of the Jewish community and I was able to produce at breakfast one morning, Mr. Jaime Levy, a businessman and importer. We sat down and Mr. Abrams asked him about the persecution of the Jews in Nicaragua. Mr. Levy said, "Well, there hasn't been any." Mr. Abrams pressed on this subject, saying he knew that all the Jews had been forced to leave the country, etc. Mr. Levy acknowledged that they had left but said, "Look, you don't understand. I import Maiden Form Bras from Guatemala. I hold them off the market for six months and make a lot of money. Nobody here is harassing me."

Well, many people in Washington felt that somehow the story was not being told by the embassy honestly. On the same occasion that I went up to talk to Judge Clark, it was suggested that I see Faith Ryan Whittlesey, subsequently the ambassador to Switzerland, then in charge of the publicity aspects of Contra effort.

Q: A politician from Philadelphia.

QUAINTON: That is correct. I went to see her. She talked a bit and said, "Well, I want you to know that we read your cables very carefully, Mr. Ambassador." I expressed some gratification at that. But, then she went on to say, "I hate to tell you that you report too much great news. When you go back, we want you to report the bad news. You will not help the President unless you report the bad news about the Sandinistas." I said, "Well, I can't do that. I can report all the news, good and bad. If there is a lot of bad news I can report bad news." Well, that kind of attitude was very strong. This was an important ideological war which had to be won. Whatever ammunition could be found to fight that war must be gathered by the embassy. The embassy's job was, in fact, to do just that. Not to negotiate an outcome to the war, but to provide ammunition to the President to win the war publicly in the United States where it was going badly. There was a lot of criticism of Central American policy at that time. It was the only time in my entire career that I found that kind of attitude towards information. It was a powerful message that I got from Ms. Whittlesey.

Q: What was your impression of Judge Clark?

QUAINTON: He had only a superficial knowledge of Central America as far as I could see. He did arrange for me to brief the President on Nicaragua at the National Security brief the next day. I went there and after their briefing on a variety of other subjects, Judge Clark said, "Mr. President, I have somebody here from the trenches. Ambassador Quainton, would you like to say a few words about Nicaragua?" I gave my assessment of the situation, and the President listened and asked some questions. And I went on my way. I ventured the thought then as I did later in greater detail to the Kissinger Commission, that somewhat more flexibility on our part could, in fact, have achieved some benefits on the ground and led to concessions by the Sandinistas.

Q: Did you find the embassy at all split as far as how they were viewing the situation?

QUAINTON: Oh yes. I think there is no doubt about that. As new people arrived in 1983 and certainly in 1984, the embassy became more hostile to the regime. Those of us who had been there a couple of years and who had a wide spectrum of acquaintances and friends on both sides, saw the situation as very much more complicated and were not so quick to rush to judgment. The acting AID director was someone who came with an ideological agenda, and felt our policy should be a very strong anti-communist crusade. The political and economic sections, and the public affairs officer were much more nuanced in their attitudes. I must say my staff supported me even when they didn't agree with me, and they didn't always agree with me. They thought I was much too publicly visible and much too sympathetic to the regime. I regarded public diplomacy as part of my job and I appeared regularly on television and radio. I was repeatedly caricatured in various magazines and publications. There was hardly anyone in the country who did not recognize me. I couldn't walk on the streets without being greeted and spoken to in some way or other.

Q: When you appeared on radio and TV what sort of things were you doing?

QUAINTON: Usually talking about the American agenda. About our concern about support for the Salvadoran revolutionaries, about the human rights situation, about the harassment of the Church, things that Washington cared about. Often there would be an editorial comment in the Sandinista press criticizing what I had said. One of the great dilemmas for me was the choice of whether or not to go to events sponsored by the Sandinistas and then whether or not to walk out. One of the constant problems was the Sandinista anthem, which was sung at every public event along with the national anthem. The Sandinista hymn had in it some phrase about "the Yankee, enemy of mankind." I quickly became tone deaf on this point. I always sat for the Sandinista hymn. That was always the question, what was my tolerance for anti-American rhetoric, and I did get criticized at times for sitting through things that perhaps I should not have.

Q: What about Cuban and Soviet representation?

QUAINTON: There was a Cuban embassy. I had nothing to do with it. On a couple of occasions I met senior Cuban officials that came to major Latin American events. The Sandinistas were great organizers of regional events. They wanted as many people as possible to come to Managua. The Soviet ambassador was a diplomat who had spent most of his career in Latin America and was a fairly influential figure on the local scene. I would see him from time to time. The Mexican ambassador was the most important chief of mission. He was very close to the commandantes and very sympathetic to the revolution. He had been a minister of agriculture and thought of himself as very much a revolutionary. He was known as the 10th Commandante. The Mexicans throughout this early period of the revolution were extremely supportive of the Sandinistas and extremely critical of United States policy.

Who were the ambassadors who were well informed? The Nuncio was well plugged into the Church and went all over Nicaragua. He tried to juggle his difficult relations with various parts of the Church. The French ambassador, René Ala, with whom I had a very close relationship, subsequently went on to be ambassador to the Vatican and then Senegal. He was a very able man and we worked very closely together. He had even closer relations with the revolution than I did. His house was one of the venues where the radical members of the FSLN met. He and I often shared our analyses. In general, we were in agreement about the trends of what was going on in Nicaragua at that time.

Q: Did you see during the time you were there a change in how the leadership viewed things? I was wondering whether they were beginning to sort out who was in power, who was on top, when the corruption or power was beginning to have its influence?

QUAINTON: There was very little evidence of corruption. The commandantes had all taken for themselves houses which had belonged to supporters of Somoza or people who had fled the country. They lived well and were well protected. But, one heard very little about corruption. There was great speculation both in Washington and Managua that the

three factions and the nine commandantes could not stay united, but they were very conscious of the need to stay together notwithstanding some differences of emphasis. Three groups were represented among the commandantes. One group believed that a revolution in Latin America had to be peasant and rural based. A second said that it had to be based on the proletariat, and the third, the group to which the Ortegas belonged, said you had to have both. The third group was, of course, right and the Revolution triumphed because there was an alliance which brought everybody together.

After the New Jewell Party broke up in Grenada, and we intervened to protect American medical students and others, I was called in once again by Commandante Borge, the minister of interior. He said, "First of all, never think for a moment that we will become divided. We can see what happens when you become divided, as in the case of Grenada, and this will not happen here. Secondly, there will never be any American hostages here. Any American who wants to leave can leave. You can have your administrative officer come down to my office, and I will make arrangements so that any time you feel you need buses to take people out to an evacuation site, we will be most helpful to you. Third, don't think that we will provide any provocation which will allow you to invade like you did in Grenada." So, they were very conscious of the importance of not falling out among themselves, and they never did during the time I was there. There was not a sign of public disagreement. If there were rumors about differences they certainly kept them out of sight. The nine commandantes stayed together throughout the entire period of their rule. It was quite remarkable.

Q: Was there a sizeable American presence there as far as young people working on cutting sugarcane, etc. to show that they were part of the Revolution?

QUAINTON: There was a little bit of that. There was almost no American business community; they almost all had left. Esso was the largest American firm because they ran all of the petroleum business and for a while they had Americans and expatriates from other Latin American countries running the operations. There was a very large American missionary presence. Many Catholic orders of both women and men had representatives scattered around Nicaragua, and almost all of them supported the Revolution. It was very hard to find an American who was living in Nicaragua who was not. There were also large numbers of temporary visitors, delegations who would come down for one week, two weeks, two or three days, etc. Sometimes, as you suggest, to cut sugarcane, but more to tour the country, to see the achievements of the Revolution, the healthcare centers, the literacy centers, etc. The Sandinistas were very good at describing what they had done and what they had achieved, particularly in the first couple of years. Later, it became less easy to do that as more and more people became disenchanted with the war effort and the need to mobilize young men for service in the draft. But, in the early days, there was considerable pride in what was taking place and the achievements were constantly being shown off to visiting delegations.

There were also a certain number of American journalists in Nicaragua. They would bounce back and forth between Salvador and Nicaragua. Central America was big news in the United States throughout the eighties and the press corps came to see me regularly.

Usually, I was quite open with the press. The major newspapers were extremely responsible, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Miami Herald*, the *Christian Science Monitor*. I had only one bad experience. A representative of the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* came to see. The PAO arranged for him to see me. He sat down and I said, "Now we must discuss the ground rules." I suggested that they would be, as all my press interviews were, on background. He asked what that meant. I said, "Well, you can quote a western diplomat, but you cannot quote an American official or the American ambassador." He said that he didn't do anything in Seattle on background. I said that I could give him a handout if he would like one or we can discuss what was going on in Nicaragua which would have to be on background. We went back and forth on this and he finally said this was contrary to paper policy, but he would agree to doing the briefing on background. I discussed the Nicaraguan situation as I saw it, commented on the opposition and the government, etc. I was sent a copy of his published text several weeks later which took up the top half of page 2. The headline was "U.S. Ambassador Out of Step with Washington" and it then began "Would you believe the following quotes?" I was quoted in ten different sentences in juxtaposition to statements by the President of the United States. Needless to say, that did me no good in Washington. That was the only time the rules were broken, but it certainly was an embarrassment at the time.

Q: I take it while you were there the Contra effort was beginning to take its bite?

QUAINTON: The fighting really hadn't taken its bite. They were just being organized and trained. There were various covert operations of the kind I described - a bombing raid here, a mining there. One scheme which got a fair amount of publicity and which was absolutely screwy was the idea that the revolutionary billboards which surrounded the plaza of the revolution where the Pope gave his mass would be burned down as a gesture showing to the people of Nicaragua how vulnerable the revolution was. I was briefed on this operation and was told it would happen on a night with a full moon. I said I would drive by the next morning, as it was on the way from my residence to the embassy. I drove by and the billboards were still standing. I was told that there were technical problems. Twenty eight days later, they tried again and again; there were technical problems. During the third time around, three Nicaraguan agents were captured and paraded before the press as having failed in an effort to burn the billboards down. Things of this sort were deemed likely to "harass" the Sandinistas.

Q: It sounds really very amateurish, doesn't it?

QUAINTON: It was very amateurish. A lot of high tech stuff was done. It was not so easy to mine the ports or blow up the pipeline. In one sense, the operations were technically quite sophisticated, but on the other hand the political analysis that underlay the operations was extremely simplistic and based on poor information. The White House was led to believe that the Revolution was about to collapse if only given a sufficient push from several directions. These events, of course, convinced the Sandinistas, as I suggested earlier, that our agenda was not harassment, but their overthrow.

Q: When you were talking to your CIA colleagues did the Bay of Pigs ever come up as a

subject? The reason I ask this is that the Bay of Pigs was based on the assumption that you could overthrow a regime essentially just by showing a little power and do it on the cheap.

QUAINTON: No, we never talked about the Bay of Pigs. I do think that the assumption was there. And, of course, in the long run the tactic paid off. It can be acknowledged that the war weariness that was generated by continued hostilities in the northern and eastern parts of the country and the hostility that it engendered in women, particularly mothers of young people who were forced to fight the war, did, in fact, lead to the defeat of Daniel Ortega and the victory of Violeta Chamorro in the 1990 elections. Even that was a close thing, as you may remember. We probably could have had free elections in 1984. In fact, we came very close to it, but in the end there was no desire to have free elections then because they would have reelected and legitimized Daniel Ortega. I don't think there was much confidence in the democratic process, so we went on fighting for another five years.

Q: Did you have any contact with Violeta Chamorro at the time?

QUAINTON: I knew her socially. She was not a major player. The reason she was an acceptable opponent to Daniel Ortega in the 1990 elections and the reason they allowed a transfer of power to take place (there was a lot of fear that the Sandinistas would thwart the results of the elections, but as you know they handed over power peacefully), was that Violeta Chamorro was seen to be sympathetic to the objectives of [the] Revolution. Although not a Sandinista by any stretch of the imagination, she had been in the first revolutionary junta with Daniel Ortega, one of the three rulers of the country right after the 1979 revolution. The revolution's success was in part the result of the bourgeoisie, the middle class, joining the Sandinistas after the murder of her husband, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, in 1978. She always maintained a unique relationship with the Sandinistas. Of course, she was much criticized by Senator Helms and others in her first administration for not being ruthless enough in kicking the Sandinistas out and for allowing Umberto Ortega to continue to command the army and for allowing senior Sandinista officials in the ministry of the interior and police force to remain. I think she realized it was a very polarized society and needed reconciliation, and she was in a unique position to do that. There was nobody else in the opposition who had any credibility with the Sandinistas by the end. I dealt much more with her son, young Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, who was a firebrand. He was very outspoken to the point where his paper was closed down all the time. There was a constant battle going on in the press in Nicaragua. There were three newspapers, the Sandinista party newspaper, *Barricada*, and one pro- Sandinista paper, and *La Prensa*, the opposition paper.

Q: Was there concern about hardline revolutionaries who said they weren't going to take prisoners, they were going to make things as difficult as possible?

QUAINTON: There were certainly some very tough people in the ministry of interior, which is where the hardliners tended to be concentrated. They were people who had fought and lost colleagues in the fighting. There was also considerable militancy among the younger members of the Revolution, and I suppose they could be called hardliners.

The Ministry of Interior was a mixture of dedicated revolutionaries, people who experienced the Revolution. Minister Borge was, himself, an extraordinarily problematic figure. He had three offices in the ministry which were together, connecting offices. The one through which one entered was decorated with memorabilia of the revolution, letters from school children thanking him for what he had done, weapons that he had used, etc. The office he received visitors in was decorated with the largest collection of crucifixes in Nicaragua. He had ceramic, wood, and metal. The walls were covered. He fancied himself a liberation theologian and pretended to be a practicing Catholic. In his small war office where there was a fully stocked bar and a working desk and on the desk two books; one was on Marxism and Leninism and the other a Bible. That tells you much about the Sandinista Revolution, in fact. It was a strange mixture of Christian Marxism. A great number of people who came out of the Central American University were trained by the Jesuits. There were quite a number of Jesuits active in Nicaragua sympathetic to the revolution who believed that you could have revolution and still be a Christian as well.

Q: I have the impression that every time we were making some sort of gesture towards Nicaragua, not that there were many, one of the Ortegas or somebody would end up behind the Kremlin wall or in Havana. Was there any of that?

QUAINTON: Some of these internal events that I have described which were so egregious often caught Washington's attention. Ortega went to Cuba a number of times and Castro came at least once when I was there. Certainly any sign of the Cuban relationship caught Washington's attention and was much publicized. Cubans were not terribly visible. Whenever something promising like talks were being set up, something bad would happen, a speech by Ortega or some other provocation, which seemed to undercut whatever efforts were being made. Or on our side, suddenly some nasty covert operation would take place which would blow the dialog out of the water on the other side.

Q: Can you talk about the Kissinger Commission?

QUAINTON: You may remember that the Kissinger Commission was created in the hopes of building bipartisan support for the communications strategy in Central America. They held extensive hearings in Washington. Before the Commission went down to Central America, I actually flew up and met with Dr. Kissinger in the State Department. He had an office on the ground floor there, and I went over with him the kind of program that the Commission might have in Nicaragua. I described who would be available to meet with them. He talked about wanting to see the opposition, the archbishop. I told him that the Sandinistas proposed to offer lunch in the Commission's honor. He declined, saying they would just want sandwiches and Coke. I reported that to the Sandinistas, who were very disappointed, as they had wanted to show the Commission some degree of courtesy.

The Commission arrived on their last day in Central America. They had spent six days in the region, one day in each country. They only spent a day in Nicaragua, not a night. They arrived early in the morning. I met them and took them to the old residence. The

current ambassador's residence is a fairly modern, rather attractive house, which we rented, but not suitable for large meetings. The old residence was a large building on a hill close to the embassy. There were only two houses on hills in Managua - Somoza's house and the American ambassador's house. It was a very large colonial style house with a pillared portico. It was quite splendid. It was abandoned by my predecessor because of its symbolism as the home of the American pro-consul in Nicaragua. But, the house was maintained and used for receptions on the Fourth of July and other important occasions. There was a very large dinner table that sat 26 or something like that. The Commission came in and sat on one side of the table and presentations on the other. There was a series of briefings beginning with one by me. I described the situation as I saw it, having been there about 18 months at the time. I laid out what I thought were the positive aspects of the situation as well as the negative aspects. I said I thought there was the possibility of a negotiated settlement with the Sandinistas. There were people in the government who would like a negotiated settlement and wanted to do business with the United States and who might be willing to do a deal if they could be assured of economic access to the United States and that there would be a cutback on our support of the Contras. It was an overly optimistic view perhaps, but one that was based on what I knew of the players themselves and the dynamics of the politics in Nicaragua.

Dr. John Silber, the president of Boston University, was a member of the Commission. Silber asked me if the views I had just expressed were the views of the President of the United States. I said, "I couldn't say, but these were the conclusions I had reached after 18 months in Nicaragua." He said, "That is not the question that I asked you. Would the President of the United States agree with what you have said?" I realized then that I was going to be in trouble, given the terms in which the questions were being put to me. I, of course, did not know what they had heard from other ambassadors in the region.

I was followed by representatives of the private sector, COSEP, the industrialists and agriculturalists. The banana growers, cotton growers, etc., described the different problems that they faced - coffee growers, banana growers, cotton growers, etc. They ended with a fabulous touch. They produced the first day covers of a series of postage stamps which had come out the week before in Nicaragua on which there were pictures of Karl Marx. There was a picture of Marx in the lefthand corner of the first day cover and on the bottom was written, "The world's greatest thinker." These envelopes were handed around so that everyone on the Commission was able to inspect them. Needless to say, the Commission was convinced they were dealing with a communist government. I was not brave enough to speak up and tell them that the week before the Marx postage stamp was issued, the Sandinistas put out a set of George Washington postage stamps showing Washington crossing the Delaware, etc.

The Commission then went on to meet with some of the political parties who were opposed to the Sandinistas. They had a meeting with the archbishop, who was very critical of the government. They came back at lunch time and spent the rest of the day with the Sandinistas, having spent the whole morning with the opposition. And indeed at lunch they were given sandwiches and Coke. All the members of the Commission complained. They saw this as a slight. They complained that they couldn't even be given a decent meal. But, what could I say? That was what the chairman had asked for and that

was what the chairman got, but I am sure the chairman had not told them what to expect. They were not very good sandwiches, as sandwiches are not eaten much in Nicaragua.

There was then a briefing by the head of Sandinista military intelligence. There was a huge map of the country on the wall behind him with various arrows and lines showing where the Contra bases were, where the infiltration routes were, etc. The Sandinistas described in detail how they were being harassed by the United States, etc. It was a good briefing.

At the end of it, Oliver North took Dr. Kissinger aside. I was standing there, and he said to Kissinger that this was proof of Soviet control of Nicaragua. I looked surprised. He said that the Sandinistas would not have had all this accurate information were it not for Soviet satellites and Soviet intelligence which had infiltrated the Contras. So, this was another telling point, first the Karl Marx postage stamp and then Soviet domination of Nicaragua.

They then went on and met with pro-Sandinista political parties. Their representatives were not very convincing as they tried to explain the freedom of political action which they enjoyed.

Their penultimate and ultimate meetings were with the foreign minister, Father D'Escoto, a Maryknoll priest, and Daniel Ortega. Father D'Escoto gave a rather lurid, highly emotional presentation of their foreign policy, in which he was very critical of the U.S. At the end of it, Senator Domenici asked for the floor. He said, "Well that is most interesting." He reminded the Father that they had lunch together in the Senate dining room two years before, shortly after the revolution had triumphed and that D'Escoto had told him what the Revolution would do for Nicaragua in terms of justice. The senator then said, "Father, I have seen much of your country and I now know that everything you told me was a lie. I will not believe anything that you say to me again." So, the foreign minister looked the senator in the eye and said, "Well, Senator, I heard what you said. I remember you telling me about the United States and its commitment to democracy and I will remind you that for 50 years, your country has supported the most brutal dictatorship this country has ever seen. I regard everything you have said as hypocrisy and I will believe nothing you say to me either." He stood up and the meeting was adjourned.

Q: That was a good meeting of the minds.

QUAINTON: Yes. It was followed by a meeting with Daniel Ortega and the members of his government. We were milling around outside and Dr. Kissinger waylaid me and said, "Well, what happens next?" I said, "Well, Dr. Kissinger, at this final meeting, Daniel Ortega will be at the end of this quite large room where he always receives visitors. His government will be sitting to his left. You and your commission will sit to his right. You will come in, shake hands, and sit down. You will exchange introductory remarks and then you may ask any questions that you wish to ask." Dr. Kissinger said "You don't mean I have to shake hands with the son of a bitch?" "Well, Dr. Kissinger, it is the normal practice here in Nicaragua but, of course, that is up to you."

So, we file in. I don't know if he shook hands with Ortega or not. I was bringing up the rear of this rather exalted group. The Commission sits down and puts on simultaneous translation earphones. Kissinger looks at Ortega sitting there in his military uniform and says, "Well, Commandante, what do you have to say?" Full stop. No introduction. There is a pause while Ortega thinks and he says, "Dr. Kissinger, I think I ought to give you our perception of American foreign policy in Latin America. And that is that you have no consistent policy in the region, that your policy is largely driven by crisis events. So, when there was the Cuban Revolution, your government responded with the Alliance of Progress. When there was a danger of revolution in the Dominican Republic, you responded with the Rockefeller Commission. Now that there is revolution in Nicaragua we have you. You know, your country talks a great deal about democracy, and I will remind you that if you had cared about democracy over the last fifty years in Nicaragua, you wouldn't have us." He then went on for some forty minutes to recount the history of U.S.-Nicaraguan relationships since the filibuster in the late 1860s, William Walker, through the American occupation of Nicaragua by Marines after the First World War: a litany of grievances and woes about which for most Nicaraguans were part of the theology of the revolution.

Ortega finally stops. As this is going on, all the Commission members, one by one, take their headphones off and stop listening. Dr. Kissinger listens until the end. He then turns to Ortega and says, "Commandante, I did not like the tone or the substances of your remarks. Any further discussion between our two governments will be in writing." And, he stood up. Such was the day of the Kissinger Commission in Nicaragua. They were tired, they were fractious, and they were not about to be lectured to by someone as unprepossessing as Daniel Ortega. And so they went home to draft their report.

The report was actually quite sensible in terms of things it recommended in terms of focusing American policy in Central America. About a month later, I received a call from the deputy secretary of state, Kenneth Dam, telling me the President wished to make a change in Nicaragua. This would be without prejudice to my career, he assured me, but everybody felt it was time for a change. I had been there a little over 18 months. The system was sufficiently incompetent that although I had lost the confidence of the White House I stayed another six months because they couldn't get anybody else in place and they didn't want to be without somebody. I stayed until May 1984 when Harry Bergold finally was confirmed and sworn in. Of course, those last six months were difficult ones, not only because it was clear that Washington was increasingly out of step with me and I was clearly out of step with Washington. The situation continued to deteriorate along all fronts. Covert operations increased in intensity. The rhetoric got steamier on both sides.

Anyway, George Shultz, to whom I am eternally grateful, decided that I should be sent as far from Central America as it was possible to send me. Having never served in an arab country in the Middle East I was assigned as ambassador to Kuwait.

Q: During this time had you kind of given up? An ambassador is supposed to make peace, but it looked like two railroad trains on the same track going towards each other.

QUAINTON: I had given up in the sense that I didn't see that there was any likelihood of negotiations. I had seen the various efforts that had been made to dialog with the Sandinistas, some of them secret. Tony Motley made a night time, unannounced visit which was never publicized. The bottom line was that it was always the question of the chicken and the egg. We told the Sandinistas they had to show their changed attitude by changing what they did in Salvador if they want us to change any of our policies. The Sandinistas said they would not change everything they did until there was real assurance that we would change our policies. They were very skeptical that we would do that. So, there was never a basis for an agreement. There were various discussions, various proposals, about limiting arm shipments to Salvador and resuming trade. But, neither side by 1984 believed in the good faith of the other. Indeed, there was no good reason for either side to believe in the good faith of the other.

So, under those circumstances it became very hard to put together any kind of reasonable negotiating plan. I spent much of my time dealing with the endless stream of Americans who continued to come to Managua. I tried to give them a balanced picture of what was going on. That continued to be a problem, as some of these visitors were extraordinarily emotional. I remember a group of 30 or 40 people from the film industry who came down. I met them in the embassy conference room and gave them my standard briefing. At the end of the briefing, one gentleman, whose name I never learned, stood up and said he had never encountered a man who lied to the extent that I did and he wanted to tell me in the presence of his colleagues that were there Nuremberg trials again, I would be one of the guilty. There was very strong applause.

That is a pretty heavy emotional burden. My staff took this harder than I did, this constant sense of insistence of visitors that we were supporting a genocidal policy against the Nicaraguan regime. On a number of occasions when delegations came to my office, they insisted on praying. They would pray for the overthrow of the Reagan administration. These groups included bishops, priests, nuns and pastors, etc., quite responsible and respectable looking people. I think the staff found it very, very hard - not so much analyzing the situation on the ground, but in dealing with a hostile American public. Most foreign policy positions enjoy the general support of the American people. The public may not be particularly interested in any particular country, but the public tends to be supportive of overall American goals. That was not at all the case throughout this period. Once a week, there was a demonstration that blocked the entrance to the embassy by 20, 30, 50, 100, 150, 200 American citizens. There were no Sandinista demonstrations against us, just American citizen demonstrations every week. It took its toll on the staff, who often had difficulty explaining to themselves why their fellow citizens didn't understand reality as the embassy saw it.

Q: What about communications with our ambassador in El Salvador? Was there much?

QUAINTON: There was relatively little with either Honduras or El Salvador. There were occasional regional meetings. There was one in the spring of 1984 before I left for Kuwait which George Shultz presided over in El Salvador. We also got together at a

chiefs of mission meeting in Panama, hosted by SOUTHCOM. Yes, there were occasions to get together. I think we were fully informed about major political developments in each country, but not about details of things like the military operations in Salvador.

Q: Tony, they got you out of Nicaragua and supposedly out of the line of fire, I guess. Do you know any reason why you got the appointment to Kuwait and were there any problems with it?

QUAINTON: As I mentioned, once it was apparent that the White House was anxious to have a new man in Nicaragua, Secretary Shultz arranged for me to get an onward assignment. There were not a whole lot of posts currently vacant for which I was suitable, but Kuwait was vacant. Kuwait had been without an ambassador for the best part of a year by the time I got there in the summer of 1984. The previous ambassador had left in 1983 and then in September of 1983 the embassy had been blown up by a very substantial car bomb with loss of life - FSNs were killed; no Americans were killed - and one of the two principal buildings of the embassy had been almost totally demolished. I think probably because of my previous experience in counterterrorism and my familiarity with a lot of the issues that went with terrorism, Kuwait seemed like a fairly logical choice to which I might be assigned. I was not an Arabist, in fact on leaving Nicaragua in May, 1984, I went almost immediately, after a period of leave, into the Arabic fast course with my wife. That was extended another couple of months as we waited for the confirmation process to be complete. In three months of Arabic, you can't get terribly far, but we got to the point where we could read a certain amount facilitated by the fact that we had earlier studied Urdu, which is written in a very similar script to that in which modern Arabic is written.

Of course, a lot of time was spent on being briefed on the situation in the Gulf. The period, as you may remember, was one of hostilities in the Gulf which did not involve the United States directly. It was a war between Iran and Iraq which had been going on already for several years by the time that we got there. It was a very bloody and passionate war which had really been fought to a stalemate by 1984, although the Iranians succeeded in a major offensive in the following year by advancing into Iraq towards Basra. All the time we were there we could hear from our livingroom the sounds of the shelling of the Iranians and the Iraqis. It was very close. Kuwait was only about 50 miles away from the actual fighting. Frequently one heard flying overhead, Iraqi planes on route to attacking Iranian targets. The Kuwaitis gave permission to these flight. There were often sonic booms as the planes went over.

Q: You were there from 1984 to when?

QUAINTON: Until the summer of 1987.

Q: We will come back to the war in a while. What were American interests in Kuwait at this time? What were your concerns when you went out?

QUAINTON: One of my principal concerns was with the personnel of the embassy,

itself. The embassy was deeply traumatized by the experience of the bombing the year before to the point where many embassy families refused to bring their spouses or children to swim in the embassy pool. To attend social events which involved the embassy or the ambassador's residence. The ambassador's residence was on the same compound as the embassy and although very considerable steps had been taken to improve the security around the chancery and residence, people were still very fearful. It took a very concerted effort on our part, my wife's and mine, to try to restore a degree of normalcy to the day-to-day functioning and living of the embassy. When we arrived, there was still on the compound a great deal of equipment scattered about. Offices were still in tents. Indeed, we were not able to move into the residence for several days because the health unit was set up in the ambassador's bedroom, the motor pool was still run out of the library, etc. Eventually, all that all changed. Pre-fab buildings were put up and tents taken down, and the embassy got back to fairly normal working conditions. That certainly became a major objective at the beginning of our stay.

American interests were related first and foremost to oil. Kuwait had the capacity to produce about 2 million barrels a day, but most of the time that I was there, it produced only about 1 ½ million barrels a day. Oil had been nationalized so it was all produced by the Kuwait Petroleum Company. Some of it was sold in the United States, but most of it went to our allies in western Europe and Japan. However, on the southwestern border of Kuwait, in the neutral zone, Texaco was producing oil, both on the Kuwait side of the border and on the Saudi side. It was a joint Saudi-American endeavor and there was a large camp of Americans working on what was legally Kuwaiti territory up against Saudi Arabia.

We were obviously concerned with the fighting in the Gulf, the war between the Iranians and the Iraqis, the potentially destabilizing effects that that war had, and the opportunities which it might provide and indeed did provide in 1986-87, for the Soviet Union to increase its influence in the region, something, of course, which was anathema to us given our interest in the larger petroleum production capabilities of not only the Saudis but of the other emirates in the Gulf. This was a period in which we were tilting towards the Iraqis, although this didn't impinge very much on our stance in Kuwait. The fact that we were on the side of the Arabs in what was seen as an Arab-Iranian war was certainly a positive dimension for our bilateral relations with the Kuwaitis and other Gulf Arabs.

Whatever suspicions they may have had of the Iraqis, and the Kuwaitis were always deeply suspicious of the Iraqis, they were even more fearful of the Iranians and what they might be able to do in terms of subverting the substantial Shi'a minority in Kuwait. About 15 percent of the Kuwaitis were Shi'a, many of them families still with ties to Iran. Many sent to Iran for brides for their sons. So, there was a strong linkage which the Kuwaiti government feared would be used to subvert it. The Iranian rhetoric was very hostile to Kuwaitis for allowing Iraqi overflights to Iran. Of course, the Kuwaitis also provided substantial financial support to Iraq during the war, money which I think they deeply regretted later when they were attacked by the Iraqis, but at the time it seemed to be a reasonable insurance policy for Iraqi good behavior as well as for putting them on the side of the Arab cause.

Going back for a second to the petroleum question, one of our interests which extended to other neighboring countries was that petroleum prices not be artificially maintained by

the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The Reagan administration at that time strongly believed that the market ought to be allowed to operate in a free way without the intrusion of the oil cartel represented by OPEC into market mechanisms. This, however, turned out not to be an entirely sound policy as the Kuwaiti foreign minister, Sheikh Ali Khalifa, made clear to me on one occasion when I was instructed to wait upon him and inform him that we hoped the next OPEC meeting in Vienna would not be used to keep prices up artificially. He read me a short sermon on the subject of market forces and suggested that I didn't know what I was talking about, nor did the President of the United States. A free market in oil would be more deleterious to American interests than to Kuwaiti. He suggested, correctly, that Kuwait was capable of producing oil at just over a dollar a barrel at the well head and would realize considerable profits even at very low international oil prices. However, if we compared Kuwaiti costs with the cost of production in west Texas, the oil patch of the United States, it was not possible to produce oil at one dollar a barrel but more nearly 10 dollars a barrel. He ventured the thought that what we really wanted, regardless of what we said, was that oil prices should be maintained at about \$17 or \$18 a barrel, sufficient for a good profit for the Arab producers and an adequate price for the domestic American oil producers. I assured him that we still favored a free market in oil and he said, "Let's see whether you think that if the price is allowed to fall."

For reasons not related to my demarche, the Arabs could not reach agreement on oil quotas at the Vienna meeting and the Saudis, Kuwaitis and others all began to produce over their quota. Oil quickly fell to something like seven or eight dollars a barrel. This, of course, was disastrous for Texas oil producers and we ceased to make strong representations to the Arabs on this subject. The Arabs working with their other non-Arab OPEC producers some months later managed to push quotas down. Oil prices then rose to a level which the world found entirely satisfactory.

Q: There must have been American oil experts in the government snooping around Kuwait from time to time, did you ever raise this question with them?

QUAINTON: I told them the story after I had this conversation with the foreign minister. I had reported it to Washington, of course. The oil experts recognized the realities, but it was such a strongly held belief in certain quarters in the administration that prices should be allowed to find their own level in the international market place that it was only when that was clearly demonstrated to be a policy which had unfavorable implications for American producers that we backed away. It was also thought that it was unlikely that the Arabs would allow production to rise to the point that it did rise.

Q: What was the reason for the bombing as far as we can gather of our embassy before you arrived? What was the Kuwaiti response?

QUAINTON: The explosion in Kuwait came on the heels of two bombings in Beirut. There was clearly an orchestrated campaign directed against American interests in the Middle East designed to influence our policy with regards to the Israeli dispute. One of the things that became most controversial after the bombing in Kuwait was the fate of the terrorists who perpetrated the bombing. They were being held in Kuwaiti jails. There was

a constant fear that this would only lead to further terrorist, especially hostage taking, acts in order to get them freed from Kuwaiti control. There were in fact no such efforts, at least none that were successful, but it was always a worry that terrorism would feed on itself in the sense, that having captured the perpetrators the organizers behind those who had actually carried out the bombing would want to see them freed and would take further terrorist actions.

There was, in fact, almost no violence in Kuwait in the period that we were there. There may have been one or two small bombings but no major terrorist incidents. The Kuwaitis had a fairly efficient security apparatus which focused much more heavily on dissident Palestinians. There was a very large Palestinian population, some 500,000 in Kuwait out of a population of 1.7 million. Almost as many Palestinians as Kuwaitis lived in Kuwait at that time. The Kuwaitis were outnumbered in their own country by other Arabs, so they were always concerned that within the Palestinian community there would be terrorists groups. On the other hand, Palestinians, themselves, the vast majority of whom were professionals working in public service or as doctors, teachers, etc., realized that their whole status in Kuwait would be jeopardized if terrorism was allowed to get out of control.

Q: How would you sound out what the Palestinians as well as the Kuwaitis were thinking and whither? There was no real political life there was there?

QUAINTON: There were elections in 1985 for a national assembly. The electorate was very small, only some 60 or 70 thousand voters, since voting was limited to adult males who could trace their family ties with Kuwait back before 1922. These were the so-called first class Kuwaitis who were longtime residents. Kuwaitis who had come later, the Bedouin, for example, who had moved in from the desert, were not eligible to vote. Women were not eligible to vote. And, of course, none of the Palestinians or other Arabs who had been there in some cases for 40 years were eligible to vote. But, elections were free. There was competition which was carefully monitored by the emir and by his government. The power of the assembly was greatly circumscribed so political life was quite limited, but, there was some genuine political debate, more than in any other Gulf country or in Saudi Arabia for that matter.

The Palestinians were extremely accessible. They were active across the board in Kuwaiti life, but at another level they were untouchable. Many of the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) lived in Kuwait. At the time, we had an absolute prohibition on contacts with the PLO except those that were authorized in Tunis through Ambassador Pelletreau. In fact, on a number of occasions I came in contact with senior Palestinian leaders. By chance I would sit next to them at a function or occasionally at a Kuwaiti's home, or in a Palestinian professional's home, and I would meet someone who had a political agenda as well. But, those contacts were fairly rare and certainly were not encouraged by the Department. I have to say in all honesty that in most cases I didn't report that they had taken place. I had not sought them out and they had not sought me out, it was casual conversation sometimes turning to political subjects of the day.

Q: Were you monitoring the Palestinians? I was a vice consul in Dhahran in 1958-60. At that time in that part of Saudi Arabia we were concerned about the Palestinians, who in those days were considered the tools of Nasser of Egypt.

QUAINTON: Not in any great significant way. We did a little reporting on the Palestinians as they were organized in Kuwait. They were not allowed to have any formal political structures such as the PLO, or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The Kuwaitis, themselves, monitored the Palestinian community very carefully. And, indeed, the terrorist attack that took place against the American embassy in 1985 was caused not by elements which had come from Lebanon, not resident Palestinians.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Kuwaiti government?

QUAINTON: It varied a bit. The emir at the top was quite inaccessible. In three years, I certainly saw him no more than half a dozen times and almost always in the company of a senior visitor. The next level down, the crown prince and foreign minister, were extremely accessible and I saw them regularly. They spoke English. The emir may have spoken a little English. He certainly understood a little English, but he never spoke it in public, at least not in my presence. The crown prince on the other hand spoke reasonable English having done a year's training at a police training college in England. Most of the ministers also spoke reasonable English. They were divided into two categories: those who were members of the Sabah family, the defense, interior, information and foreign ministers. Then there were non-Sabahs who held ministerial portfolios. Clearly the more important portfolios were held by the family, not all by direct descendants of the emir but by collateral branches, cousins, etc.

We had a tremendous amount of dealing with the defense minister, who had been ambassador for many years in Washington, particularly in the last year that I was there. I will come back to that. It was the period when we were engaged in flagging Kuwaiti tankers. He knew the United States and was open and accessible. My only problem was with those members of the royal family and those ministers who did not speak much English. I did not have on my staff anyone whose Arabic was sufficient to do translation or interpretation. That was a frequent problem. Although we had several people who had studied Arabic, their Arabic was not at the sufficient level that would enable them to do interpretation. So, I was frequently forced to take a local employee along or ask the Kuwaitis to provide somebody who could do the interpretation.

Q: Was the government fairly effective with what it was doing as far as money and control over running the country, etc.?

QUAINTON: One has to remember that this was one of the wealthiest countries in the world on a per capital basis and so whatever they needed they bought, whether that was in terms of talent, equipment, or anything else. So, you had free hospital care, free healthcare, free education, subsidized housing for all Kuwaitis to the tune of something like \$100,000 per house. There was no taxation. The government had enormous oil revenues which they very shrewdly invested. To give you an idea of the shrewdness of

their investments, they bought into the American stock market when the DOW was at 800. Now it is well over 10 times that. So, their investments have been enormously profitable. They had very considerable disposal income which they used to pave over the country. The road system was still being constructed, but it was of extremely high quality. In fact, they had a team from the Federal Highway Works Administration helping with the development of their road network. They had very modern hospitals. What they didn't have was terribly good nursing care in these hospitals. No Kuwaiti would do work of that kind and they all had to be imported, mainly from South Asia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. But, the country was reasonably well run. Things worked in terms of public services. The housing was uniformly good. It was a very prosperous and successful little country.

Q: I have been told that because of their wealth and, I guess, attitude, the Kuwaitis really had no natural friends in the area. Their relations were rather formal with other countries. Is that true?

QUAINTON: Of all the Arab countries in the Gulf, the Kuwaitis had tried to adopt a policy of non-alignment. They were frequently critical of American policies. They tried to balance relations with us by relations with the Soviet Union. Many other Arabs did not have relations with the Soviet Union. So, there was a conscious effort to steer an independent path. I think their history suggested to them that they were a small country with two large, not particularly friendly, neighbors. One, Iraq, which we know in hindsight was not a friendly neighbor. The other was Saudi Arabia, whose influence they feared, and whose politics and religious fanaticism they did not wish imported into Kuwait. Kuwait was a Muslim country. Alcohol was banned, but on the other hand women in Kuwait enjoyed quite considerable social rights - drove cars, didn't wear the veil, etc. - and there was no attempt by the emir or by any of the other senior Kuwaitis to convert Kuwait into a formal Islamic state. Christians were free to worship and indeed there was a Catholic cathedral and several Protestant churches in Kuwait. There was even an American missionary presence there.

Kuwaitis on the one hand were very suspicious of the Saudi model and were also suspicious, of course, of the Iraqis. That led them to think that their best policy was to have good relations with the great powers. The United States was a friend of Saudi Arabia, and the Soviet Union a particular friend of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqis, so the Kuwaiti whole strategy was one of careful balance.

This only began to change when their interests were directly threatened in the latter phases of the Iran-Iraq war in 1986-87. As the Iranians mined the access to Kuwait's harbors, the Kuwaitis saw themselves in a situation where they would not be able to export their oil without some direct support from one or other of the great powers. As a result, the oil minister, Ali Khalifa, had the bright idea that the way to protect Kuwait's tanker fleet was to have the fleet fly a foreign flag. He approached the Russians and asked whether they would be willing to protect Kuwaiti tankers. The Russians actually expressed some interest in doing this. Whether the Kuwaitis were serious in this inquiry of the Russians makes little difference because it set off very considerable alarm bells in Washington where it was thought that the Soviets were being invited into the Gulf in a

military capacity. The Soviets had deployed additional warships into the Indian Ocean which occasionally sailed into the Gulf. The result was that we decided we could not let the Soviets get the upper hand. Through a very torturous process in Washington, both bureaucratically and legally, we allowed the Kuwaitis to set up a corporation in Delaware to which the tankers were transferred. The tankers became American vessels, enabling the American flag to be flown on them. This, in turn, allowed us to provide direct military protection with the Middle East Force, COMIDEASTFOR, based in Bahrain, while not beefed up, to the extent that came later, it was still a significant presence.

Those negotiations took a very long time, a number of months. There was resistance by some in Kuwait to the whole idea of turning to the United States. This ran counter to Kuwait's traditional foreign policy of balance. There were a lot of people in the United States who were suspicious of the Kuwaitis because they had been non-aligned for so long. They were not a reliable partner in the eyes of some Washington officials. There were people who said it was crazy to take on an obligation to protect another country's fleet which might draw us into the Iran-Iraqi conflict. All of these arguments played back and forth, but in the end, the fear of the Soviet Union, which was such a controlling factor in our foreign policy throughout the Cold War, led us to swallow a lot of things we would otherwise not have swallowed and to agree to, like the flagging of the tankers.

It was then a question of how to get the tankers in and out, given the fact that there were mines scattered up and down the Gulf. We had to bring in minesweepers to get rid of the mines and then to escort the tankers down the Gulf at regular intervals, always fearful that they would be attacked by the Iranians as they passed through the Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz at the far end. In fact, the Iranians didn't attack the Kuwaiti tankers. The only attack that took place was the attack by the Iraqis on the *USS Stark*, one of our ships in the Gulf, part of the Middle East Force that was there to protect the Kuwaitis and to insure that the sea lanes were kept open for the other Gulf states that exported oil, including Saudi Arabia.

Q: Prior to the flagging, the problem had been that small Iranian boats were coming in almost like a militia with shoulder rocket launchers, etc.

QUAINTON: And small boats came in and laid some mines. That, of course, was very threatening to Kuwait. They were afraid this would happen elsewhere in the Gulf, Kuwait being much closer to Iran than anywhere else except Oman. It was only a few miles from the delta of the Euphrates to Kuwait territory, so it was easy for Iranians to use small boats to come across into Kuwaiti waters and threaten Kuwaiti shipping.

Q: Had the Kuwaitis been making any representation to the Iranians or were they pretty much shut off from that?

QUAINTON: The Kuwaitis never closed their embassy in Tehran. They kept it open but it was not staffed at any very senior level. The Iranians kept their embassy open in Kuwait throughout all this period. The Iranians were increasingly anxious about Kuwaiti support for Iraq.

Q: During the negotiations on the flagging, was this something pretty much carried on in Washington?

QUAINTON: It was largely carried on in Kuwait. I did much of the negotiating directly with the defense minister and the prime minister. We had, of course, visits from Washington. Senior visitors came from the Pentagon, from CENTCOM, etc. We had a steady stream of people to discuss some of the technical elements of the reflagging. And then once the ships were reflagged, we needed to increase our presence so that we could support the reflagging. The presence of foreign troops on their soil was always a neuralgic issue for the Kuwaitis, at least until the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. They did not want to see that happen, but we were able to get agreement to bring in on a rotating basis a small number of people who worked directly with the Kuwaiti shipping and petroleum authorities on the protection of ships.

Q: When you fly under the American flag don't the majority of crew have to be American?

QUAINTON: There was a whole series of requirements that had to be met and the Kuwaitis did in fact meet those requirements. I have forgotten exactly what they were with regard to the manning and officers of the ships. Tankers don't require very many people. Many of our requirements only apply to ships that come into American waters and these tankers never came to the United States. Once they got out of the Gulf they sailed to Western Europe or the Far East.

Q: Was it your impression that what was driving us was not the flow of oil as much as it was the possibility of the Soviets supplying protection?

QUAINTON: We had two concerns. I think the Soviet concern tipped the balance because we saw the Soviets getting a potential foothold in Kuwait, if they were allowed to protect the Kuwaiti tankers. We certainly didn't want that to happen. We were also concerned at the general Iranian threat to oil exports from the Gulf region and wanted to provide as much reassurance as we could to all of the Gulf states that their oil exports would not be threatened. The Saudis, of course, had by this point built a pipeline across to the Red Sea at Yanbu, and a great deal of oil could go out without going through the Gulf, although they still had substantial exports from the Gulf. Kuwait was the second most important producer of petroleum after Saudi Arabia, so the threat to the oil in Kuwait was in itself an important concern for the United States.

Q: What about relations during this 1984-87 period with the Iraqis?

QUAINTON: The Iraqi ambassador was the dean of the diplomatic corps. He was a big man around town. He didn't speak any English so I had relatively little contact with him. I called on him a couple of times. Clearly the Iraqis and Kuwaitis were very close. I won't say they were always terribly friendly, but Iraq was an extremely important country for the Kuwaitis. The Iraqis had a very large embassy doing all sorts of things, and undoubtedly had a very large intelligence presence in Kuwait. They were certainly

important players on the Kuwaiti scene.

Q: What about the Iran-Iraq war? It seemed to be moving more towards the side of Iran while you were there?

QUAINTON: Yes. The Iranians had successfully advanced their front quite a distance into Iraq and there was a point when it seemed possible that they might actually be able to reach Basra. Of course, reaching Basra would have meant closing off most of Iraq's oil exports. Some could have gone out by pipeline across Turkey, but Iraqi oil came out basically through Basra. The Iraqis put everything they had into the campaign to stop the Iranians. I think history will judge that in all probability it was the Iraqis who were the original provokers of the war in their efforts to gain those portions of southwestern Iran, which was inhabited largely by Arabs. On the other hand, there is a counter case which the Iraqis were quick to make that the Iranians were provocative and had started shelling across the Iraqi border and the Iraqis responded back. There certainly was some shelling but I think the origin of the war lies more heavily on the side of the Iraqis than on the side of the Iranians. I am not an expert on that.

Q: Were you at the embassy making plans for a possible breakthrough by the Iranians?

QUAINTON: We certainly worried a little bit about it and there was some question as to whether the Iranians would try to come through Kuwait. However, they didn't have to come into Kuwaiti territory in order to get to Basra. What was a bigger issue was whether the Iraqis would demand of the Kuwaitis access to several offshore islands which bordered Iraqi territory in order to be able to more effectively shell the Iranians from the Kuwaiti side. That never happened, but there certainly was a great deal of talk about that possibility. The Iraqis, I think, pressed very hard to get authorization from the Kuwaitis. But almost everything in Kuwait's foreign policy tried to keep both sides in play. They never wanted to take a stance so provocatively pro-Iraqi that it would lead to Iranian intervention. So, they never gave in to the pressure put on them to allow the Iraqis to use Kuwaiti territory. They were only allowed to use Kuwaiti air space.

In hindsight, it just may be that this whole experience for the Iraqis and their vulnerability to an Iranian attack, increased their desire to annex Kuwait and have an effective buffer on that side from which they could operate against any future incursion by some outside force. The legitimacy of the borders created by the British was always an issue and contributed to the disastrous Iraqi strategy several years later.

Q: You were sort of the new boy on the block in this area. From talking to people when you would go back, was it your impression that the Iran seizure of our embassy and the subsequent acts had so traumatized us that we almost by reflex were looking upon Iraq as our friend?

QUAINTON: I think that is right. We were only five years or so from the hostage taking in Tehran, and the perception of the Iranians as being fanatical was deeply held. While Saddam Hussein had never been a friend of the United States, and had consistently tilted

towards the Soviet Union, in large part because the Soviet Union had tilted towards the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli dispute, nonetheless, it was important to us that the Iranians not gain control over Basra, southern Iraq and particularly Kuwait.

We saw Iraq as a nasty dictatorship, not a fanatical dictatorship and certainly not one in that time that seemed to have regional ambitions. It was a secular state ruled for many years by the Baath party. It was one which was and is in some respects more open than any number of other Arab countries. You can get a glass of beer in Baghdad and the women aren't veiled. The superficial aspects of life in Baghdad were more western than anything we had seen in Iran since the Ayatollahs had taken over some years before.

Q: Did our policy towards Israel intrude on you much?

QUAINTON: It was always a source of discussion. There was constant criticism in the Kuwaiti press of our policy towards Israel. The perception was widely held in Kuwait, as elsewhere in the Arab world, that American policy was controlled by Jewish interests in the United States. We were always explaining, defending our policy. One aspect that I think was common to other countries and certainly involved my staff a good bit was the Arab boycott. There was a secondary boycott by the Arabs of American companies who did business with Israel. There was a list of companies that could not sell in Kuwait because they were selling to Israel. We were constantly involved in that.

Q: The boycott had been in place for a long time. I would have thought that by this time everybody would have gotten so sophisticated that by bypassing the second party it would have become a moot problem?

QUAINTON: No, it never did. There was a very elaborate certification process whereby exporters had to certify that they were not doing business with Israel, but there were always new players, people who entered the Israeli market and then found that Arab countries had added their name to the list of companies that couldn't do business with one or all of them. So it was always a neuralgic issue with the Department of Commerce, which kept up the pressure on us. My commercial attaché spent a good bit of time on boycott questions.

Q: We had to be very careful not to get involved in making this certification for anybody, didn't we?

QUAINTON: Yes, that is right.

Q: They couldn't come in and swear in front of the consul that they didn't deal with Israel and that sort of thing.

QUAINTON: We were prevented by American law from doing that. They could take positive steps to prove that they were not doing business with Israel. Of course, they would argue their case forcibly.

Q: During this time were there any other events that concerned you?

QUAINTON: A great deal of time and effort, as I suggested, was given to security matters. We built around the compound the most expensive wall that had ever been built in history. It cost just over a million and a half dollars to build this wall. It was made of reenforced steel concrete set many meters into the ground and would have withstood anything short of an atomic weapon. There was constant discussion as to why we were spending this kind of money.

Another event that did not directly touch us but actually had an impact throughout the region was the Iran-Contra affair. Iran-Contra took place against the background of the Iran-Iraq war, and the hostility which Iran was showing to its Gulf neighbors on the southern side of the Gulf. Visits to the ayatollahs, etc. had a negative impact on our relations with the Gulf Arabs, including the Kuwaitis. They saw this as a very foolish policy that the United States was pursuing.

Q: Did you find yourself trying to say we have some stupid people in our government?

QUAINTON: I followed the line that was being taken in Washington. Of course, we ran away from the policy fairly quickly. But the Kuwaitis didn't dwell on the issue at great length. The United States was held up to some initial ridicule, but the Kuwaitis are a pragmatic people and their interests were to protect themselves, not to attack us. They thought our methods were really quite crazy, and they certainly weren't enthusiastic about the offer of arms to Iran. On the other hand, you would get Kuwaiti commentary, never publicly made, but sometimes privately, that just as they had maintained contacts with Iran throughout the Iran-Iraq War, they were not surprised that the United States with much bigger fish to fry would want to do the same.

Q: Did you get dragged into the whole Iran-Contra affair because of your Nicaraguan experience?

QUAINTON: No, happily, I never had to come back to testify on this. I knew nothing beyond what I read in the newspapers and what we were told officially. I guess I wasn't terribly surprised when I learned who the actual author of this was, the same senior CIA officer who had orchestrated some of the more bizarre covert operations during my stay in Nicaragua.

Q: When you left in 1987, how did you see things coming out?

QUAINTON: Things were very upbeat. As relations in Nicaragua got steadily worse every day I was in Managua, in Kuwait, relations, by and large, got better every day. The reflagging had just taken place. We were developing a new political/military relationship with the Kuwaitis. So, I left Kuwait with a sense of accomplishment, having helped to build a new, more mature relationship with Kuwait. And, I think the Kuwaitis felt that their relations with the United States had taken a decided turn for the better. I got a bit of credit for that, I must say, and I was very gratified.

Q: Well, then in 1987, whither?

QUAINTON: In the summer of 1987, my name was given to Sherman Funk who had been named as the first statutory inspector general when the State Department was added to the Inspector General Act. When statutory offices of the inspector general were created, the State Department, CIA, USIA, and the Justice Department were all left out. They were all thought to have rather special needs and requirements which did not make them suitable for the statutory approach. Senator Helms, after observing the situation for a couple of years, decided that the State Department and USIA and ACDA ought to be brought under the Inspector General Act. That amendment passed in late 1986 and Sherman Funk was chosen in early 1987; he was then the statutory inspector general at the Commerce Department. He was very anxious to have a Foreign Service officer as his deputy, since he had no great knowledge of the State Department.

The State Department had had an inspector general for many years carrying out inspections but had never had a highly developed audit function. The new office came into being in the spring/summer of 1987. My name was given to Mr. Funk and he asked me to come up for an interview in Vienna, where he was inspecting the embassy. I went up and we had a very long day of discussion talking about his vision of the inspector general function and what he expected of his deputy. At first, we did not entirely agree as to what that role would be. Originally he had the idea of having a kind of deputy who had no direct line of authority over anything. I said that I wouldn't be prepared to accept the job on that basis. In the end we agreed we would divide responsibility. He would continue to have direct responsibility for the investigative function, about which I had no previous experience, and I would supervise the auditing and inspection functions. The inspection functions was a traditional Foreign Service function and under Sherman Funk, there continued to be many Foreign Service officers working in the Office of the Inspector General.

So, I returned from Kuwait to be the deputy inspector general. Of all the jobs in the Department, only two are defined by employment category. The director general of the Foreign Service must be a Foreign Service officer and the inspector general of the Department may not be a Foreign Service officer. So, there was no possibility of the Department getting a career officer as inspector general once Senator Helms had had his way and put this particular definition into it. So, the only senior Foreign Service position in the office was the deputy position which I held for the next two years.

Q: You were there from 1987 to when?

QUAINTON: Until 1989.

Q: Sherman Funk was the first outsider to come in and was not greeted with open arms by the Foreign Service.

QUAINTON: He used to call himself a junkyard dog. But, in fact, he was a very strong admirer of the Department and of the Foreign Service. He came from an intellectual and professional background which made him quite compatible with the culture of the

department. He was a Harvard graduate, extraordinarily articulate and enormously interested in both the policy issues on which the Department was engaged, as well as the substantive responsibilities of the inspector general. He genuinely wanted to do well by the Department by improving its management, and by eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse that might exist. He used to try very hard to play a role which was constructive and supportive of the Secretary, even as he was forced by the nature of his job to be entirely independent of the Secretary. He reported almost on a daily basis to congress about what he was doing and what he had found. The inspector general also sends a report twice annually to the congress with all the conclusions of the major investigations, audits, etc. So, there was and is a very close relationship with the Congress, which we in the Foreign Service have a great deal of difficulty getting used to. We were accustomed to having an inspector general whose work was really internal, reporting to the secretary on fraud, abuse, and other management problems, but in the past the IG did not have a requirement to keep Congress continuously informed of what he was doing and what he found.

Q: You were essentially the first Foreign Service person to go in and help meld these two together. How did you view your job and how did you go about it particularly in the beginning when the position was just beginning to take hold?

QUAINTON: There were a couple of problems to which I was exposed which actually became quite useful to me in my subsequent positions in the department after I returned from Peru.

One was the tension between the Civil Service and the Foreign Service and in the Civil Service between those who came from a law enforcement background and those who did not. In the IG there were three different categories of employees. There were 1811s who were the career, law enforcement investigators - equivalent to special agents of the FBI. They were trained at Glynco, Georgia at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and they approached the world as policemen. They came from a very different culture from that the State Department had ever seen before. Actually there had been a couple of 1811s working in the old non-statutory IG, but the creation of a substantial body of investigators was something very new. They came with quite a hostile attitude towards the institution looking for criminal wrongdoing among the employees of the Department.

The second large category were the Civil Service auditors. Sherman Funk established a large audit operation with six different audit divisions looking at various aspects of the Department's work. They had come from all over government. A small number came from the Department of Commerce, which Sherman brought with him, but also others came from Energy, Defense, etc. They came because they believed the State Department was the most interesting, most attractive, most prestigious Department of government. They came with the desire to be in the Department, to carry out what they had to do, but their culture was also very different having come from other parts of the bureaucracy. They were not very familiar with the workings of the State Department and one of the things that I was able to do, as they went forward with their audits and made their recommendations, was to try to insure that what they were suggesting made sense in the context of our overseas operations, those operations being very different from domestic

operations. I was directly involved in reviewing all audit reports. I learned a great deal about the so-called yellow book, the standard against which auditors must operate. It is very convoluted, very rigorous, very time consuming, so audits usually took, to my astonishment, nearly 18 months to complete even though they seemed quite straightforward. In contrast, the inspections were usually completed in a matter of weeks.

Sherman Funk inherited all of the inspectors that had been in the old inspection office. They were very concerned that he was going to adopt a hostile attitude towards the Foreign Service employees which he did not. However, he did begin a process, which has continued to this day, which was to include Civil Service employees in the Foreign Service inspection teams. That was very strongly resisted by the Foreign Service people who felt only Foreign Service officers could judge Foreign Service personnel, officers, and staff. But, Sherman Funk believed very strongly that if you were going to have continuity in an inspector general's office, you had to have some people who were going to be there beyond the two year tour of a Foreign Service officer. Not an unreasonable position, although it took him a long time to find people who could develop the expertise to evaluate the work of our posts overseas fairly. So, I found myself working a lot on bridging the cultural gaps which existed in the inspector general's office as well as directly supervising all of the reports that came out of the inspection and audit process.

The audit process was an eye opener for me, to see how auditors went about looking at institutional problems. I must say they identified really some major areas where the Department was wasting money on a very large scale, including major investments in certain kinds of telecommunications technology which, when the auditors got a hold of it, turned out to be based on very poor assumptions. That made me realize that there was a real need for a rigorous audit process, and that the Foreign Service had not been very good at looking at administrative procedures. The inspection process had always been valuable in judging the performance of an embassy and an ambassador against local conditions, but there was very little aggregation of the recommendations made from one inspection to the next to find solutions to systemic problems.

The auditors would decide to look at a function to see if it was working across the board. They looked at some very controversial programs, the allowance function being one. There were many different kinds of allowances, as you know, housing, cost-of-living, per diem, etc. The auditors found that many of these allowances were gratuitously inflated by talented administrative officers who found ways to ratchet up the allowances. In one of the earlier phases of the allowance audit, the auditors went to Paris, where they discovered that the embassy was setting the per diem on the basis of a small number of hotels, including the Crillon, the most expensive hotel in Paris, in which no U.S. government employee stayed. Just by changing the hotel base, using the hotel where people actually stayed, the per diem in Paris fell by \$50 a day and that affected 100,000 visitors a year. But, that kind of finding, I regret to say, did a lot of damage to the Foreign Service on the Hill by giving the impression that we had been profiting from these programs and feathering our own nests. I think a lot of the subsequent problems on the Hill arose from what the inspector general found. It does seem to me, however, that there were cases where the Department had not been very wise stewards of its resources.

Q: Was there any feeling on your part or on Funk's part that, yes, we will have this very large group of auditors come in and straighten things out and then we will move to a smaller group to monitor once you have sort of cleaned up the stable?

QUAINTON: No. In fact we were in a state of building up all the time I was there. By the time I left there were well over 200 employees and I think there are now 300. That growth was much resented because already the Department was beginning to be squeezed by other budgetary pressures, and to see the IG grow as everything else was being held flat or in some cases reduced, was galling to many in the Department. I think it was Funk's assumption that the number of Department programs that deserved being looked at were so numerous that an increase in staff was essential. The feeling was not, can we clean up the agenda and then shrink, but how could we look at all the different things the Department did to see whether they were properly run. Audits took a very long time, between a year and 18 months, and sometimes two years to complete. It was a mammoth undertaking to look at the various consular, administrative, budgetary programs in the Department, not to speak of those bureaus that had very large resources. There was, for example, a constant effort to monitor what was going on in INM, now INL, the narcotics bureau, where the Department had been given very large sums of money to run air forces around the world, a field in which we had very poor expertise and in fact had a lot of trouble using resources wisely. The same was true of the Refugee Bureau. There were always more than enough things to look at. We didn't solve all the Department's problems, but we beamed a certain amount of sunshine into the process. In my view, this was entirely necessary. OIG [Office of the Inspector General] certainly did not run out of things to look at.

Q: One of the problems that occurs in the Foreign Service, is that all of a sudden a narcotic thing explodes on the scene, or refugees explode on the scene, which is really quite different from many other agencies of government where you are not dealing constantly with problems somewhere in the world that explode on the scene and to which we have to respond. We have to make an extraordinary effort all of a sudden to deal with tankers getting a path through the Persian Gulf, etc.

QUAINTON: That is exactly right. There was a tendency, and there may still be, in the audit process to jump to conclusions which did not take into account the idiosyncratic environment overseas. The auditors looked at overseas operations as though they were the domestic operations of some other agency and tried to apply worldwide, global solutions, which often didn't apply. There was a considerable learning curve for the auditors throughout this period.

On the inspection side, Sherman Funk focused the inspections more on waste, fraud and abuse issues rather than on policy management issues. That too was much resented because it was seen as nickel and diming a post to death. Indeed there were far too many trivial recommendations, made I must say by Foreign Service inspectors, not by interlopers from outside, but there was an obsession with certain kinds of problems involving the management of resources, such as allowances and representation. Some of

that investigation was excessive and unnecessarily rigorous. It was a constant strategy of Sherman Funk to put an end to something which had existed for many, many years. The phenomenon of the “can-do” administrative officer - “Don’t tell me about regulations; tell me what you want done and I will get it done.” A lot of regulations were bent out of shape, because that had been the philosophy which guided a great deal of the administrative work overseas. In the third world, that seemed to be the only way to operate. Administrative officers argued that you couldn’t stick to the regulations.

Q: In a way, this is the way we win wars but it is not the way you run a peacetime army.

QUAINTON: That’s right.

Q: We have a series of almost wartime crisis situations.

QUAINTON: The basic problem was what reasonable standard to apply. The fact is, the Department in its wisdom had created a series of regulations which officers were told they had to comply with. When they were systematically not complying with them, it was not surprising that the inspector general was critical.

On the investigative side, there certainly was then, and there has been since, a great deal of criticism of OIG investigations in the *Foreign Service Journal* and elsewhere. What happened was that the practices of other inspectors general was brought to the Department, notably the creation of a hotline. It was a number that you could call if you had a complaint about waste, fraud and abuse, and illegal activity. That hotline produced quite a surprising number of calls, but we also received hotline complaints in written form, often anonymously suggesting wrongdoing on the part of one employee or another. That had, I think, some very damaging consequences for the Department in that it led to an attitude on the part of many employees which was highly critical of co-workers. Many employees were looking for examples of wrongdoing. Even in the A-100 course, junior officers were told that they should be on the lookout for cases of waste, fraud and abuse. And, once you are on the lookout, you will find a lot of things that you believe to be improper. The inspector general was flooded with allegations, many of which, I think, in any earlier day, would not have been investigated.

I got involved in some of the more sensitive cases, particularly where there were complaints, allegations about chiefs of mission. Some of these cases are alive today. Senator Helms recently wrote the Secretary listing a number of quite egregious cases of chiefs of mission who had done improper things as found by the inspector general. Some of them went back to the time when I was there. One involved the construction of a squash court by the embassy using funds intended for other purposes. A junior officer, an assistant GSO, blew the whistle on this operation and it then turned out from documents that authorization numbers had been altered in order to make this appear as a legitimate transaction. It did a great deal of harm to the corporate culture because these stories got around. There was a high degree of sensitivity to potential wrongdoing in the Department created by younger officers.

Q: I must say looking at the Department in those days when I visited you would see big posters up there “report waste, fraud and mismanagement” and I kept thinking that bureau support for having people targets of terrorism were putting people into God awful places and the main message was “waste, fraud, and mismanagement” which never struck me with being the modus vivendi of the basic Foreign Service which was to get out there and deal with the problem at hand. It sounded bureaucratic and somebody with an eyeshade looking at you and not understanding what your real job was.

QUAINTON: There is some truth to that. On the other hand, I think in a service that was becoming steadily more egalitarian and more diverse, where the whole society was sensitive to fraud issues, where the political climate was hostile to government, it was not surprising that officers and staff also became very sensitive to what they saw as wrongdoing, particularly in a period of diminishing resources. I think when everybody has more than enough, the occasional abuse is tolerated, but when there are resource shortages and you saw examples of ambassadors obsessed with the furnishing of their residences, people complain. Some of it was the spirit of the times. But, some of these abuses were also very damaging to the integrity of the Service, particularly the perception that there was a fair amount of wrongdoing, cheating, etc. Actually, while there was a flood of complaints in terms of absolute numbers compared with what there had been before, the total was still relatively small.

Q: What about consular cases? Here is often the place where particularly junior officers who are on the line are the targets of bribes and all, plus the fact that there seems to be a changing morality coming out of the schools, etc.

QUAINTON: There were a small number of consular fraud cases where either FSNs or junior officers (There were also several cases where senior officers got involved in dubious practices.) were involved. The trouble usually involved money matters. The cases were few, but every case was very damaging. If a consular officer sells visas, that is a criminal offense. We had a small number of criminal indictments. There really isn't a lot of crime in the Foreign Service or in the State Department in general, but there is some. It seems to me you have to have some ability to investigate and OIG did. But what is disturbing to many in the Foreign Service is the perceived lack of due process, the whole assumption that federal investigators have, not just OIG investigators, that you don't confront an individual with an allegation until you have done substantial investigation of that allegation. They believe confrontation may lead the individual to cover up the wrongdoing of which he/she may be accused. That procedure leads to protracted investigations in which an individual is aware that something is going on but is never quite sure what. Just being investigated by the OIG quite often had deleterious effects for a person's assignment, promotion, and career.

Q: Would you find that if somebody was undergoing an investigation and presumably was innocent at this point until found guilty that this would hold up assignments, etc.?

QUAINTON: If there was reason to think someone was engaged in consular fraud, for example, I think the inspector general might speak to the director general and say that this

was a case where individual x ought not to be put in this kind of temptation again. There really weren't very many cases where this happened. A more common problem, which continues to this day, is that where there is an ongoing investigation of an officer being promoted must be confirmed by the Senate, into the Senior Foreign Service, for example, the existence of an investigation is sufficient for an officer's name being kicked off the promotion list until the allegation is proved or disproved. The Senate made it quite clear that they did not want to receive the names of individuals for promotion against whom there were unresolved allegations of serious fraud.

Q: What if there is a time element? You are allowed so many years to be promoted. Is allowance made if the person is found innocent to give them more time?

QUAINTON: Yes, the individual is told his name has been taken off the promotion list. Obviously, the promotion, if confirmed, becomes retroactive to the original date of the list. Until the issue has been decided favorably or unfavorably, the officer is not forced out of the service for time in class.

Q: Also, was there ever an accounting to figure up - I am sort of appalled at the number of accountants that have been hired - whether the accountants save more money than they cost?

Lets talk about discipline problems. Did the problems of gender and race intrude at all in your work?

QUAINTON: In point of fact they didn't intrude at all. The inspector general was not charged with investigating complaints that arise under the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. There is a separate mechanism for investigating allegations of gender or racial discrimination in the Department and while occasionally allegations came to the attention of the inspector general, the cases were more often than not referred directly to the EEO office.

On the discipline side, there was always a range of issues. The ones of greatest concern, of course, were the genuine cases of fraud which usually involved consular employees, a very small number of whom sold visas for money or for sexual favors. In terms of cases that led to disciplinary action, there was an active campaign to solicit through the OIG hotline and in other ways information about waste, fraud and abuse as it applied to the employees of the Department of State. The most common allegations would relate to voucher fraud, people who padded their travel vouchers, their educational allowance vouchers, who took advantage of regulations in ways that were illegitimate or appeared to be. In some cases, it was a misunderstanding of what the regulations required and in those circumstances, if officers had under paid, they were told to make financial restitution and no further discipline action was taken. There were other cases in which an officer appeared to have willfully abused the regulations. But the total number of disciplinary cases was relatively small. The ones that were the most eye catching involved chiefs of mission, and I saw more of those cases when I later became director general than when I was in the inspector general's office.

What was distressing about much of the disciplinary process was not that officers did things which were wrong but that there was a growing culture of pursuing wrongdoing, particularly by younger officers who tended to believe that their superiors were corrupt or engaged in nefarious activities. There was a climate of suspicion that was fostered not just by the inspector general, perhaps not even primarily by the inspector general, but by the general formation of officers at the Foreign Service Institute in the A-100 course. Junior officers were systematically briefed on questions such as waste, fraud and abuse, dissent, and race and gender discrimination. Unfortunately, many officers got the impression that they were entering a service in which the senior officers were both corrupt and abusive.

As deputy inspector general I had a number of cases where I was asked to go out into the field to look into particular problems and where I was directly confronted by junior officers. They told me that what they had seen in their first tour or tours confirmed the rather negative description of the service which they had taken on board during their time at the Foreign Service Institute. I regarded that as extremely unfortunate, particularly since it eroded the culture of the Foreign Service. Nonetheless, it was quite real.

I remember on one particular occasion a young officer who had identified what he believed to be a case of fraud at one of our embassies overseas based on documents that had been altered in order to justify the construction of the squash court. When I discussed this case with him within the first five or 10 minutes, he looked me straight in the eye and said that it was people like me who were the problems in the Foreign Service. It was, he asserted, the senior officers who were corrupt, not the junior ones. One would have thought that he had reached a rather rapid conclusion, in my case at least, but it was indicative of attitudes at that time. These attitudes continued after I left the OIG and indeed after Sherman Funk left. The Congress was enormously interested in wrongdoing in the Department. Senator Helms, among others, believed that corruption was quite extensive and put considerable pressure on the inspector general's staff to report all allegations of wrongdoing and to investigate them fully.

As I mentioned before, the investigative process left a great deal to be desired in terms of the due process which was accorded to the officers under investigation. Not that this is something unique to the inspector general's office. It is something which is characteristic of law enforcement agencies in the United States in general and the way in which law enforcement officers are trained to carry out investigations. Procedures do not allow the subject of an investigation to be confronted with information until the case has been fully developed by the investigator. Even if the individual concerned is aware that he is under investigation, he can not obtain any information about the nature of that investigation. The argument is that there is always a presumption of innocence and there is no need to confront an officer if there is nothing to confront him about. It's a very doubtful proposition in my view, but it is one that is consistently held throughout the law enforcement community in the United States. The inspector general got much criticism when he brought into OIG a team of some 50 or 60 law enforcement officers who came with this culture of law enforcement from outside.

You asked a question about the number of auditors. There had always been a small number of auditors in the Department, at times was associated with the inspector general's office and at other times associated with the controller's office. Traditionally their function was to look to see that the monies appropriated to the Department were spent in accordance with law and regulations. There is nothing wrong with that, particularly when considerable sums were being used in contractual relationships of various kinds. What happened with the arrival of the statutory inspector general and Sherman Funk was that half a dozen audit divisions were set up whose purpose was not per se financial accountability, but who were tasked to assess programs partly on the basis of funds allocated to them but also on the basis of whether they were carrying out the functions which they had been set up to perform. So, there was one division which looked at consular services, one that looked at financial management, and a series of others which looked at the various functions in the Department from a management perspective, asking questions about human resources, whether the regulations were appropriate and being followed. The audit process was extremely slow in comparison to the inspection process or even the investigative process. Auditors are constrained by the guidelines set out by the General Accounting Office in something called the Yellow Book, which contains audit standards and describes in great detail the way in which audits must be carried out. All of that is good stuff because it provides great discipline to the process, but it means that managers, who often are quite anxious to be audited when they are faced with a complex problem which they didn't have the time or the resources to look into, found that the audit recommendations they hoped they would get in two or three months and which would help them solve their problems, often did not arrive for 18 months or two years.

Q: By that time, they would have moved on to another job.

QUAINTON: Some had moved on and sometimes the situation in the Department would have changed substantially from the one that the auditors originally identified. The auditors did, in my judgment, save the government a considerable amount of money. One of the major audits in my time looked at a hundred million dollar plus communications project. The auditors asked a lot of hard questions about the assumptions that lay behind this project, how it was going to work, etc., and concluded, rightly, that this money was going to be wasted. It led to the Department's killing a project which otherwise would have gone ahead with nobody asking serious questions about it.

At a more mundane level, but at one where substantial resources were saved, at considerable unpopularity for the inspector general, was an audit of the allowance system. The audit focused on how we set allowances for overseas employees. As you know there are a wide number of allowances ranging from cost-of-living and per diem to educational allowances. With regard to per diem allowances it took the auditors only a few weeks to conclude that there was a pattern, I regret to say, in many major embassies of inflating the per diem rates by using as the per diem base very high priced hotels in which the government employees never stayed. The most notable case, as I indicated, was the use of the Crillon as one of the benchmark hotels in Paris, even though in the previous two years no U.S. official had stayed at the Crillon. By bringing down the per

diem rate in Paris, the auditors saved the government several hundred thousand dollars each year.

Q: Were you able to work with the inspector general to come up with what amounted to a quick response team? There is a difference between long-term problems and somebody saying, "Help, I'm out here in the Central African Republic and I really need some help getting this in order. I don't want a long investigation, just tell me what to do."

QUAINTON: We did do some of that. It has become much more institutionalized since. There is a new kind of SWAT team that is available for this purpose. There wasn't such a team in the original structure of the OIG. When an emergency problem came up, sometimes I would be dispatched to look into it. The inspector general would tell me that I had better go out and look at the problem and see if I couldn't help the ambassador or the post out. I would do that, or the assistant inspector general for inspections would do that. It was also possible to send small ad hoc inspection teams, but that was less common.

Much time and effort went into the effort to maintain a three yearly cycle of inspections of all of our embassies. This cycle has begun to change because a new inspector general has asked some hard questions about whether it really makes sense to look at every embassy on the same cycle. Perhaps some embassies should be looked at more often than every three years and some every five years or more. But, in any case we still operated under what had been the pre-OIG inspection system which was a cycle of inspections that touched every embassy every three years.

There clearly is a need for a quick response. Often, a post faced a personnel problem rather than a management problem, and there, as I saw in subsequent jobs, it may be just better to ask the director general to look at the problem than the inspector general. The inspector general would certainly send an investigating team if there were an allegation of fraud, particularly in a consular section, which could be of potential damage to the United States. Where there were personnel problems, sometimes they would be looked at by the OIG and sometimes it would be passed off to the director general who in turn might send somebody out to deal with the problem at post.

Q: Next you went to Peru. You were there from when?

QUAINTON: I went to Peru in December, 1989 and was there until September, 1992.

Q: How did that job come about?

QUAINTON: I am not sure how it came about. As I was completing my second year as deputy inspector general, I was asked if I would like to be considered for a number of different posts. The first one was Bulgaria, but my name didn't pop out of the hat. In that case, happily so. Sherman Funk was a very loyal superior and said to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary that he would be grateful if I could get another mission, although he had no particular ax to grind for any particular place. Out of the blue in the late summer of 1989, Peru was suggested. I was happy to accept, having served in Latin America once

before, although not in South America. But, the internal workings of the D Committee, the Deputy Secretary's Committee, were as opaque then as they are now. Officers often have no way of finding out how their names are suggested for a particular post at a particular time. Peru did not have notable management problems that someone from the inspector general's office might take on immediately and fix. Indeed, my predecessor had won the Reple Award for management. It was a well run post.

The agenda in Peru was a very specialized one as I quickly found out as I read into the Peruvian account, in the autumn of 1989. The focus at that time was on the forthcoming elections which were to take place in the spring of 1990. The universal expectation in Washington was that those elections would be won by the great Peruvian novelist, Mario Vargas Llosa. All the papers that I read and all the analysis that I was given suggested that on arrival I should deal promptly with Vargas Llosa and his team since they would be running Peru for the ensuing five years. These judgments turned out to be far from correct as time would tell.

Q: Before you went out there what were the United States major concerns in Peru as you saw it?

QUAINTON: There really were two or three. It was evident that narcotics would be at the top of the program agenda, if only because Peru at that time produced 60 percent of the world's coca and 60 percent of the world's cocaine had its origin in Peru. That was an enormous preoccupation with the rising level of cocaine consumption in the inner cities in America. DEA had deployed quite substantial resources, up country in Peru, and was actually fighting the drug war with gun in hand. The narcotics agenda was very, very central.

A second agenda then, however, was democracy. It had surfaced in a variety of ways over the preceding three years. We were anxious that there be a smooth transition from Alan Garcia to his successor. One must remember that Peru was a country that had had really only two free elections since a long period of military rule. There was some uncertainty about the institutionalization of democratic institutions. The widespread belief that Washington has in Peru that a country that had been run into the ground by the populist views of the outgoing president, Garcia, and that it was very important that the next president espouse a set of economic policies which would begin to turn Peru back towards a free market economy away from Garcia's statist policies. It was assumed that Vargas Llosa would carry out market policies. He had come to the United States a number of times and talked to senior officials making it quite clear that he subscribed to a rigorous liberal economic agenda with the support of the IMF and the World Bank. That transition from Garcia to Vargas Llosa was supposed to be at the center of my efforts in the first months I was there.

And, finally, as in many other countries, there was a commercial agenda. There were major American investments in Peru. The Southern Peru Copper Company had a vast operation in the southern part of the country. The copper was owned by Newmont Mining and American Smelting and Refining. Occidental was producing oil in the north.

There was a longstanding confiscation case involving Enron. So, there was an economic agenda which was itself quite important, and one I spent a fair amount of time studying as I got ready to go to Peru.

Interestingly enough, I got to Peru without congressional hearings. My predecessor had left in the summer and the elections were seen as very important in Peru, and the Secretary felt it was very critical to have an ambassador on site. Senator Helms was persuaded to forgo hearings and to put my name directly on the committee agenda. I was voted out of the committee without ever appearing before that committee. Steve Ledogar, who went to Vienna on a disarmament mission, was also pushed through without the normal hearings.

Q: What was the Garcia administration like?

QUAINTON: Garcia had been in power four and a half years having been elected overwhelmingly as the first president from his party, the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), a radical non-Marxist party. He came to power with the support of the business community. They were very enthusiastic about his policies during the first 18 months. They increasingly soured on him, particularly after he attempted to nationalize the banking system in Peru. It was that issue that propelled Mario Vargas Llosa into prominence as the leader of a coalition called the Democratic Front which supported him throughout the 18 months that he was campaigning for the presidency of Peru. Garcia's policies involved extraordinarily large subsidies for a range of social programs and eventually bankrupted the country. By the time we arrived, inflation was running on the order of a few thousand percent per annum. It rose in the course of the next six months to seven thousand percent per annum. This was an extraordinary rate of inflation achieved only in the Weimar Republic in the 1920s. So, there was a desperate sense of the country being bankrupt and that the only viable solution was an IMF program of ending subsidies and bringing fiscal responsibility to Peru.

Vargas Llosa publicly espoused such policies but not in a way that was captivating to the public, who saw him as willing to take Draconian measures which would have very high social costs. This is part of the reason that he eventually failed in his campaign for the presidency of Peru.

Garcia was a man with extraordinary charisma. He was a wonderful speaker and in someways a Bill Clinton figure. Not in terms of the actual policies pursued, which were very different, of course, but a person who had studied in Europe, who had a wonderful touch with people one-on-one, who loved to play the guitar and did so with some skill, and a person who loved the ladies and the ladies loved him. I must say on a few occasions that I had to deal with him I found him every bit as engaging as I had been told he would be. Unfortunately, shortly after I arrived and presented my credentials, the United States intervened in Panama and that intervention was passionately opposed by Garcia and his government. The Panamanian flag was hoisted above the presidential palace in Lima and remained there until the American troops were withdrawn. There was a drum beat of anti-American, anti-imperialist rhetoric, during the U.S. intervention in Panama.

But, that was really a sideshow, the central issue from December through to the summer, was the elections. There were many political parties competing, many candidates. Vargas Llosa was way ahead. According to polls he had well over 50 percent of the vote at the time I arrived. I was introduced quickly to the men and women who were to be his cabinet. They already knew what their portfolios would be. They were already anxious to come to Washington to get to know their opposite numbers, etc. It was a remarkably talented group of people from the business and academic communities.

But, as the months went on into the spring, Vargas Llosa's percentages began to slip and an unknown, minor candidate from a new party, Change 90, began to gain in strength, Alberto Fujimori, who had never been in politics before. He was a university professor, mathematician, having studied at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, and at the University of Strasbourg. He taught calculus at the agricultural university of La Molina. He eventually became rector of the university. He was a candidate simultaneously for the senate seat and the presidency. He put himself down as a candidate for the presidency to give himself a better chance of becoming senator. Fujimori ran on a platform with two slogans: (1) a president like you and (2) honesty, technology, and hard work. In a country that was lazy, corrupt, and backward, his slogan had a certain resonance. The idea of Japanese efficiency being brought to bear on Peru to change it from its backward bad ways was very appealing.

Fujimori had no national network. He worked to some degree through evangelical Christians. This, of course, convinced the Catholic Church that he was going to come to power as a pro-Protestant figure. Nothing was further from the truth in fact. However, he had two unknown vice presidential candidates, one of whom was a Protestant evangelical pastor from the north of the country and the other a small Indian businessman from the highlands. Fujimori's reaching out to the indigenous population was a master stroke, given the fact that Vargas Llosa and all his colleagues were white European from the small political elite that had ruled continuously since the conquest.

As things turned out, when the elections were held in the first week in April, Vargas Llosa came in first. The Peruvian system requires someone to have an absolute majority of the votes cast in the first round in order to be elected. Otherwise, a runoff was required. Vargas Llosa got some 35 percent of the vote and Fujimori 25 percent. Twenty-five percent may not seem very much, but in polls in February, two months before, Fujimori's numbers had hovered between 3 and 4 percent. So, it was a dramatic advance. All the other candidates were forced to drop out. There was a runoff election in early June. All the other parties that were not supporting Vargas Llosa, including Alan Garcia's party, APRA, supported Fujimori and he was easily elected in the second round. Vargas Llosa had wanted to drop out because he believed he couldn't win, but he was persuaded by his colleagues, by me and others, not to give up. He was persuaded to stay in the race but with great misgivings in his own mind. He engaged in a debate with Fujimori. There was a rather interesting structure for the debate. They agreed on five topics that they would debate - social services, education, foreign policy, etc. - and they were each then allowed two minutes to express their strategy and point of view. Then they questioned

each other. I remember the education portion where Vargas Llosa, in order to convey the fact that he was the superior candidate, noted that he had lectured at the Sorbonne, Oxford, and Princeton. As a Princetonian, I was quick to think that there were probably not two votes in all of Peru for anyone who had lectured at Nassau Hall. And, so it turned out, Vargas Llosa's attitude linking himself to a foreign elite carried no weight with the masses. Fujimori represented himself as an honest populist, and that had much greater resonance in Peruvian society. It was widely assumed that the United States favored Vargas Llosa. The Catholic Church favored Vargas Llosa. Vargas Llosa was in a position to demand resources from the IMF and World Bank which no one else could get. But none of this weighed very heavily in the minds of the electorate.

It was interesting that between the first and second rounds, the Catholic Church made a serious effort to defeat Fujimori. The Archbishop of Lima, Vargas Alzamora, subsequently Cardinal, used the most sacred religious symbol in Peru, a picture of the crucified Christ called "The Lord of Miracles," a 16th century painting, to which was attributed much miraculous power and once a year is taken in processions in the streets of Lima. He ordered the painting to be taken out into the streets of Lima for the first time outside its feast day in order to call on Peruvians to resist any temptations they might have to support a candidate who might allow the Protestants into power and subvert the Catholic nature of the state. Fujimori was never mentioned but it was clear that he was the target. The result, of course, is that the Cardinal and president don't speak and relations between the church and government are rather hostile.

Q: While so much was going on were you and the political section able to have pretty good rapport with the Fujimori group or because it started out as such a small thing did you find yourself somewhat on the outs?

QUAINTON: Well, no one knew Fujimori at all until after the first round. That is not quite true, there was one AID officer who had met him when Fujimori was rector at La Molina. That officer had a very negative view of him. We thought right up to the end that Vargas Llosa would not get an absolute majority in the first round, but that he would have such a substantial plurality that he would still get through in the second round. It was hard for the embassy's political section to focus on the possibility that Fujimori might win. It was a little as though someone had said to us that Senator Hayakawa from California was a likely president of the United States. It was inconceivable that a first generation Asian could come to power in a very traditional country such as Peru. So we were a bit closed in our thinking. We recognized that something had gone wrong and that Vargas Llosa was on the skids, but we found it hard to imagine that we would end up with Fujimori, at least until the last few days when we began to see this as a possibility. It was certainly very, very late in the campaign.

Once we got past the first round, however, I immediately went to call on Vargas Llosa and Fujimori and got a fair amount of publicity by inadvertently staying ten minutes longer with Fujimori than Vargas Llosa. This was interpreted by the Vargas Llosa camp as a clear decision by the White House to turn against him and throw in our lot with Fujimori. It was entirely fortuitous. Fujimori's wife served tea in Japanese fashion sitting

on the carpet in the livingroom without a table and it took longer than I anticipated. Fujimori was surrounded by papers, books and seemed to be trying to read into an agenda that he had inherited. And, he had no team. It is not easy to send the political and economic sections out to get know Fujimori's team because there wasn't much of a team. There were the two vice presidential candidates who we got to know. There were some economic advisors. He had a motley group who were not orthodox liberals. It was thought that he would pursue a much more populist economic policy than Vargas Llosa. We tried to identify some of those figures and provide them our views about what was necessary in order to reform the economy. That effort continued right up until Fujimori's inauguration in July. Before the inauguration, Fujimori came up to the United States, went to New York where he met with the Secretary General, and the head of the IMF and World Bank. He was given a lecture on what was necessary to put Peru on the right track. It had an enormous impact on him, and he threw out his economic policy team and got a whole new team who would go along with Vargas Llosa's set of policies. Vargas Llosa's people were extraordinarily bitter that their policies and programs had been stolen by an "incompetent" Asian after they had done so much hard work. And, they really had. They had drafted laws and were ready to go and run with their program.

Q: Like Dewey's team.

QUAINTON: Yes, very much so. The focus of the first nine months that I was in Peru was on the election. Fujimori had a hostile legislature since he had no real political party. The number of people supporting him who were elected to parliament was very small. The lack of legislative support continued to bedevil his policies for the next 18 months until he managed to throw out the parliament in what is known as the self-coup in April, 1992. That was 18 months ahead. In the meantime, there was constant conflict between Fujimori and the parliament.

Q: Did you find that when this happened that all the other embassies, newspapers and power establishment within Peru found themselves without any real contacts with this group that came in?

QUAINTON: Yes. Most of the press was hostile to him. They regarded him as something as a clown. In campaigning he frequently wore Indian dress. At one point he appeared as a sumo wrestler. He was thought to be rather a joke. But he was far from a joke as subsequent history has shown. He had a wonderful touch for figuring out what people would like and established contact with them. He traveled very widely, something that has continued to this day and certainly continued in the months after his election. He would pop up on weekends in small towns, looking at projects, taking his son fishing, etc. He had tremendous energy in terms of willingness of be out among the people. This was something that Vargas Llosa was incapable of. Vargas Llosa was a very stiff, starchy intellectual who found people not to his taste generally. Fujimori reveled in meeting and being with people. He loved the adulation that he got back in return. But, you are right, there was a strong sense of not knowing what he was likely to do. He moved very swiftly to take control of the police and the armed forces. He fired almost all of the top admirals in the navy from one day to the next and put his own man in as

commander of the navy, the navy being the most conservative and pro Vargas Llosa of the services. To a lesser extent, he did that to the other services and the police. He put his own stamp very quickly on the organs of government that were most important to his survival. The military, I think, was totally astounded at his decisiveness.

They were extremely reluctant to get directly involved in politics. Any sign that a general was getting interested in politics would lead to that individual being fired by Fujimori, who kept remarkably strict control over the military services.

He began very quickly to implement a shock program in accordance with the IMF's guidelines. For example, he removed the subsidy on gas, which was sold for about 18 cents a gallon. It was cheaper than water. The price went to over \$2 a gallon overnight. Subsidies on foods, grains, etc. were taken off and prices went up dramatically. But, within three months he had brought inflation down from 7000 percent annually to a couple of hundred percent and within a year he brought it down to 10 or 11 percent, which was an extraordinary achievement. He increased tax collection. He quickly overhauled the tax collection system and appointed honest people to run the Peruvian equivalent to the Internal Revenue Service. He brought about a complete turn around in the economic situation in Peru in the first year of his mandate.

During all of this time, he was continually harassed and opposed by the congress. He was increasingly fretful of their opposition. He didn't try to accommodate them at all. He wasn't interested in accommodation or indeed in institutions. In his view, if congress had to go, then congress had to go. He had no compunction about dismissing it in April, 1992, provoking, of course, a tremendous crisis in relations with the U.S. It was the first time in Latin American history that a freely elected parliament was dismissed extra-constitutionally by an elected president.

Throughout this period from 1990 until early 1992, the biggest part of our agenda was, of course, the drug agenda. We were anxious to coopt Fujimori to get his support for a more aggressive interdiction campaign and, if possible, for eradication of coca plants, particularly in the upper Huallaga valley, which was the area from which about two-thirds of Peru's production came. Fujimori had as his principal adviser a well known economist, Hernando de Soto, who had written a book called *The Other Path*. The first path was Abimael Guzman Reynoso's *Shining Path*, which was causing considerable chaos throughout the country. DeSoto was very influential and often argued against the U.S. interdiction strategy and in favor of alternative development.

On the drug front, Fujimori had a strong desire to cooperate with the United States. Just before I went to Peru, President Bush had announced a major drug strategy for the Andes and promised major resources for Andean countries - Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia - to help them with their interdiction and crop substitution programs. In point of fact, those monies were not dispersed promptly, in some cases not until 1996 or 1997, leading to considerable cynicism by the Andean governments about American intentions. Certainly in Peru's case, Fujimori took the view that if he was going to take a tough line on narcotics and get peasants out of coca production, he would require substantial money for

alternative development for other crops which could be used by the small farmers as a source of income. We initially were skeptical of that approach because the AID economists could not see any crop that would provide comparable return to coca. Over time, a number of cash crops have been developed which are, in fact, competitive, but at that time there was not a whole lot we could do. The congress objected very strongly to our disbursing AID resources to Peru given widespread human rights abuses. It was a classic case of the difficulty of co-existence between a number of competing American priorities. We wanted to control drugs and at the same time promote democracy and human rights.

Fujimori, for reasons of his own, did institute economic reforms for which he got very little credit in Washington even though reforms had been a major rhetorical thrust for his administration. It certainly was one of the subjects that I discussed repeatedly with senior finance officials. But the focus in Washington was on drugs and on human rights. Peru was constantly criticized for not reducing the acreage under coca production. Fujimori said, "Well, when we tried to get resources for alternative development, your congress refused saying they would not provide aid to a country with systematic human rights abuses." The systematic human rights abuses grew out of Fujimori's efforts to control two terrorist organizations, The Shining Path, Abimael Reynoso's organization, and the MRTA. Both organizations were extraordinarily brutal in their tactics, murdering peasants, villagers, as well as killing police and soldiers. The response of the police and military was to strike back very forcefully.

Human rights was a constant problem in Washington, where there was an unwillingness to recognize that Peru was a highly conflicted society in which it would take quite a long time to change attitudes about the role of the military and permissible behavior. Civil rights organizations were singled minded, America's Watch particularly, demanding the United States reduce its ties to Peru until the Peruvian military and police got out of the drug and interdiction business. So many of the things we wanted to do were halted by various congressional restrictions, and we didn't get the narcotic results that we wanted.

We began to make some progress on human rights, however. Fujimori, himself, recognized that change in the behavior of the military and the police was going to be in his interests and in the interest of the whole country. There was a constant effort on our part to work with the Peruvians, and help them to develop structures within which the rule of law could operate. We worked to get the army and police educated on human rights issues. There was, in my time, some progress, progress which accelerated after I left Peru, in part because of the extraordinary success that Fujimori had on the eve of my departure in September, 1992, in capturing the head of the Shining Path, Abimael Guzman Reynoso, breaking the back of that organization and thereby reducing the general level of violence in the society.

Q: You had been the anti-terrorism person in the Department. Was there a time that you came down on terrorism rather than drugs?

QUAINTON: There was a linkage to the degree that terrorists provided protection to the

traffickers in some of the areas in which there was drug production. For the Peruvians, the anti-drug campaign was also an anti-terrorist campaign. The army repeatedly asked for our assistance in dealing with the terrorists, at the same time that it was reluctant to become involved in anti-narcotic efforts. A great achievement for Fujimori was to convince the military that they would have to engage in the drug war, beginning with the air force and the navy. Our perception of the military was that they were all corrupted by drug money and were reluctant to be involved in anti-narcotics program because they benefitted too much from the narcotics business. For them, it was not a useful thing to try to get the drug war cleaned up. So, there was always a constant tension.

Terrorism was another policy issue for us at the embassy. We were among the targets. Shortly after I arrived, a bomb went off at the Marine guard's house during the visit of a congressional delegation. The terrorist threat continued right through the time I was there. The embassy was twice rocketed. The residence was strafed a couple of times by machine gun fire, and then in February, 1992 it was blown up by a very large car bomb. So, we were very much in the center of terrorist activity mainly from the Shining Path, but also to some degree from the MRTA. We constantly received intelligence reports of threats to me, threats to the embassy, threats to the residence, threats to the American community, to American business, which kept the Americans in Peru very much on edge. This threat certainly defined our lives. I was able to travel more than others because I had a good deal of protection - 14 bodyguards at all times, a four car cavalcade. This was a very disagreeable way to live. I can now imagine the kind of security the President of the United States has to live with. We did not allow officers to travel outside of Lima except to a very few limited places - a couple of places along the coast and a couple of places in the south. But most of the central part of the country was off limits. These restrictions inhibited our ability to report on much in the country. I tried to take colleagues with me on my trips, enabling them to take some of the pulse of the country.

We twice had authorized departures from Peru. We never had any evacuations. I was strongly opposed to evacuating people, although there were times that it was a very close thing with Washington close to ordering an evacuation. The community was very divided on this issue. A majority wanted to stay in Peru and did not feel personally threatened where they lived. On the other hand, there were others who were quite frightened, wanting to get out. So, authorized departure provided a way which allowed people to leave who wanted to leave, but those who wanted to stay could stay. Unfortunately, if one's family members left, they couldn't come back and new family members couldn't come, so there were a lot of negative aspects to authorized departure as well.

One of the other effects of terrorism was that it allowed me to carry out something like Jack Tuthill's Operation Topsy in Brazil. I succeeded in reducing the embassy staff from a permanent complement of just over 200 to 135, a cut of about a third. However, the motivation was different and my approach was somewhat different. It was clear that we had too many people. The more people we had, the more we were at risk for security reasons. Using the security angle, I required every agency head to give me a list of every employee along with a description of what each employee did. There were several agencies that were resistant, as you might imagine, but in the end all complied. Then,

using the list and working with the DCM we went through it identifying jobs that in our judgment were secondary and didn't fit in with the central focus of what we were trying to do in drugs, human rights, counterterrorism, etc.

Bit by bit I persuaded Washington agencies to cut back. For example, I eventually got rid of DIA's airplane, which had seven or eight people associated with it. They tried desperately to justify keeping the plane on the grounds that it was the source of much useful intelligence about terrorism, drugs, etc. I asked them to produce all the reports that had resulted from trips which the airplane had taken in the country and they produced a pile of reports, most of which described the airfields they had visited. I told the Defense attaché that we could fly commercially to those airfields and describe them without having our own plane. Washington was angry that I wasn't more supportive. DIA was angry - that I could understand - but I could never understand the importance of these planes. But, the fact is that the product didn't justify the large number of people and costs. It was a very interesting exercise. Needless to say, almost as soon as I was out of the country, my successor reinstated most of the positions at the advice of other agencies who convinced him they needed greater resources to carry out their mandate in Peru.

Q: What were the human rights abuses during your time that caused such agony back in Washington?

QUAINTON: There were a lot of documented disappearances. A great number of unexplained killings. People would just show up dead. Credible reports would come in that the army or paramilitary units would go into villages and just cut people down on suspicion that they were terrorists. They were often quite indiscriminate in how they used violence. There were also some allegations of torture, but mostly it was operations carried out by the police and the military in rural areas with little regard to any kind of civilized code of behavior. These cases were well documented. Human rights organizations were very active in Peru. Peruvian human rights organizations were very critical of the government and the military. They would stay in close contact with Amnesty International and Washington human rights organizations. These groups kept up a considerable drumbeat on the issue. All of these things came onto my agenda when President Fujimori visited Washington in the early fall of 1991. I came up with him, as did my wife. We had very useful meetings with President Bush. I think he thought that he had gotten a good hearing, but in fact not much changed as a result of the visit. In fact, the administration was not able to get the additional resources that he expected from such a visit.

Q: Were these human rights abuses in the program a Fujimori program or had it just been a continuing one from the previous administration?

QUAINTON: The abuses went back well into the previous administration. Fujimori was, himself, publicly opposed to human rights abuses. But he was reluctant to publicly berate the military and was quite protective of the military in some respects. He was also receptive to some of the programs that we proposed, such as adding human rights into military training courses, etc. The military would often deny the allegations against them,

although when pressed they would say, yes, there had been some cases of military abuse and they would assert these officers had been appropriately punished. We never could get confirmation, however, that they were in jail. This always led to a constant suspicion that we were being lied to by the military about their good intentions and that they continued their bad practices notwithstanding what Fujimori and others were doing to clean up the military's act.

Q: When Fujimori came in, were you looking down to the south to Chile and thinking about what had happened there when a radical president, Allende, had come in there? Was there a concern in the beginning that this might lead to another military takeover as happened in Chile?

QUAINTON: Yes, we constantly asked ourselves whether the military would intervene, whether there was some point at which Fujimori's interference in military promotions, etc. would lead to a reaction. From our contacts with the military, which were very good at all senior officer levels, we were pretty much convinced that the military really did not want to get back into politics. We didn't spend a whole lot of time worrying whether there was going to be a kind of Allende scenario in Peru, although it was one of the things that was possible, Peru having had military governments in the past. It was not something one could rule out entirely. But, I made clear to the generals that I dealt with that a coup would have a very, very adverse effect on bilateral relations. They constantly reassured us that they had no intention of intervening. I think they saw Fujimori as somebody who was fundamentally sympathetic to them and that he would do nothing that would undercut them except in terms of individual promotions. He went after people whom he didn't like. That caused some anxiety but he was publicly supportive of the military and made great efforts to come to military events, to anniversary celebrations, etc.

Q: Allende had created his own militia more or less and that was the challenge to the military that they couldn't put up with.

QUAINTON: There was nothing of that kind in Peru.

Q: Looking at Chile again, early on even during the Pinochet time he had what they call the Chicago boys, economists from the University of Chicago. Was there any spill over into the Fujimori administration of looking at Chile as an economic example and turn around?

QUAINTON: Yes, certainly. Chile was constantly pointed to by outsiders as the way to go in terms of freeing up the economy. In the end, Fujimori accepted that argument although I think there were a lot of people who said to him that Chile was fundamentally different from Peru - ethnically, geographically, economically. The parallels were very inexact. Very early on, Fujimori was told that the kinds of policies which Chileans had adopted, which Argentina had adopted, was the way to go to get his country straightened out. What was so surprising to everybody who observed the Fujimori government in its first couple of years was the absolute consistency of his policies. It didn't matter what

opposition appeared, he continued down the road upon which he had set out, unflinchingly. This was probably due to his not having a political party to whom he was accountable. All the other political parties opposed him and he saw no reason to consult them. He relied on a group of technocratic advisers, particularly his minister of finance, Carlos Bolona, who was American educated and a very smart economist.

While Fujimori never trusted anybody and kept his advisers in a state of tension and rivalry, he also had a very clear sense of what he wanted to do for the country. He sees himself as the savior of the country. He has been in power now almost a decade. He is trying to find some way to be re-elected for a third time. Whether he succeeds in that is something else again. This is a man who has a messianic streak who sees himself as the savior of Peru. He has defeated the violence, the drugs and the parliament and he knows that he can do what he has to do. Now, there is some truth, of course, to his extraordinary claim to success, but whether he has, in fact, been able to turn around the conditions of fundamental poverty in which large numbers of Peruvians live remains in doubt. There are still serious questions about whether it is a good thing that Peruvian society live in shanty towns along the coast, particularly in Lima. People in Lima have not benefitted from the Fujimori revolution. But, he has marginalized the opposition. They have not been able to find a coherent point on which to oppose him. They oppose his anti-democratic tendencies, the autocratic way in which he makes decisions. He is an autocrat, not a democrat in any sense of the word.

Q: What about your personal relationship with him, if any?

QUAINTON: In the first year it was really quite good. I had a lot of access to him. I went to see him quite frequently, often on Washington instructions. After he dismissed the parliament, relations became much more strained and access was greatly reduced. In fact, he threw out the parliament the night before the assistant secretary for Latin American affairs, Bernard Aronson, was to see him. We sat in the residence listening to the news about this and Aronson was greatly affronted that this would happen when he was visiting. He felt it was a kind of slap at him. But Fujimori was unrepentant about what he had done. Bilateral relations became quite difficult.

Also, we became increasingly aggressive in complaining about Peruvian drug performance and their unwillingness to engage in major eradication efforts. Fujimori's point of view was that there was not much to talk about if we weren't prepared to put up resources. The dialog became more fractious in the last year I was there. The first year was really a learning period for Fujimori. Fujimori was doing most of the right things. Right up to the time of his visit to Washington, he wanted to be taken seriously as a Latin American statesman who had access at the highest levels. He went to Japan, to Europe, and a number of other countries. He wanted to project Peru and to project himself on the international stage.

Q: During this time did the Peruvian-Ecuadorean border dispute appear on our radar again, I think the last time was in 1942?

QUAINTON: We were one of four guarantors on the border with the Brazilians, Argentinians, Chileans, and ourselves. There was a border skirmish in 1991, very similar to one that took place several years ago. It was a question of small military detachments moving into a disputed area and setting up border posts on land the other side claimed as its territory. The guarantors were all mobilized to try to persuade the two sides to stand down and then, eventually, the two sides were pulled apart and the demarcation of the little stretch of the border went forward. But, it became a much bigger issue after I left. Fujimori was never constrained by history and one of the most extraordinary things about him in his willingness to take controversial decisions, as in his efforts to resolve the Peru-Ecuador border and to develop access to the sea for Bolivia. If he thought it was good for Peru, he would do something whether or not this had been the established position of Peru. He was very conscious of being Peruvian; it wasn't that he dismissed Peruvian history, but he never felt constrained as others might have been by the policies of his predecessors. He had a great confidence in his ability to try things that others would have found difficult to try.

Q: Any problems with Chile?

QUAINTON: No, relations with Chile were basically pretty good. The Peruvians had long since come to terms with the loss of that portion of southern Peru that was lost in the War of the Pacific. Relations with all the neighbors were pretty good, except with Ecuador, where they were strained. Peru is a very inward looking country. As a country which historically was the jewel of the Spanish crown, it has always seen itself superior to and different from its neighbors and other Latin American countries by virtue of its pre-Colombian history, by virtue of its colonial history, by virtue of its natural resources, and its geography. So there is a kind of aloofness in the way Peru approaches the world which is different from that of some of the smaller countries in Latin America. It is a country with a very professional foreign service, and is one of the few countries which relies almost entirely on career diplomats, with very few political appointees. It is a country which sees itself with a long historic trajectory.

Q: I take it that during this time, 1989-92, which was cataclysmic throughout a lot of the countries because of essentially following the Soviet Union, Peru really didn't have a left wing that depended on that so in a way it was something that was happening way over there.

QUAINTON: That's right. There had been a small communist party in Peru at one time, but it wasn't very important. I think the Soviets consistently supported APRA, the party of Alan Garcia, which was a leftist populist party and the most revolutionary of legitimate Peruvian parties. APRA, of course, was completely discredited for reasons that had nothing to do with Soviet support or anything else. While the Soviet relationship with Peru had been a limited one, the Soviets had supplied some aircraft and some other weapons systems. We hadn't supplied any weapons to Peru for over 20 years. The Soviets had a certain status in Peru because they supplied some military resources. But, they were not major players on the Peruvian scene. And then, of course, they became declining players as the Soviet empire broke up.

Q: Did we have any programs like the Peace Corps there?

QUAINTON: There used to be a Peace Corps program but it was thrown out by the military government in the early 1970s. There was a substantial AID mission working in a whole range of basic human needs - agricultural development, family planning, etc.

Q: Was there a problem with family planning from our side?

QUAINTON: No, not from our side. Fujimori was in favor of family planning, another thing that put him at odds with the church. He embraced the need to have a family planning program in Peru. More recently, he has gotten into trouble because of allegations of forced sterilizations and an excessive zeal for family planning. Whether they are true or not I don't know. In my time, it was quite clear that he supported family planning and when asked about the church's opposition he said that there was no institution of which he was afraid and if the church didn't like family planning, it was just too bad.

Q: There had been several major business confiscations, ITT, in copper and other things of American firms. While you were there had these things been pretty much settled?

QUAINTON: Yes, the only confiscation case that was of any importance was the case of offshore oil platforms that were confiscated by the Garcia government in the northern part of the country. Fujimori was quite anxious to get that issue settled and eventually it was settled at the end of my time there.

Q: Any tuna wars or anything of that nature going on?

QUAINTON: The time I was there was a period of *el nino*, not the most recent one, but the one before that.

Q: Will you explain what "el nino" is?

QUAINTON: It is a warming of the Pacific waters off the South American coast which changes the air currents. It had the effect in Peru of (1) increasing the likelihood of more rain than usual in the northern part of the country and (2) pushing the anchovies and fish farther out to sea. Both of these effects have quite a negative impact. In fact, the *el nino* of 1997-98 is considerably more severe than the one in 1991-92. At the time I served in Lima, it had not rained in Lima since 1972. So, it is well to keep in mind when thinking about Peru that the Peruvian coast is the world's driest desert. It doesn't rain at all along the Peruvian coast except once in a while every 20 years.

Q: You mentioned the foreign ministry. Did you get caught up in UN votes and things like that?

QUAINTON: I didn't spend a lot of time on UN votes. There was the annual attempt to

get the Peruvians to vote for the things that were important to us. But, in fact, the Peruvians stuck as close as they could to a Latin American consensus. If it appeared that the Latin Americans were going to vote one way, you could be pretty certain Peru would vote the same way. I did have to deal with the foreign ministry on international drug issues. There was a drug summit in San Antonio, Texas in the spring of 1991 to which Fujimori went and where there was considerable confrontation with the Bush administration. Again, Fujimori raised the issue of alternative development. He expressed dissatisfaction with American pressure and our lack of responsiveness. We spent a fair amount of time on that. There was a lot of time spent with the foreign ministry preparing the Fujimori visit to Washington, of course. But, UN issues were secondly or tertiary.

Q: About the drug issue and the lack of response of compensation, was this primarily because of the human rights or was it just our making promises and not delivering on them?

QUAINTON: In general, we didn't deliver on our promises to the Andean countries. Congress kept the administration on a very tight leash with regard to dispersing resources. Disbursement was linked to drug performance, which Washington perceived was not sufficiently good, at least in terms of commitment by the Peruvian government and military. There was also opposition to any aid to Peru as long as the military was engaged in human rights abuses. So, both these things intersected. It never really got to the point in my tenure when Peruvian efforts were sufficiently successful on both drugs and human rights that it became possible to unlock the funds.

Q: Corruption has usually been the key to the success of those who are in the drug trade. We have seen Colombia almost collapsing under the corruption from the drug lords. What about the effect in Peru at the time you were there?

QUAINTON: There was no serious corruption at the top of the Peruvian government, involving the president or his ministers. I think there was evidence that some of the officers of the armed services had accepted drug money and were corrupt. Fujimori did dismiss such people when he found out about them. But, Peruvian society was not as profoundly corrupt as Colombian society has become. Of course, Columbia had substantial value added by converting coca paste to cocaine. Coca itself is a fairly basic agricultural product and the amount of money that came into Peruvian coffers was substantially less than that which went into Colombian hands.

Q: Did you see the beginning of factories moving to the higher grade stuff in Peru at the time?

QUAINTON: There was no cocaine produced in Peru at the time I was there. The coca continued to be shipped out by river, land and small aircraft to Colombia. What was more worrying to the Peruvians was the rise of consumption in Lima, and other cities, and the development of an indigenous drug culture.

Q: This is often what swings a government around at a certain point.

I think we are about at the end of the Peruvian tour.

QUAINTON: Yes, I think so. There isn't a whole lot more to say about Peru. As I look back on that experience, aside from the evident saliency of the issues - democracy, drugs, terrorism, etc. - which brought together cumulatively a great deal of the experience that I had had in other jobs, it certainly was the most complex mission I have had to manage. One of the problems was how to maintain effective control over the law enforcement agencies, particularly the Drug and Enforcement Administration and its teams that were actually engaged in the drug war. The drug war was fought by a coalition of U.S. government agencies receiving their guidance and instructions from a variety of different places, from Panama to Washington and internally from the embassy's country team. The coordination of the drug agenda was carried out by the DCM who was chairman of the narcotics committee, but many issues came to me for decision. Unlike my predecessor, I was not much interested in day-to-day military operations; I left that to my DCM. But this is always a great question as to how much an ambassador should engage himself in the details of what was in fact a paramilitary operation with quite a large number of people involved. We had a fleet of helicopters, transport planes which were run out of the embassy by the narcotics assistance unit. That was a constant problem. The inspector general was interested in the whole narcotics bureau and how they were controlling the resources. In management terms it was one of my major areas of concern.

The other thing I would say is that, unlike other places in which I served, I was very pleasantly surprised by the extraordinary hospitality of the Peruvian people to the American ambassador. I was made welcome at almost every level of Peruvian society. Partly because of the work that my wife did with American missionaries, I had contacts with even in the poorest areas. At every level there was enormous affection and willingness to work with the United States whatever our difficulties were with Fujimori and his close advisers. I certainly was given quite an extraordinarily warm and affectionate welcome throughout my time there.

Q: All right. Where did you go in 1992?

QUAINTON: In 1992 I was asked to come back to take charge as assistant secretary of state for diplomatic security.

Q: We will pick that up next time.

QUAINTON: Good.

Q: Today is June 12, 1998. Tony in 1992 you were in charge of diplomatic security and this was from 1992 to when?

QUAINTON: From 1992 until I was sworn in as director general of the Foreign Service

in December, 1995. So, it was almost three and a half years that I was in charge of the bureau. I was the third assistant secretary succeeding Sheldon Kryss and Bob Lamb. All three of us were career Foreign Service officers. I was the first to hold the job who was not of the administrative cone. I found a bureau profoundly alienated from the Department, a bureau in which its employees themselves were deeply divided. In some ways, this was symptomatic of the problems which the larger Foreign Service faced at that time.

In the Bureau of Diplomatic Security there were only two career Foreign Service officers: myself and the administrative officer who was working in the office of the executive director. There was a clear pecking order in the bureau. The special agents, of which there were some 700 and who were either security officers overseas or who were the core in the domestic offices of the bureau, including the 19 field offices around the United States, were at the top of the heap. They had all come in as security specialists. They had all been trained at the Federal Law Enforcement Center in Glynnco, Georgia. They were very conscious of their dual role as diplomats and law enforcement officers. Both roles in their minds were quite distinct but equally important. I will come back in a moment to that dichotomy and its implications for our security programs.

The second group were the security engineers. There are some 150 security engineers. They felt themselves to be second class citizens in the bureau of diplomatic security, because the office director positions, with one exception, always went to special agents, security officers.

The third group were the diplomatic couriers, a group of some 80 officers who had bounced around over the years between the bureau of administration and the bureau of diplomatic security. They felt looked down upon by both the special agents and the security engineers.

At the bottom of the heap was a substantial number of Civil Service employees who, as elsewhere in the Department, saw themselves being patronized and mistreated by the Foreign Service - in this case, the Foreign Service specialists that I have just described.

Shortly after taking over I organized an off-site at the Xerox Center where I gathered all the office directors to try and look at issues that faced the bureau on which we ought to work in the year ahead. It was quite clear to me that one of those issues was the very nature of the diplomatic security service, itself. The diplomatic security service of 700 officers, special agents who belonged to it, belonged to one of the smallest of Washington's law enforcement agencies. The head of the service is the principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

One problem that immediately became apparent to me and had been apparent to my predecessors, was that law enforcement officers in the United States get a whole series of special pay and benefits which are not available to members of the Foreign Service. There was a constant demand by the special agents to be treated as law enforcement officers, particularly when they were here in the United States, for special rights in

carrying a weapon, special arrest authorities, law enforcement retirement benefits and a whole series of things that were quite at variance, with the privileges and benefits that were available to Foreign Service specialists and officers. The majority of the special agents in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security wanted to be first and foremost law enforcement and a minority, mainly the older generation of security officers who had served repeatedly at embassies abroad, saw themselves first as belonging to the Foreign Service and secondarily as law enforcement officers. There was a constant tension about this issue.

The second big issue that was out there for discussion and which we continued to discuss throughout my entire tenure was how security should adapt in light of the change in international realities after the Cold War. There was again fairly profound differences of view within the cadre of security professionals. Some officers were very much willing to concede that the world had changed and security policies would have to change. Others continued to take a very pessimistic view of the international environment and believed it was essential not to let down the security guard in the face of not only terrorism but continued efforts by a limited number of foreign intelligence agencies to penetrate the United States diplomatic establishment. At the end of the day we reached agreement as a bureau on a concept of risk management, the idea that not all risks were equal. We tried to get away from a strategy of risk avoidance, which was too expensive and too arbitrary, and to move to a more flexible risk management approach. That, I think, remained the fundamental philosophy of the Department until the Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam bombings, which have again tugged us towards risk avoidance. Every time there is a major international incident, we face the criticism that we that we haven't been sufficiently careful in designing our security programs.

There were two separate areas which occupied my attention. One was construction security. We were in the midst of the construction of a whole series of so-called Inman embassies built to extraordinarily high security standards, the result of Bobby Inman's report in the mid-1980s following the bombing of our embassies in Beirut and Kuwait. Admiral Inman recommended a series of measures including building to very high levels of physical security in terms of walls, ballistic glass and substantial requirements for setbacks. The embassies that were built beginning in the late 1980s, certainly in the first five years of the 1990s, all conformed to formidable standards of fortification both internal and external. They were built largely in Latin America, in all the Andean countries, in El Salvador, a handful in the Middle East, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, and a small number in the Far East, notably Bangkok and Singapore. A lot of controversy surrounded these buildings, particularly those that were not yet finished. As the world changed, as the Cold War evaporated, as the threats diminished, there was constant controversy about whether we needed to build to these very high standards which had disadvantages both in terms of public access and internal mobility for the employees of the embassy.

A related issue was communications security, how we were to adapt security requirements to the evolution of the Internet and modern information systems. Those questions have never been satisfactorily resolved. It has been the consistent view of the engineers and the experts that almost all systems are vulnerable and that you must have

highly privileged systems with very vigorous access controls and that there can be no connectivity with the Internet or any unclassified systems. That may be beginning to change at last, but it is still a highly controversial issue, and certainly in the early 1990s, it was a very emotional issue for many people who were in the security business.

As the Department in 1993, 1994, 1995 went through a prolonged period of budgetary constraint, the under secretary for Management, then Richard Moose, took the position that the heaviest cuts in the Department's budget should fall in the management area and not in the substantive areas of the Department, that is the geographical bureaus. The functional bureaus would also be, relatively speaking, spared, although they all faced cuts of some considerable magnitude. In comparison with the cuts that he had imposed on the A Bureau and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, they were relatively modest. Needless to say the implementation of these cuts, which were mandated by management, fell to me to implement inside the bureau with fairly disastrous results in terms of the morale of the security service. They believed that threats had not diminished and yet the resources for battling the threat were being decreased.

The budget of the bureau of diplomatic security declined in those three years from something around 200 million dollars to about 165 million. This was a very dramatic decline in real terms. It was not only resented in the bureau of diplomatic security, but of course by our embassies abroad who saw this as a shortsighted policy that risked the lives of employees and family members of those who worked overseas. It was never clear to me that there was any real diminution of actual security. We were able to make enormous savings in the local guard program which had grown to well over fifty percent of the total DS [Diplomatic Security] budget. There were an awful lot of people standing around in places where they were not needed and this was very expensive. We went after security programs in Western Europe, particularly in Germany, where a single security guard in Berlin would cost something of the order of \$50-65,000, which would fund the entire program in Ouagadougou. It seemed to us prudent to redistribute resources, but needless to say, that was very unpopular.

I had enormous support from the deputy assistant secretary who handled these issues, Wayne Rychak, who in my opinion is one of the ablest security officers I have had the privilege of working with. He was very creative in seeing how we could manage resource reductions. It would not have been so bad if the resource reductions had only been in program activities, but throughout the M area, there were personnel reductions as well. We were limited in hiring replacement personnel for retirements, so there was a dramatic falling off in overall numbers in 1993 and 1994. There were no hires of security officers, a few engineers were taken on board, but no couriers. The number of Civil Service employees declined by substantial numbers. There was a general atmosphere of a shrinking human resource base which created very substantial problems.

These problems were exacerbated by a most unfortunate effort by Under Secretary Moose to remove the criminal investigative function from Diplomatic Security. Most Foreign Service officers are aware of two of the three functions of the bureau: the security of our embassies abroad managed by security officers, and the background

investigative function for clearances. Fewer, however, were aware that of the 700 special agents that we had, almost 200 worked full-time on the criminal investigation of passport and visa fraud in 19 offices around the United States. I visited all 19 offices in the course of my tenure. It took quite a while to get to them all. There were a lot of very dedicated officers who were engaged in criminal investigations, often working directly with other agencies of government, the FBI, the INS, the Customs Service, etc. The reality in my view was that these investigations were relatively unproductive, that most criminals who were caught in passport fraud either got no sentence, time served, or sentences of six months or less. It was a very expensive operation for a relatively low payoff.

Under Secretary Moose and I discussed this at considerable length, and he decided on the basis of these discussions to approach the attorney general to see whether he would agree to the transfer of these functions to the FBI. These were not discussions to which the officers in the Diplomatic Security Service were privy. At one point in 1994, Mr. Moose called me and said we were going over to meet with the deputy attorney general, Jamie Gorelick, the director of the FBI, Louis Freeh, and two assistant directors of the FBI to offer up the DS criminal investigative function to the Justice Department in the interest of reforming the government and streamlining the operations of the Department of State. I was along at that meeting. Moose did virtually all of the talking. Louis Freeh expressed considerable reservation about taking on this function and said that in his experience, as a U.S. attorney, he had never thought these cases worth investigating in the first place. He wasn't sure that the FBI ought to take them on now. Jamie Gorelick was more interested in whether or not what Dick Moose was offering was the security function overseas to the FBI, which she thought might be quite a good idea. Moose explained that that was not in any way his intention; he merely wanted to have criminal investigations separated from other security functions. The Justice Department interlocutors agreed to discuss this issue further.

They never came back to us with a proposal because what in fact quickly happened was that the FBI officers present in the room called up the senior career officers in Diplomatic Security and said "Guess what your boss has just done." My relations took a nose dive with the career officers of the Diplomatic Security Service, who felt that I had betrayed them. It was a great idea in certain ways, but very unwise in terms of my leadership of the bureau. It effectively ruined me with a large number of people.

In the abstract, it continues to be my view that the State Department has no business engaging in criminal investigations as part of its core functions. But, that theoretical proposition ran directly counter to a long investigative history of which the Diplomatic Security Service was enormously proud. It ran against the identity of the Diplomatic Security officers as law enforcement agents and both Dick Moose and I suffered considerably from it in terms of our relationship with the security service people. Certainly there was a lesson there. The tension between management's responsibility at a time of decreasing resources to think creatively about how to save resources and a manager's responsibility to subordinates to defend them against all depredations near and far.

Q: We spend a great deal of time trying to understand the culture of the security services

but the police culture is both a powerful one and quite different from ours. What to us seems like a cost saving move, to them it's a blow to their dignity.

QUAINTON: I think that is absolutely right. I certainly came away from the time that I spent in diplomatic security with an enormous respect for the officers and their dedication, absolute loyalty, very considerable bravery in a whole range of situations. I also came away with the recognition that change there was as difficult as anywhere in the Department because of the particular nature of their culture. It was as hard to persuade them as it is to persuade Foreign Service officers to change long established practices and to abandon long established programs.

A good example of this was the whole question of protection. The bureau of diplomatic security is chargé with the protection of the Secretary of State and foreign officials who are neither heads of state or heads of government, the responsibility of which in the early 1970s was given to the Secret Service. It struck me as highly anomalous that we would find ourselves frequently protecting one member of an official party visiting Washington, the wife of the prime minister, when the prime minister was being protected by the Secret Service. It seemed to me that there was considerable waste here. And, I was not persuaded that this was a function that was well managed inside the U.S. government, leave aside whether it was well run by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security where the quality of protection was, I think, of the very highest quality, in some ways better and more flexible than that provided by the Secret Service. It did seem to me to be a rather odd situation where two different agencies of government were engaged in the same job at a time when resources were scarce and the government was being reorganized. Everything that I say about this period of my service must be seen against the background of the dramatic downsizing of the Department and the resource restrictions that were being imposed by OMB and the White House on the Department of State. Had there been no resource crisis, very few of these issues would have been looked at.

It also seemed to me that the Secretary of State was grossly over protected, particularly here in Washington and that there was no flexibility with regard to his protection overseas. A typical trip to the Middle East would cost just for protection alone half a million dollars. We protect the Secretary of State the same way in London, where you have a government with very sophisticated security and protective systems which was perfectly capable of protecting the Secretary of State, as we protect the Secretary in Bujumbura or Damascus. I tried to get at that issue, unsuccessfully, I might say. And, we protect the Secretary in Washington, DC as if it was Bujumbura. A massive detail goes with the Secretary from 22nd and C St. to the White House. I thought that here in Washington that kind of massive security, which far exceeds that which any other cabinet officer has, was not necessary... that there were real costs to be saved by reducing the size of the Secretary's detail, on which there are over 30 people. It includes round-the-clock coverage. It was hard to get more creative thinking on the question of protection.

Some protective functions clearly could have been contracted out. The Saudi ambassador in Washington, whom we continued to protect with a very small detail, had contracted out his security to a local firm. He had massive security, a small part of which was

provided by the Department of State. Our role was to make sure that doors got open at the appropriate time. But, it was hard to get people to change the way things had evolved over time. That is no criticism of the officers who were doing the job they had been trained to do. They were doing it very well. But if you wanted to try to do things more efficiently at a lower cost there were clearly other ways of doing much of what we were doing. I have to confess that I had little success in changing these programs, with the exception of the local guard program which was dramatically changed under Wayne Rychak's leadership, and changed for the better.

In one other area there was notable change and that was in the way in which we handled background investigations. There continues to be much criticism of that process in regard to the lack of due process by investigators on both the inspector general's side and the diplomatic security side. But, in fact diplomatic security did try very hard to bring itself into a more modern way of thinking about security risks.

The central issue when I first arrived was homosexuality. There was a desire in DS to make an explicit policy of non-discrimination with regard to sexual orientation. A policy was drawn up which I helped write, which made that clear. In the end the Baker/Eagleburger administration did not want to touch it in the middle of an election campaign and left it for the next administration. The issue became embroiled against the background of the President's efforts to open the military to homosexuals. So, there was great fear that the State Department would seem to be out ahead of the President. In the end, we adopted and published a clear statement that sexual orientation was not a consideration for an appointment with the Department of State. And, more important than the policy, the criminal investigators scattered around the country doing the background investigations changed their own modus operandi so that they no longer asked questions about sexual orientation.

Q: I would think that would be difficult going to that particular group which I would assume from a practical point of view, would probably be one of the groups with the greatest thrust. Because most people who are hired aren't really Marxist ideologues, or something like that, I would have thought that this would be the principal focus of many of these people's investigations.

QUAINTON: Even after the policy was changed, people would make allegations about people in the Service or about candidates for the Service. But, the groundrules shifted in the sense that previously any allegation of homosexuality would lead to a long series of follow-up questions, such as "Does your mother know? Who knows, etc.," which were highly intrusive. We shifted to the policy which we had long had with regard to heterosexual activity which is - is there any suggestion of scandalous, promiscuous behavior, which raises concerns about suitability if not about security per se. We continue to believe publicly promiscuous activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual, to be of great concern. But we got away from the easy classification of individuals and the position that if they were homosexuals they would be ineligible for a clearance just on the basis of their sexual orientation. And that continues to this day. We were in fact very much on the cutting edge in the U.S. government in adopting such a policy with regard to

the security process.

Q: I just came back and it is now 2:50 and at lunchtime I was in the Department of State and there was a choral group singing with a very large banner saying, "The Gay and Lesbian Choral Group of the Foreign Affairs Agencies." I have to say that I was not impressed and don't think gay or lesbian orientation necessarily means that you have a good voice. It was all right, but not good.

QUAINTON: Well, this is a subject about which we might talk when we get to my tour as director general, the whole question of groups in the Foreign Service who self-identify by a variety of criteria, sexual orientation being just one, and what this has meant for the cohesiveness of the Foreign Service.

I traveled very widely as assistant secretary. I went to almost all of the dangerous places - Beirut, Algiers, Kinshasa, Gaza, Somalia - where our people were really right out on the edge under very dangerous circumstances. I must say that the protection that was being provided to our ambassadors and our staff was always of a very impressive quality. Sometimes in some places it seemed obsessive. A good case in point was Beirut where I had an interesting two day visit. I flew in from Cyprus, as everybody did in those days, late at night by helicopter with no lights landing in the embassy compound. The embassy compound was extraordinarily fortified. There were multiple walls, wires, watchtowers, large numbers of security officers. When the ambassador went out, he went out followed by a car bristling with mounted machine guns, etc. It seemed to me then that we had rather exaggerated the profile of our security. Things had already improved substantially in Beirut. The history of this went back to 1983 and nothing had changed for over a decade.

Because of crossed signals the helicopter that was supposed to pick me up didn't come. The pilot was told there was fog in Beirut, which there wasn't, so he couldn't come. So, I was confined to the compound and forced to spend another day there. And, the question arose what were they going to do with the assistant secretary for another day. To my great surprise I was asked if I would like to take a trip out into the countryside, up into the Shouf. I said that would be wonderful. The political officer was enraptured since he had not been able to visit that area because of security restrictions. So, we went out for lunch in the hills at a hotel southeast of Beirut. There was a follow car but there wasn't massive security. It occurred to me that if the assistant secretary for security could travel around in this way, it wasn't at all clear why the people in the mission couldn't. They did not. They never went to the beach, hills or anywhere. They were really prisoners in the compound and yet it was decided it was all right for me to move around. It began to raise questions in my mind about the whole consistency of the security policy in the field. I found the same problem in Algiers as well when I visited there.

Not all agencies played by the same rules. The rules imposed by the security officer applied always to the State Department employees concerning travel, the kind of escorts they must have, when and where they could travel, but officers of the Central Intelligence Agency and the law enforcement agencies and in some cases, the military, felt that they

were not bound by the same rules and they would move about in ways that were quite inconsistent with the embassy's announced policy. I always wondered if it was safe enough for them to do so, why wasn't it safe enough for State Department officers. We have never been able to resolve this tension between those who say they have operational requirements for movement and hence cannot be protected and those who are in the business of political and economic reporting and must be protected at all times. There is a large area for future reflection. I saw and was concerned about the clear multiple standards between agencies on this subject.

Q: What about consular operations? This allows the public coming in.

QUAINTON: Consular operations in Beirut had been suspended for many, many years, a very limited number of passports could be sent into the embassy for special purpose visas. There was no interaction with the public. Consular activities at the dangerous posts continued, often with special security requirements. But, in Beirut there were not regular consular operations of the kind that existed elsewhere.

Q: I would have thought that there would have been a continuing battle over our embassies, in the lower risk places, about putting up security which would make the place safe and the fact that the consular side had to serve the public. Was this a battle you had to deal with?

QUAINTON: Yes. There were ongoing complaints everywhere in the world where embassies were built about whether the security was necessary, whether the staffing was excessive, etc. The whole fortification of embassies, of course, goes back over much of the last 16 years, back to the mid-1980s and people, I think, have gotten used to the end of the open embassy. The real difficulty of getting into almost any embassy if you are a foreigner or an American citizen who is not a government employee, is the fact that we have the controlled access concept, which means that certain parts of the embassy are really closed to outsiders entirely and in some cases that includes even the ambassador's office. The multiple layers that were imposed, in my judgment, were almost always excessive. That is, if you could determine with some confidence the entrance, whether that is the external gate or the lobby, that people were not bringing weapons or bombs into the embassy, the risks of espionage by escorted guests seems to me to be really quite low. But, it was always a great source of concern as to what would happen if even unarmed people got into the inner sanctum of the embassy. I am not talking about the communications center and the code room but other parts of the mission. Unfortunately, the new embassies are constructed in such a way as to make access extremely difficult even for staff. In the embassy in Bogota some doors had as many as three cipher locks. Well, that is overkill in real terms in what you are trying to achieve. And, this security largely impacts Americans and people working in the mission. The design really got out of control.

Q: Hadn't there been a mandate by congress or by order of the State Department that if anything bad happened it was the fault of either the security officer or the ambassador?

QUAINTON: Absolutely. There is the President's letter to ambassadors which refers to their responsibility for the security of the American personnel of the embassy. There was a legislative mandate for accountability review boards in cases of terrorist attacks which result in loss of life and extensive damage. The law makes the point very strongly that ambassadors will be held accountable for the security of their staff. Security officers feel that they are on that front line, that they, in fact, will be the ones held accountable if anything goes wrong. They feel very threatened by efforts to reduce security. I heard a great deal about this over the course of these three years.

If something goes wrong, the first question will be why the State Department security officer wasn't doing his or her job. I was the subject of an accountability review board, which I may have mentioned in the course of our discussion of Peru, and was associated with several others that took place on other people's watches in other places while I was assistant secretary for Diplomatic Security.

Q: That was known as the Dhahran Towers. There was another bombing.

QUAINTON: There was one before that actually, the Hobart Towers. There was a bombing before that first one which led to very considerable anxiety in Washington as to what had been done and what had not been done, more typically what had not been done.

Q: Where did you leave things when you left the Bureau of Diplomatic Security?

QUAINTON: I guess I would say, I left at the very bottom. That is, the diplomatic security budget leveled off after I left and began to increase. Congress made a supplemental appropriation in the aftermath of the Saudi Arabian bombings. So, what I had achieved, if it was an achievement, was to adapt a very large bureau of over a thousand employees to the realities of a budget which was 20 percent smaller than the budget when I started. And, to have done so with, I think, no significant lowering of our security profile. We had streamlined the guard service. We had introduced and got accepted the concept of risk management. We had made the investigative function somewhat more efficient. We had completely reorganized the bureau through restructuring and reducing the number of offices and managers. This was all in keeping with the rhetoric of the day. What the White House was calling for was fewer managers and pushing authority downward. We did a great deal of that in the bureau. I think this was all good.

I can't say the morale in the bureau throughout was as good; it was not. There was tremendous resentment at management for failure to get a new intake of officers and I fought with Dick Moose on this subject trying to get a regular intake because I did believe, whatever the appropriate size of the bureau, that it would be a very poor personnel management policy to have no intake for three years and then take in some and then none again. You ought to decide how large a unit you wanted and each year take in the number required to sustain that level. That was never Dick Moose's view. But, my failure to get any intake was impacted by the overall morale of the bureau as they saw themselves, as other parts of the Department saw themselves, being asked to do

substantially more with considerably less.

Q: What was your relationship with the marine guards at embassies?

QUAINTON: The Marine guard program comes under the Office of Overseas Operations within Diplomatic Security. It did not change very much, although again I attempted to downsize the program. In the plan I inherited when I first came in, there was the thought that ten or twelve detachments might be closed. By the end of the time I was there almost all those detachments had been closed. Most of them were in Africa at very small embassies where six Marines, which is the smallest detachment, sometimes equaled the rest of the entire personnel of the embassy. That seemed to make very little sense particularly when there were no sensitive activities going on, so we were able to close quite a number of detachments in Africa. Places like Bangui, where when I was ambassador there were no Marine guards. They had been brought in at a later date and then subsequently removed.

It was not always easy to get detachments out, particularly in countries where there was a political ambassador. Luxembourg was a case in point. I traveled to Luxembourg to try to persuade the ambassador, Clay Constantinou, that there really was no threat to his little embassy that required Marine security guards. There were literally only a half dozen American officers. But, it had become a status symbol in his mind and if you took the Marines away he would be a lesser ambassador. The other ambassadors that I crossed on this issue, both career and non-career, felt that this was a downgrading of their mission in terms of Washington's importance if they did not have Marine security guards. It was not a question as to whether they needed them for security purposes. In many places, it was quite clear that there were no requirements. You would get arguments about who was going to answer the phones at night. Well, if that is what the Marines are there for, you don't need Marines. A frequent argument was that the morale of the post would go down because there wouldn't be parties at the Marine house. Well, I found that also a trivial argument for maintaining what was a relatively expensive program.

The Marine Corps was quite willing to adjust if we wanted it to. The place where the issues were most interesting were the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. These posts were all created without exception on the expectation that we would not be assigning guards, that they would be, with the exception of the Ukraine, small special embassy posts with staffs of nine or less. By the time I became assistant secretary they all, without exception, had more than nine employees and they used a drum beat of pressure from ambassadors and more importantly from the intelligence community to obtain Marine security guards. I think, if the intelligence people had their way, the Marines would be at all the posts, no matter how small.

Q: Why was that?

QUAINTON: The argument was that if there were sensitive activities going on, even if there was no direct threat to those activities, you ought to have 24 hour coverage of the facility, somebody there around the clock. The only financially feasible way of having

that is Marines, which are cheap compared to contract, direct hire Americans who would have to be paid much higher salaries in order to sit and protect against surreptitious entry. The post that became the test for this was Minsk, where a major battle took place bureaucratically between members of the intelligence community and the Department of State and the embassy, itself, which did not want security guards. The embassy had just been redesigned, made over on the assumption that there wouldn't be and suddenly plans changed. It really is a philosophical question as to whether or not 24 hour coverage is required in places like that. I was never persuaded. The embassy managed to hold the decision off all the time I was there although subsequently my successor was forced to acquiesce in the assignment of marine security guards to quite a number of places in the former Soviet Union, including Minsk.

Q: Were we ever looking at retired military like the British used for guards? My experience has been that Marines are usually young men who can get into a lot of trouble. In a way, it would be nice to get two married men, former police officers, sitting in the entrance.

QUAINTON: We looked at this very carefully because there were a lot of people who made exactly that argument. You can't do it with just two although you could possibly do with just three. Three married men, each requiring his own house or apartment, plus allowances of various kinds, turn out to be infinitely more expensive than one single house sufficient for six Marines. Actually, it is two houses because the NCOIC has his separate dwelling. There was no way that having retired married people could be justified financially, and finance was driving almost everything at that period in time. I think there is a case to be made for a new system. At one post - I forget which one - the officers were required to spend one night a week in the embassy. That is another way of doing it and you paid them for that. That was very unpopular, of course. It wasn't at all clear when you have an embassy full of people, why you need Marines there all day when anything that is sensitive is being protected by the people in the embassy in whose hands that material has been entrusted. The Marines refuse to go on what I would call a nighttime and weekend program where they would work 12 hours a day and all day Saturday and Sunday. They took the position that the policy would just relegate these poor young men to the most dreadful hours and time and they would have no private life. I felt this meant they wouldn't have any chance to get into trouble. But, this program was a 24 hour one and that was intrinsic to the time off and leave. We never got very far with it.

Q: Diplomatic security for foreigners was not under your bailiwick was it?

QUAINTON: Yes and no. As I say the security of foreign visitors below the rank of head of state or government was our responsibility, which meant at the UN general assembly meetings every year we protected 30 or 40 foreign ministers and other high ranking dignitaries. We had regular responsibility for protecting the Turkish ambassador, the Saudi ambassador, and the Turkish consulate general in Los Angeles. So, on a very selective basis we protected foreigners in the United States. And, in one extraordinary situation, we protected a foreigner outside the United States. That foreigner was President Aristide of Haiti. The decision was taken in the White House by the national security

advisor that we had to protect President Aristide in his own country. We set up a detail and contracted out to get additional resources. We continue to protect the president of Haiti to this day, now President Preval. This was entirely anomalous. It was an area which I and my colleagues in the bureau of diplomatic security thought was a terrible idea, in the sense that to take on the responsibility for protecting a foreigner in his own country, makes you liable in all sorts of ways, but also it is an inappropriate function for a security bureau such as ours.

Q: It shows a lack of faith in the government we are supporting.

QUAINTON: There was no question that this was something that the White House wanted. The Secret Service refused to do it and so we got stuck with it. I went down to Haiti on a couple of occasions and looked at the protective detail which was very professional and very expensive. In fact, but they did everything from literally standing outside the door of Aristide's office, right down to his personal security at all times, at his residence as well as at his office. We cut it back but were never able to eliminate it. It is the only case of this kind that I have ever heard of.

Q: Would you mind mentioning the special reason for the special consideration for the Turks?

QUAINTON: Well, the Turks had had in the 1970s and 1980s several of their diplomats assassinated in the United States. In the case of the Saudis, protecting Prince Bandar, this was really a function of his political clout with many administrations, and of a very special relationship with our government. I tried twice to get rid of that. The first time I tried was when I first came in and was told the Bush administration would not look at it. So, when the Clinton administration came in, I went to Warren Christopher to talk about his security and whether it could be less high profile and he seemed quite sympathetic at the time although I didn't get very far. I said there was no threat against the Saudi ambassador, at least no threat that the intelligence community could identify, and that this was costing us several hundred thousand dollars and money was a great consideration. I said that I had tried before and was told that this was a non-starter, that the ambassador would go directly to the national security advisor or the President. Secretary Christopher said, "Well, leave that to me." So, I went ahead and told the Saudi ambassador that we were going to phase out his detail, and it wasn't very long before King Fahd called the President asking what we were doing to his nephew. The word came back that perhaps this was not the moment to change Bandar's protection. He continues to be protected by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. Like the Aristide case, these are anomalies in what were established programs of protection.

Q: You left in 1995 and what?

QUAINTON: Fairly early in 1995 I was asked by Dick Moose if I would like to be director general of the Foreign Service. My name went forward and the clearance process began in February, 1995, but I did not actually get confirmed until December due to the extraordinary slowness of the congressional and the investigative process. Herein lies a

cautionary tale, I guess, for diplomats. My name went forward, the White House approved, the investigations began. This was my seventh presidential appointment. For assistant secretaries or the equivalent, the investigation is carried out by the FBI, not by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security which does ambassadorial investigations. I had been investigated by the FBI three years before in connection with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. In any case, the investigation dragged on to everybody's annoyance and surprise.

After about three months, the FBI made ominous noises about having sources that they still needed to approach, allegations that they still had to track down. Nobody would tell me or my colleagues in the diplomatic security service, whom I enlisted to see if they could find out what the problem was. After about four months had gone by, the FBI reported to the Under Secretary that they had been unable to disprove an allegation that I was a transvestite, a cross dresser, and they wanted the Under Secretary to know this fact which they would put into their report. Of course, Dick Moose had to tell the Secretary and then told me. My wife, after hearing the story, said, "Yes, I know where that comes from. It goes back to your days in New Delhi when at a farewell party for Galen Stone, subsequently ambassador to Cyprus, the political section gave him a farewell party in which all the members of the section dressed in drag. It was called the Stone Age Follies. In any case, my nomination was held up for almost four months while the FBI investigated this bizarre allegation.

Q: I would think you either wandered around in a dress or you didn't and that should be easy to ascertain. Was the problem what did you do in your bedroom or something like that?

QUAINTON: It was not clear, and it was never clear, who the sources were that they had not been able to track down to get further clarification of this charge. But it was a cautionary note about the kind of things that get thrown up. I had had a similar problem on a different issue when a very vicious allegation was thrown over the transom to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee before I became assistant secretary for diplomatic security. This held up my nomination also. One senator took this anonymous allegation very seriously and questioned about it. When these things happen you have almost no recourse. There is almost no due process here. It was very disagreeable in both cases.

Q: It really is. You can see why, particularly, as time goes on, fewer and fewer people want to get into public service at a senior level because these things come up and hit you.

QUAINTON: I think it is safe to say that most lives are unblemished. It is a question of what to do with allegations or indeed disciplinary problems. I came across this when I was deputy inspector general. At one point, a man who was being nominated to go to Morocco, who had been my successor in Nicaragua, had a number of allegations made about him including voucher fraud on his ORE [official residence expense], which was a serious allegation. The other allegations turned out to be trivial, but this one was a quite serious one. It turned out when the inspector general's investigators looked into it, that indeed the embassy had miscalculated the exchange rate at which he had been reimbursed, using an official exchange rate rather than the exchange rate that was available to diplomats on the legal open market. When I learned this I went to my boss,

Sherman Funk, and said, "I think there are probably others in this same boat, it could be me, my predecessor and three DCMs." And sure enough, with no malice whatsoever, I and the others had signed vouchers that were presented to us for signature. We had collected all the information about how much we had spent on servants and other expenses and then the embassy calculated the amount we owed. This was, in fact, a windfall for a number of us of several thousand dollars, as it was for Ambassador Bergold. What was tragic about this was that, the three DCMs and I were all told we had to pay some money back because we had not, in fact, paid what we owed according to the rules. We all promptly wrote checks for the amounts for our delinquency. In the case of Ambassador Bergold, Senator Helms raised this issue with the Deputy Secretary of State and said that this was not the kind of person you would want to be an ambassador, and the Department walked away. He lost his embassy on the basis of an allegation that he had violated regulations, even though there had been no attempt to defraud the government and full repayment had been made. I think when people make errors there is no way of telling whether these errors will have lasting consequences for the career of an officer. I saw quite a lot of this kind of thing when I was in OIG and DS and finally as director general, three jobs that impact on the personnel systems of the Department.

Q: There seems to be a viciousness in a way. At least it is evident at levels, almost a delight in using this just to cause trouble for the administration.

QUAINTON: I didn't see these cases as attempts to cause trouble for the administration. But there is a highly censorious climate in the Department. Whenever employees saw a senior officer apparently, sometimes actually, taking advantage of the system for his or her personal benefit, they saw this as somehow an attitude of "let them eat cake," a dismissive attitude towards subordinates. In a lot of places, ambassadors seemed to be preoccupied with redecorating their residences when there didn't seem to be any money for redecorating the apartments or houses of the worker bees. So you got a kind of climate where people were watching senior officers, both career and non-career. It didn't seem to focus one way or the other. If you were a career officer, you easily got into the same kind of trouble as political ones did. It was a problem that kept coming up, although not in a large number of cases. But, even a small number of cases in a highly gossipy environment gets magnified. Everybody knows about one or more of these examples and extrapolates from it to much more grandiose conclusions. Senator Helms did the same when he wrote to the Secretary of State citing five cases of ambassadorial wrongdoing, some of which went back to my time in Diplomatic Security. A couple went back to my time as director general, and a couple were more recent. In various ways, ambassadors or ambassadorial candidates came to the attention of Mr. Helms as having done quite egregiously horrible things, and he alleged in a letter to the Secretary that this was the tip of the iceberg of a fundamentally corrupt service. I never had any reason to think that the Service was fundamentally corrupt and the number of people who abused their position, or abused the allowance system were really very few. But, every one did damage to the corporate integrity of the Foreign Service.

Q: I assume you had a hearing for the director generalship?

QUAINTON: Yes, and it was entirely uneventful.

Q: I have to ask you, what did you wear?

QUAINTON: A bulletproof vest.

Q: You didn't wear a dress?

QUAINTON: No, no, no. I can't remember who was there other than Senator Helms, who is the chairman of the subcommittee that deals with managing positions. He was perfectly gracious. In fact, in all of my hearings I was very well treated. The only one where I had any substantive questions was when I was a candidate for Kuwait where they asked questions about Nicaragua, not about Kuwait. And, as I mentioned, in one case I went out without any hearings at all. So, I was very, very lucky.

Q: You served as director general from 1995 to 1997?

QUAINTON: That's right. I came in in late December of 1995 and was director general until August of 1997. I came in the midst of the closure of government. Congress had failed to pass a continuing resolution to fund the State Department's operations in early December 1995. I arrived in the middle of this when the State Department was essentially closed. It was closed to the public. Essential functions were going on. Many of the functions of our embassies overseas were closed. It was quite an extraordinary time to take over the personnel system. Morale, of course, was dreadful for all sorts of reasons but basically because the Congress had made it quite clear that they didn't think the State Department was very important in the grand scheme of things. This problem was exacerbated internally because the people who were asked to come to work were perceived to be the people who were important, and the people who weren't asked to come to work were seen as somehow being characterized as less valuable, and their work less important. Those were often Civil Service employees while Foreign Service people were deemed essential. All of the internal tensions in the Department were exacerbated by what happened.

One of the first things I had to do in my capacity as director general was to appear on the barricades in a public meeting denouncing the furlough of government employees held in the little park on the 21st street entrance of the Department. AFSA (the American Foreign Service Association) and AFGE (the American Federation of Government Employees) organized a public demonstration complete with banners, trade union representatives who exhorted the brothers and sisters, as we were called, to stalwart opposition to our elected leaders who were doing wicked things. There were a variety of banners hostile to the speaker of the house and to the secretary of state. There was one I remember that said, "Mr. Christopher, where are you?" Strobe Talbot attended, as did I. In fact I was asked to speak on the barricades.

Q: Which side of the barricades were you on?

QUAINTON: I was on the side of the trade unionists. I tried not to be photographed with pictures saying "Where is Mr. Christopher?" I thought that was unfair, because the Secretary was doing a great deal behind the scenes. But, the sense that he was not particularly visible on this issue was reflected in the profound unhappiness of the work force. The meeting was a joint meeting of AID, USIA, and State and went on for several hours. There were passionate speeches from people like Tex Harris, the president of AFSA and others. Management people spoke as I did. Brian Atwood from AID spoke. They were all expressing their concern for the workers, in both the Civil Service and Foreign Service, and their commitment to getting back to work and getting congress to appropriate funds as quickly as possible. I never thought I would be in a trade union demonstration so early on in my tenure.

The second thing that happened which marked my tenure was a meeting of the Board of the Foreign Service. The director general is the chairman of this board, which was setup statutorily under the Foreign Service Act of 1980. The Secretary of State is supposed to be the chair, but he historically always designates that role to the director general of the Foreign Service. It was an institution that had not met very often. My predecessor had only one meeting of the board her whole time as director general, but I thought this was an institution that deserved to be revitalized, that there were a lot of issues among the foreign affairs agencies that needed to be discussed, including differences in personnel policy and personnel management styles.

So, we had a meeting in February at which we discussed the furlough and the different ways in which the foreign affairs agencies had handled the furlough overseas. There were quite extraordinary discrepancies, most of them not very conducive to harmony at an overseas post or indeed here in Washington. We discussed this for some time. It was quite a useful discussion. But, at the end of the meeting, the USIA representative, the counselor of USIA who was the senior career officer in her agency, said that this had been a fascinating discussion, but she had to say in all honesty that it had not been an important discussion. There was only one thing the Board of the Foreign Service should be discussing: the question of why should we have a Foreign Service.

That was not a question I had given much thought to frankly before becoming director general and I spent almost all of my time from then until the end of my tenure asking myself that question and asking it of my colleagues. It was quite clear as Senator Helms pressed for the consolidation of the foreign affair agencies and Congressman Gilman continually raised issues about discrimination between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service in the Department State that people on the Hill did not understand why we had a Foreign Service. And it was probably not clear to the American public why we have a Foreign Service. And, given the tremendous breakup, breakdown of institutional cohesion in the Department, it is not even clear to the employees of the Department, what is the unique value added that the Foreign Service provides to the foreign policy of the United States.

In those early weeks in 1996, I spent a lot of time meeting with constituencies, groups of employees who had an axe to grind in the personnel affairs of the Department of State - gays and lesbians in foreign affairs agencies (GLIFA), blacks in government, the

Thursday Luncheon Group, another African-American group, Asian Pacific officers, Hispanic officers, the Civil Service Council, the Senior Executive Service Council, etc. There were a whole range of people whose particular interests were in the advancement of their subgroup. They were concerned about the discrimination that they had faced in one way or other within the personnel system.

Q: Did you mention a women's group?

QUAINTON: It was actually very interesting. The women's group, which I met with, was the least active of all the groups in the Department, in part because the hiring policies of the Department over the last 10 years have been gender neutral. Thirty five to 45 of the incoming Foreign Service officers have been women. They were doing well in the Service. Many of the problems of the past had been rectified. I spent a lot of time on women's issues, though not in the context of the women's organization but in the context of the Palmer lawsuit. Indeed, of all the things that I spent time on in the next 18 months, the two law suits were the most consuming. One was the Palmer suit brought by Alison Palmer over 20 years before and which is still in the courts to this day, and the other, the Thomas suit, brought over 10 years before by a black Foreign Service officer. Both alleged systematic discrimination in the personnel policies of the Foreign Service. Both cases involved Foreign Service officers, not other categories such as Civil service employees. And, indeed, the statistics were quite dramatic in periods of the 1980s when it was clear that neither women nor blacks advanced as rapidly like their peers. They did not pass the Foreign Service Exam in comparable numbers. They did not get awards, particularly superior honor awards, in comparable numbers to their white male colleagues.

I'm not sure why this all happened, but by getting these issues into the courts, where they are now, they have created an extraordinary paralysis of the personnel system, because any policy change, which would impact either African-Americans or women, must be reviewed in the courts. So, you can't easily change the examination, the promotion system, or the performance evaluation system which all need change to bring the Foreign Service into the 21st century because of the constraints imposed by the various judges who are overseeing the two cases.

Before I got to the DG, I think it was early in 1995, Secretary Christopher had been held in contempt of court for failure to implement the court decisions in these cases. The Secretary made it quite clear that he never wanted to be held in contempt of court again and that we would scrupulously honor the court orders under which we were operating. We had not, in fact, reported as we were supposed to, nor had we made the progress to which we were committed and which we said we were making.

The Secretary found this very trying. Warren Christopher was deeply committed to equal opportunity in the Department for minorities as well as for women, and to find that we had been delinquent was something that was abhorrent to him. But, these court cases and the review of the government's briefs as they made their way through the court system took an enormous amount of my time and that of my senior colleagues. There is no class

action suit in the personnel area without implications throughout the government. How the Department handled these cases had repercussions for other agencies on how they handled personnel issues. We have been required by the courts to promote officers, women officers, and African-American officers who were not promoted by their peers under the previous system. With some reluctance, but I had no choice, I signed a whole series of superior honor awards that landed on my desk one day, all for women, because the courts had found that we had discriminated dramatically against women in granting superior honor awards.

Q: How did one as director general, I mean this is supposed to be generally within the bureau or embassy, say let's have some superior honor awards?

QUAINTON: I am not quite sure how it was done. This pile landed on my desk quite early in my tenure. People were given honor awards for three years of hard work in the Foreign Service. It is quite easy to write those, but it was a travesty really, and did great harm to the Service, even recognizing that the Service had not behaved well, in the sense that there was discrimination. It is not quite clear to me why there was discrimination, for the statistics cannot be gainsaid. But the pursuit of these cases over a 20-year period has had a very deleterious effect on the Department and on the Foreign Service and has created enormous resentments to the point that everybody now believes themselves to be in a discriminated minority, including white males. It is unhealthy to have an institution in which there is an institutionalized sense of grievance against the personnel system, and a belief that other people are going to get a better shot than I am because of who they are or what they look like or what category they belong to. Now, almost everybody believes that.

Q: That would probably be the major focus of what you had to deal with, wasn't it?

QUAINTON: That certainly was an issue that came up all the time. Some of it was reflected in outright grievances filed against the Foreign Service and the Department. The grievance staff came under my jurisdiction as did the disciplinary staff.

I didn't mention a growing issue throughout my tenure which was the whole question of the role of the Civil Service in the Department of State. The Civil Service ombudsman issued a report to the Secretary in December, 1995, just before I took over, which was very critical of the Department, and which suggested that the Department was organized to discriminate against the Civil Service institutionally as well as individually. The Secretary was quite concerned about this. This report got some considerable publicity inside the Department.

And there was always the issue that began to be a problem under my predecessor, of whether we were being fair to the Civil Service side of the house. I worked very hard to try and build bridges between the Civil Service and the Foreign Service, to get them to see themselves as being on the same team. One of the efforts I made that worked well was the creation of Public Service Recognition Week in the summer of 1997. Historically there had always been Foreign Service Day, in the first or second week in May, which

was the only day devoted to a portion of the Department's workforce. But the Civil Service became increasingly critical of Foreign Service Day. They kept asking why there wasn't a Civil Service Day.

In the summer of 1996, I had been invited to the Mall to attend the celebrations of Public Service Recognition Week, and I sat on the podium while a whole string of people got recognition from various Federal agencies. Indeed, there was an award for distinction in international affairs which went to someone from the Customs Service, if my recollection is correct. I wondered why the State Department wasn't recognized. I was a last minute addition to the program and referred to throughout as General Quainton, I think they thought I was from some military agency. The Secretary of Energy spoke. It was a big event. There was a big exhibition on The Mall and it turned out that there was a State Department portion of this, a tiny table, at which a State Department officer handed out copies of the *Foreign Service Journal* or AFSA publications.

It seemed to me that I made a very poor impression. So, when I got to the next year, having lived through a great deal of tension between the Civil Service and the Foreign Service, I said that we would make something of Public Service Recognition Week. It turned out that Foreign Service Day fell within Public Service Recognition Week, and we organized a whole series of events. We held ceremonies which recognized both Civil Service and Foreign Service, Civil Service Day, Foreign Service Day. It went pretty well. As we have seen subsequently, it is very hard to catch the attention of the top management of the Department for anything dealing with personnel matters because of the enormous substantive agenda that they have to confront. But, I think we managed to get the Civil Service and Foreign Service working somewhat better together. I was happy to see that much of this was carried on after I left. But I think this problem of Civil Service versus Foreign Service goes back to the question that I was asked by the Board of the Foreign Service. Why do we have a foreign service? Why do we have something that is different, and call it different and treat it differently? And, I would like to come back to the issue of assignments to our embassies, Civil Service assignments, and the way this has changed, the way we are filling jobs overseas by people who are not traditional Foreign Service officers, who have been the core of the Foreign Service for the last 75 years.

Q: Next time we might talk some more about recruitment, discipline and I am sure there are other things because we really haven't gotten down to the details of the director generalship.

QUAINTON: Fine.

Q: Today is June 26, 1998. Why don't we talk about recruitment?

QUAINTON: When I arrived as director general I was presented a proposal to change the basis on which the Foreign Service recruited its candidates. This was a proposal which

had been developed in the previous six to eight months and which suggested that we should experiment with an alternative to the traditional Foreign Service Exam which had been in existence in its present broad format since the mid-1950s when the multiple choice written exam supplanted the three and a half days essay-type exam. I was in the first group that took the new exam.

The problem with the existing examination was that for reasons which no one could adequately explain either to the management of the Department or to the courts, it did not seem to produce sufficient diversity in the pool of candidates going on to the oral assessment. It was not clear whether there was some inherent problem with the questions themselves, which made them harder for particular ethnic groups to pass or whether there had been questions which were in some way male-oriented, disadvantaging female candidates. In any case, it was suggested to me that we ought to substitute or at least supplement the traditional intake by examination with a system which permitted us to do recruitment on the basis of the skill needs of the Service. The idea was to model the recruitment process on the system currently used elsewhere in the U.S. government for the presidential management interns. PMIs, as they are known, apply from their graduate schools, are nominated and supported by their deans and professors and go forward to a competitive oral assessment run by the Office of Personnel Management. If they pass that oral assessment at which the assessors have access not only to the candidate but to the candidate's record in terms of previous employment and academic history, they are then offered appointments as PMIs in one of the government departments including the Department of State.

The advantage of this system was that selection would be based in part, at least, on past performance: how well people have done academically and how well they may have done with any professional experience they may have. The current Foreign Service Exam precludes the examiners or the system from knowing anything about the candidates either in terms of their academic performance or their previous work experience. So, candidates in areas where we may have substantial need, take East Asian studies as a possible area looking to the 21st century, we do not have any ability to find out whether we are getting candidates who have already demonstrated mastery in Chinese or Japanese or have worked in the Far East or whatever. We are limited to what we get through the sieve of the written examination and then through the oral assessment which is very narrowly and very fairly focused on particular jobs and work related scenarios in which candidates have to make demarches, write reports, and deal with hypothetical situations. All of these aspects of the oral assessment were designed to meet the court's preoccupation that the examination be purely and demonstratively relevant to the Foreign Service work that successful candidates would have to carry out. It is an extremely fair system, but it denies us a range of candidates which we might otherwise want. It possibly also denies us a certain diversity, but the argument was not essentially a diversity argument but one based on skills.

That proposal is still making its way as we speak, in the middle of 1998, through the bureaucracy, more than two and a half years after it was first put forward. It has been enormously controversial. Senior members of the Foreign Service and particularly the

retiree members, objected furiously to any dilution of the traditional exam entry procedures on the grounds that this would delete the elite status of the Foreign Service and the requirement that officers all pass over a clearly defined threshold for entry.

Q: Speaking as a senior, retired Foreign Service officer, but I served with the Board of Examiners and the exam is just a hurdle and when I was there we knew more about the people. We would frame our oral questions around their backgrounds. But, hurdles are hurdles. They would take an exam, wouldn't they?

QUAINTON: They would not take a written examination. The idea was in fact to eliminate the written examination for this universe of candidates. If the process was successful, at least in theory, you might change the whole system. It was designed to supplement by perhaps 25 admittees a year, the examination pool entrants. We weren't sure that it would work. We knew it worked in the Civil Service at the national level but not whether it would work in the Foreign Service with its special requirements. But it was interesting that you referred to the way it was done when you were on the Board of Examiners. Certainly when you passed through the examination many, many years ago, considerable attention was given to your past experience and demonstrated qualities. There is none of that now. In fact, candidates are warned at least three times in the course of the day that the oral assessment will make no reference whatsoever to past experience, background, academic institutions attended or anything of this kind. So, we were denying ourselves knowledge of our candidates for fear that we would make subjective judgments giving advantage to Harvard graduates and disadvantaging the graduates of Slippery Rock University, that we would in fact not get a Foreign Service which was representative of America as the Foreign Service Act of 1980 required.

The exam was not given for a year. When I became director general we were still using the results of the 1995 examination. It was given again in the spring of 1998. This was probably not a good thing because it eliminated what had been a longstanding tradition of offering the examination once a year. Potential candidates could expect that in February of each year, there would be an examination. However, with the downsizing of the Department and the draconian reductions in personnel which were imposed by OMB ceilings and the Under Secretary for Management, we did not need any additional candidates. The register that we had was far in excess of our actual intake capacity, not necessarily the needs of the Foreign Service. And, the exam is expensive. It costs around a million dollars to offer and it was decided not to hold it every year. In retrospect, that probably was not a wise decision, but one which was driven by resources.

The recruitment for the rest of the Foreign Service is, in fact, much along the lines of the so-called alternate hiring that we proposed for FSOs. If you wish to be a security officer, if you wish to be a doctor in the Foreign Service, an information management specialist, or any of the other skill groups which compose nearly 50 percent of the State Department's Foreign Service, you must demonstrate ability in that area. Work experience and educational criteria are taken into account in the assessment process which is supplemented by an oral assessment focused rather more on an interest in the Foreign Service, in worldwide availability and questions that relate to those subjects

rather than to past experience. So, we have in fact a multiple system of examination and testing. The recruitment begins, of course, at the level of advertisement, of outreach, of efforts to attract men and women into the generalist officer corps, and into the specialist categories of the Foreign Service. An enormous effort was made and continues to be made to recruit on those campuses where it is hoped we will get more minority candidates. We cannot guarantee that any of those candidates will pass either the written or oral assessments but one of the problems was, and is that of the total number of people who took the Foreign Service Examination only a very small number came from minorities. So, we did a lot of recruiting on the campuses of the historically black colleges and universities and on the campuses of those universities which belonged to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. That did produce in the last two examinations significantly increased numbers of exam takers who came from minority groups and has, I think, resulted in an increased number of passers, although the overall numbers are still relatively low. The recruitment was done both by officers assigned to the Office of Recruitment and Examination Evaluation and by diplomats in residence, senior officers who are assigned to universities around the country. There are about a dozen of those in any given year and we try to place them in areas where they are likely to have greater impact in terms of minority outreach.

You will see from this as from the earlier discussions of other issues regarding the Foreign Service, that diversity was an all consuming concern of management from the secretary on down, including the under secretary and certainly the director general. We were sensitive to the insistent and repeated congressional criticism of the Foreign Service's failure to be representative of America as it was intended to be.

Q: This was a problem when I was with the Board of Examiners back in the mid-'70s, too. Essentially what we are talking about is that minorities do not pass the exam in the same numbers, but if one looks at the overall schooling and all this, there is a real cultural, social, and economic problem that feeds into this, and particularly in the last 20 years, some of the best youths end up in jail because of the poverty. It is a very difficult problem at this time and to pretend that somehow the exam is at fault when you might have to say society and the culture are at fault really.

QUAINTON: I think there is no doubt that what you say is true. However, there is no doubt that for competitive minorities and certainly for competitive African-Americans, of which there are plenty in our society, the Foreign Service has not looked like an attractive option for a couple of reasons, both of which are quite controversial, as I discovered from adverse commentary about me of my statements in either *Ebony* or *Jet*, I can't remember which. I made the statement that minorities did not enter the Foreign Service because it doesn't pay very well. In many cases, extremely able graduates of the most prestigious universities who are minorities will make choices about their future in part on the economic benefits to be derived from that choice. Government service is adequately paid, but it does not pay at the level of a New York law firm, a Wall Street banking house, or whatever, and if that is the competition, then the Foreign Service is often going to come out second best.

But, more importantly is the elitist image of the Foreign Service, an inaccurate image but nonetheless a real one which goes back over many, many years and which the media continues to propagate, which is that it is a rich white man's club engaged in activities which are entirely foreign to the minority cultures of America. So, if you go to a movie such as "Mission Impossible" and you see a shot of a diplomatic reception, you see a large number of white men and women drinking champagne. That image and the work which has extended out from the Department from many successful African-American officers is that the State Department is an unfriendly culture, and unfriendly to African-Americans in particular. Other minorities probably also share the sense that it is unfriendly to them, but the issue has been best articulated by African-Americans. How to change that image and the reality that in earlier years there was some discrimination in the assignment and promotion of African-Americans was something I worried about. The perception of the Department's culture is one that bedevils our recruitment efforts and our attempts to get broad diversity.

Q: One group you are not mentioning, which was very important, is Asian-Americans. When one talks about Asian-Americans we are going all the way from India, to Japan. Here one particularly thinks about Vietnamese-Americans, the Korean-Americans, Japanese-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Indian-Americans. These were people who are packing the classes of most universities. I would have thought if you had an overall minority group, this would be the group to go after.

QUAINTON: We are getting substantially greater numbers of Asian-Americans applying for the Foreign Service and successfully passing the examination and many of them bring the language and area skills that will be extremely important in the future. Although I am leery of the proposition that assignments should be based on ethnicity, this has been a problem in the sense that many African-Americans believe that they were pigeonholed to serve in Africa. It is certainly true that a disproportionate number of Hispanic-Americans serve in the Latin American Bureau, and it is probably true that a disproportionate Asian-Americans serve in the East Asian bureau. If you are thinking about a worldwide service, you want to use the interests, skills, and area knowledge that comes with ethnicity, but you may not want to make it a dominant basis for making assignments.

It is also fair to say that Asian-Americans have done very poorly in the Department of State, even more poorly than other groups. The first career Asian-American ambassador in the history of the Foreign Service was only appointed in 1995. There had been several political Asian-American ambassadors, but never a career officer. That officer was William Itoh who was assigned to Bangkok as ambassador. That says a couple of things. One, that there aren't very many Asians in the Service. Historically, there were very few and in the Senior Foreign Service there are only a handful. I can't think of more than a couple. But that situation will change over the next decade or so as the intake of Asian-Americans into the Foreign Service increases. It is interesting that Asian-Americans much more than Hispanic or African-Americans find the Foreign Service unattractive as a career. I believe that will change as Asian-Americans become more politically active in our society.

Q: I have not been involved in this, but I gather that no matter how one plays around with talking about diversity, it's a code word for saying we have to get more blacks in the Service. Hispanics are now pushing to outnumber blacks, so no matter how we slice it, the real push has been to get more blacks.

QUAINTON: I would think it is equally Hispanic and Africans who are represented in the Foreign Service below their percentage in society at large. I don't think there should be quotas. There aren't quotas now. But, on the other hand, a service which continues to look awfully white and awfully male has difficulty in commanding the political support which it needs for its future survival. So, there is a practical issue here. And, it is also more than a practical question. I think it is desirable that our Foreign Service reflect the diversity of American society. You don't want to lower your standards, and I don't believe we have, in order to achieve diversity. But, on the other hand, you want to have diversity,

One other recruitment issue that came across my plate very early, one that is related to all this, was the continuation of the foreign affairs fellows program. This was the concept of an ROTC for the Foreign Service under which the Department each year would select ten candidates who were finishing their sophomore years in college. The Department would pay the full cost of their junior and senior year and the first year of graduate study at one of the prestigious schools of international studies. The second year of graduate study would be funded by the school. They would then enter the Foreign Service with a commitment to give it five years after they had completed their MA degree. There were four candidates chosen. Out of 40 people chosen 39 were minorities, about equally divided among Asian-Americans, African-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans. However, in the spring of 1996, the Supreme Court handed down a decision in the Aderand case relating to contracting in Colorado which had nothing to do with the Service, but the Aderand case held that federal programs could not be based primarily on race. This particular contracting division in the Department of Transportation was setting aside positions for minorities. The Justice Department and the Legal Adviser's Office concluded that this decision, the Aderand decision, made it impossible for us to go forward with a fifth and final candidate of the foreign affairs fellows because it was clearly a minority recruitment program. Consequently, the Justice Department and the Legal Adviser's Office concluded that if the criteria was changed from race to economic need to include economically disadvantaged candidates, then the Department could go forward with the program. And, the program is now being reestablished.

As we tried to justify a continuation of the program for the four candidates that had already been chosen, we ran up against another problem. The original assumption was that these candidates, after their junior year would do a special course at the Woodrow Wilson Center at the Smithsonian here in Washington, after their senior year they would do an internship in the Department of State and after their first year of graduate studies would do an internship at an embassy abroad. They would also have demonstrated in their academic performance, because they were graduating from prestigious schools, and in their practical performance in jobs in the Department and in the field, that they were adequate candidates for the Foreign Service without taking the Foreign Service

Examination. The Justice Department ventured the thought that if the candidates had not passed the Foreign Service Examination, the program would be discriminatory against those who had. So, we were forced to backtrack. Some of the fellows had taken the Foreign Service Exam. In the first group, quite a significant proportion failed the exam, and we were faced with the terrible dilemma of taking into the Service people who might be perceived as having been second class candidates.

Q: Yes.

QUAINTON: In point of fact, with a lot of effort they have all passed the Foreign Service Exam, both written and oral, as it is currently constituted. But, it was another alternative hiring mechanism which ran afoul of the Justice Department for reasons of affirmative action, not for reasons of practicality. But, it relates very much to the whole question of can you devise an alternative hiring system which would take into account academic performance and experience.

Q: Another subject is discipline. I would imagine discipline would also have to some extent included some of the same problems?

QUAINTON: This is the one area into which the problems of diversity did not intrude. Discipline had two or three different dimensions. The first discipline issue is the one most often commented about, which is Service discipline as it applies to assignments. There is not a great deal of discipline in this area, in part because once we opened the assignment process for other good and sufficient reasons to a bidding process, employees were given the impression that it would be their choice that would determine where they went rather than the needs of the Service. It created a constant tension between the needs of the service and the personal needs of the officer, or the personal aspirations of the officer, or the officer's assessment of how he/she would advance more rapidly in the service in terms of particular assignments. That tension was a constant one and while in the vast majority of cases we were able to meet both the Service's needs and the officer's aspirations, there was always a universe of people who refused to go where they were assigned, who used, some times I think unjustifiably and sometimes justifiably, family and other reasons to explain why they couldn't go where we wanted them to go. But, this left the impression that if you fought hard enough, you could avoid going anywhere you didn't want to go. In fact, there was often an issue as to whether people would have to go overseas at all. There were various tactics for achieving this. Our tactic was not sending in a bid list at all. You just waited until it was very far into the assignment season, so that the job for which you might be immediately qualified on the basis of past experience or language training, etc. had been filled. You were then left with other choices which would allow you to stay in Washington.

It is a vexing problem. Everybody agrees that more discipline would be a good thing. On the other hand, having had to deal with a large number of individual cases where assignments were made and broken, or where officers resisted an assignment, and given the presumption of compassion that has been built into the personnel system, and which I think overall is a good one, it was often hard to sustain some of the more arbitrary

assignments that were being made “for the needs of the Service.” And, there, I come up against the societal constraints on a disciplined assignment system. One was the problem of spouse employment, the expectation that spouses will have a full professional career, not necessarily in the Foreign Service, but over the course of their professional lives. The problem was how to accommodate that in far-off places. There were the problems of elder care and the demographic change in our society whereby mid-level officers and senior officers have one or more parents in their 80s and above who require at-home care or nursing home care. The changing requirements in American education of the availability of special education, which is more readily available in the Washington area for the gifted as for the seriously physically disabled. These programs are not readily available in many schools overseas. I would say most overseas schools wouldn’t have them. You have a large number of people who have reasonable cases for not going overseas at a particular point in time in their own professional lives. We try to be as sympathetic to those demands as possible. When I first took over, all requests for extensions to the six year rule required an administrative determination of the director general to stay in Washington, and the eight year rule, which required that the Secretary of State had to approve extensions in Washington of over eight years, an action that he delegated to the director general.

It quickly became apparent that there were no cases in which the six year rule was upheld, and I therefore devolved responsibility downward on the grounds that there was no point in taking my time reviewing cases if in fact they were always going to be approved. On the eight year rule I did continue to exercise my authority and occasionally turned down requests for extension, but almost all had compassionate reasons which were very hard to deal with. People saw that there were ways to manipulate the system by using any one of the criteria I just mentioned, and some others that are provided for in the regulations - if you have a child in the last two years of high school, you can stay behind until graduation; people who are assigned to positions at the deputy assistant secretary level or above get an exemption, etc. There are a whole series of exemptions. But, in fact, you now have a certain percentage of the Foreign Service that is not very mobile, is not moving around in quite the way that officers moved 20 or 30 years ago.

Q: Wasn’t this affecting staffing overseas?

QUAINTON: Certainly. We had a serious problem with “hard to fill” positions overseas. They tended to be in Africa, some in Latin America; in fact, every bureau had some. Places which were not very attractive which were unlikely to have spousal employment opportunities and where climate and danger made the post not terribly attractive. We found these issues aggravated staffing problems. We had to devise innovative ways of filling the gaps which were being created by the refusal of officers to go to certain posts. All of these solutions were controversial.

First, we allowed Civil Service employees to fill Foreign Service positions when there was no available Foreign Service officer. Many Foreign Service officers alleged this was de-professionalizing the Foreign Service, but in reality we had nobody in the Foreign Service who would go.

The second alternative, which was designed to meet the spousal employment problem, was to create a category of professional associates under which Foreign Service spouses could get the necessary training at the Foreign Service Institute and could then fill officer level positions in the field. That also turned out to be controversial, particularly in visa sections, where there might be several professional associates. It was the perception of the career consular officers that spouses worked less hard and had less of a commitment to the work. Thus, they felt there was a double standard which allowed spouses to get away with things. A lot of this was exaggerated, but any attempt to dilute the Service by using creative ways of getting the work done always ran into professional resistance. We had almost no alternative, given the dramatic drops in the hiring for the Foreign Service from an historical level of 220-230 in the early 1990s and late 1980s to just over a 100 in 1996 and 135 in 1997. There just weren't enough junior officers to do the work. We were forced to develop alternatives.

Q: Before we move to other subjects, was there any downside for a person saying, "I want to stay in Washington because it is nicer here. I don't want to go out?" In other words, "Okay, you could do that but it will be noted and promotion panels will look at length of service, etc." Was great care taken not to have this being detrimental?

QUAINTON: I don't think it was detrimental to serve in Washington. In fact, in many cases I think it was advantageous as some of the most interesting and prestigious jobs are in Washington. For example, staff jobs to senior officers of the Department were very highly sought after. In any particular grade, in any particular cone, an officer is competing against his/her peers. It certainly would be true if one was an administrative officer and had never had at least one job in the field, you would be most unlikely at grade 2 to be competitive with other administrative officers. Presumably, in that case, the officer would have acquired multifunctionality and would compete with other multifunctional officers where he/she might be competitive. So, people were constantly calculating between their skill code, cone, and the opportunities which were presented by multifunctionality.

There was a different problem among specialists, as I learned from my experience in Diplomatic Security. A certain number of security officers do not like security work and want to become general services, personnel, or consular officers. There were opportunities for them to do excursion tours, but they were immediately penalized in practical terms because from the date that they accepted an assignment outside of their speciality, they became uncompetitive for promotion, which in the case of specialists is determined on the basis of professional skills and in-specialty experience. So, it was a large leap of faith for them to make these adjustments in the hope that they might be able to convert at a later date into a regular Foreign Service cone where they would be competitive.

Q: You were talking about disciplinary action for wrongdoing.

QUAINTON: Disciplinary action resides with the director general and his discipline

staff. We have the most complicated discipline procedures in the federal government, which will be changed one of these days because of congressional criticism and the inspector general's criticism. Essentially the director general is informed of wrongdoing in a variety of ways. The bureau of diplomatic security may bring to the DG's attention serious breaches of security, or serious behavioral problems related to alcohol, drugs, sex, etc. The inspector general can also bring to the DG's attention the same kinds of problems. The inspector general is, however, unlikely to get into issues of security violations, but may well turn up questions of personal impropriety. In addition, the IG is more likely to come across cases of fraud. Fraud crops up really in two universes, consular fraud, the selling of visas for money, sexual favors, etc., and the abuse of allowances. There are some other kinds of fraud, but those two would be the most substantial. Before they reached my desk, they would have been investigated by professional investigators either on the IG's staff or in Diplomatic Security and I would be presented with a recommendation that I take administrative action. Another source of disciplinary referrals to the director general was the office of equal employment opportunity when there were allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination. What is interesting about all of these cases is that if there is egregious wrongdoing of a criminal kind, the case is presented not to the director general but to the Justice Department for prosecution. This is certainly true of all cases involving felonies. Those cases are likely to be generated in the inspector general's office. In many, many cases, I would say the majority of cases presented to the Justice Department for prosecution, the Justice Department turns down the opportunity and hands the case back to the inspector general or the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. If that happens, and there is still substantial evidence of wrongdoing, those cases are forwarded to the director general with a recommendation that appropriate administrative action be taken. None of the officers that refer cases to the director general has the ability to set the penalties. Those penalties are set on the basis of precedent as determined by the director general's discipline staff.

Once a case is referred to the discipline staff, they review the allegations. They may seek additional information from the originating bureau, and then they come up with a conclusion as to what the appropriate penalty should be. In the case of the Foreign Service, penalties range from a suspension of 90 days down to an oral admonishment. In between, there are reprimands, written and oral, and lesser suspensions for different categories of wrongdoings.

The officer being sanctioned then has the right to appeal to a deputy assistant secretary in the bureau of personnel charged with that responsibility, who can mitigate the sentence, mitigate the penalty, or uphold it. If the officer believes that the mitigated penalty is unsatisfactory or unjust in that officer's perception, the officer may then file a grievance. In this, the Department of State is fundamentally different from other agencies in that there is a second process available to officers to appeal disciplinary actions. You can file a grievance against the proposed penalty which then opens a new investigation by the grievance staff in the director general's office which may take many, many months to complete. The grievance staff either upholds the penalty again or recommends its mitigation. If that is unacceptable to the officer, he still has the possibility of appeal to the Foreign Service Grievance Board, which is an independent outside board. It may again

review all the evidence before making a ruling. So, for even quite minor infractions resulting, say, in three days' suspension or a reprimand, some officers would carry the appeals process out over a period of 18 months, two years. It is a very slow and cumbersome process and Congress has stumbled on to this fact because of outside criticism, particularly from the Civil Service. Compared to other government agencies, State gives its employees the ultimate in due process. However, compared to other disciplinary processes in federal government, it is inordinately slow. Elsewhere, disciplinary decisions are reached within 90-180 days.

The one thing that the Secretary of State has not been able to do is dismiss his subordinates in the Foreign Service. That authority was removed from the Secretary just before I took over as director general on the basis of a court decision which upheld the right of the grievance board to be the final arbiter of dismissals. This arose in a case involving an officer who had committed a felony, there was no question about that. We have always had a policy that a felon can not continue to be employed. If that employee is a Civil Service employee, he or she would have been dismissed. But in this case, this employee stayed on the payroll for several years on administrative leave while the case went through the various appeals stages. Eventually the grievance board said that, notwithstanding the Secretary's decision to fire the officer, he should be retained in the Service because, in the Grievance Board's view, there were mitigating circumstances.

Q: What was the rationale?

QUAINTON: It was a very complicated case but essentially this was a case where the officer had been offered a plea bargain and a chance to plead to a misdemeanor. The officer turned down the bargain and the case went forward as a felony prosecution. The officer was guilty of the infraction. But, since the misdemeanor plea had been denied, he was convicted of a felony. I think the Grievance Board felt that this was really a misdemeanor and that it was unfair to dismiss the officer concerned on the basis of the facts. But, this decision, of course, undermined the Secretary's authority in the most fundamental sense.

Q: Speaking of undermining discipline, something that has come to me very often, although I have never experienced it myself, but in corridor talk among officers and in some oral histories I have done, I have talked about officers who were (1) unsuited, or (2) really shouldn't have been in the Foreign Service. But, the consensus is, particularly if the person is a woman or a minority, that in the long run the grievance system and all wouldn't take action and that the officer who is trying to remove that person from the Service or discipline them is going to end up with so much bother and trouble and be attacked, that it is best just to give the officer a moderate efficiency report and pass them on through the system, just get rid of them and make them somebody else's problem. I have heard this so many times.

QUAINTON: You are touching on a different problem. By and large, wherever there has been an infraction of the regulations or a felony committed, the investigative process goes forward quite independently of the immediate supervisor or the efficiency report process

with a real degree of independence and a lot of due process for the officer. Unfortunately, you don't get swift justice under this system. And, indeed, if you are innocent, the whole investigative process may take years to play itself out and you are left with a cloud over your head. But, you are touching on a more difficult issue which is the whole question of suitability and performance, when there is no question of wrongdoing but of functioning in a substandard way in the Foreign Service. This kind of issue is handled not in the discipline channel but in the grievance channel where an officer can go directly to the grievance staff with a complaint that he/she has been unfairly or unjustly treated by a superior officer. Officers do this routinely and at the end of every rating cycle there is an upsurge of grievances. Almost every decision by a selection board to refer an officer to a performance standards board for potential selection out leads to a grievance which may take a long time to sort out. Pejorative comments are often deleted from the file under the direction of the grievance board, so raters become discouraged about making adverse comments.

I have to say, having looked at this a lot, that there are a couple of problems here. One is the expectation in American society of above average performance. It used to be that children in school got Cs and that was a passing grade, although not a distinguished grade. As were a rarity; Bs were acceptable. The whole culture has now said that Cs are failing, that Bs are very nearly so and that the acceptable grade is an A. That, of course, has crept into the Foreign Service where the top two boxes are the only acceptable boxes and almost nobody falls below that. I was on the career minister promotion board some years ago. I forget how many files there were to look at, 200 or so. Nobody fell below the top two boxes. We have a grade inflation which has worked against the honest evaluation process by officers. Officers have been reluctant to mark their subordinates down, because they themselves expect to be marked up and are receptive to the idea that their subordinates should also be marked up even if there are real and serious doubts about the quality of performance. People say that they have poor performers working for them but don't want the hassle because they figure they would lose if there was a grievance, which would take a lot of time, and they would have to explain every detail of their criticism.

In my judgment, there is a real unwillingness to document poor performance. Superiors who are dissatisfied with the performance of their subordinates rarely sit down with the employees and say, "Look, these are the things that you are doing that are substandard; these are the things that you must do better." Supervisors are even more wary about putting this in writing. The result is that when a critical efficiency report is produced, the officer being criticized says, "Well, wait a minute. You never told me." The fact is, you will never lose a grievance if you are the grievant under circumstances where there is no documented evidence about the alleged lapse in performance.

I used to encounter this to my consternation when ambassadors would send me a cable demanding that I withdraw a particular officer, political counselor, DCM or admin counselor, etc. for poor performance, management deficiencies, terrible interpersonal relationship skills, disruptive behavior, etc. I got a multitude of these. I was very reluctant to acquiesce in these requests, although ambassadors in theory have absolute power to throw people out. I was particularly reluctant when I discovered in one of the cases where

I had acquiesced that the ambassador wrote that officer a glowing efficiency report saying that the officer should be promoted into the Senior Foreign Service and had many positive qualities which should be rewarded by the service. I called the ambassador and said, "Wait a minute. You sent me a Director General Channel message explaining that this person was a dreadful officer." The answer I got in this case and in several others, was that "I'm sure he/she would be a wonderful officer somewhere else but just not here." After I was burned a couple of times I would say, "You have to do better than that. You have to put it in writing and give it to the employee and let the employee comment." Ambassadors and DCMs were often very reluctant to do that. Sometimes it is a question of superiors who just don't get on with their subordinates, where the fault may be with the superiors and not necessarily the subordinates. We have not got a culture which has facilitated the directness of evaluation which we ought to have and that creates problems concerning promotions, assignments, etc.

Q: Did you have any input into appointment of ambassadors?

QUAINTON: Yes, indeed, and in the assignment of DCMs. I comment on the two processes because they are similar but distinct. I'll start with the DCM process. The director general chairs a committee to choose DCMs for all but very small posts which have been designated SEP posts, special embassy program posts, where DCMs are chosen in the ordinary bid and assignment process by a lower level committee chaired by the director of Career Development and Assignment. But, the vast majority of DCMships come to the committee chaired by the director general and on which sit three other assistant secretaries, plus the principal deputy assistant secretary in Personnel. Officers bid on the available DCMships and the staff prepare brief summaries about each of those officers and a short list is chosen usually of four or five, sometimes only three, candidates to be submitted to the ambassador. These candidates are ones who in the committee's judgment were qualified to be DCM at that particular post. If there was no ambassador at the time, the same list would go to the assistant secretary of the geographic bureau, and a decision would be made absent an ambassador. Sometimes an ambassador had been named and would be consulted but the ultimate decision would be the assistant secretary's. The process worked pretty well, although, as in the case of ambassadorial selection, there is not enough time given to reviewing each case given the volume of DCMships rotating each year. We are talking about 50 or 60 DCMs and principal officers at major consulates general, who go through the same process. The real weakness in the system, in my judgment, and I couldn't figure out how to get over it, is that in the DCM committee, the amount of information about management potential available to the decision makers is very limited.

For ambassadorial appointments, the system is, if anything, worse. The Deputy secretary's Committee handles the selection of career candidates for those embassies designated by the White House as available for career ambassadorial appointments. At the present time, the White House retains 30 percent of the total number of embassies worldwide for political appointees and gives the Department of State a list of the 70 percent that remain. Those are filled on a rotating three year cycle so that in any given year the committee may have between 25 and 30 posts to fill. The committee was chaired

in my time by the deputy secretary; the director general acts as executive secretary, the under secretary for management, the under secretary for political affairs, and the executive secretary of the Department. That meant there were at that time three career officers (The DC, executive director, and the under secretary for Political Affairs). The deputy secretary was non-career, as was the under secretary for Management. At other times, there could have been three non-career officers.

In both the DCM and “D” Committees, what the members have to look at are the PARs, personnel assignment records, which contain the assignment history of an officer, the promotion history of an officer, the awards the officer has received, and the languages that officer spoke. Now, that will always tell you some interesting things. The language skills are important at many posts. The assignment history and promotion history will tell you if you have an officer who has moved very rapidly or slowly in the service and at what points the officer moved more rapidly or slowly. It looked like the racing form at a track. There is an awful lot of factual detail there but you have to know how to interpret it in order to make sense of it.

You do not have, as a routine matter, written summaries of performance. If you have a man or woman being considered for DCM or chief of mission, it would be useful to know on a systematic basis what that officer’s strengths and weaknesses were as revealed from the personnel file. I tried to change this, but it took a great effort. Often, there were many candidates, particularly for attractive posts. Let me give you an example: Calgary. It is not a DCM post, but there were 70 candidates to be consul general. Everybody wanted to be consul general in Calgary. For consul general in Naples there were 50 candidates. To do summaries of all those candidates would have been an enormous burden on the personnel system, and so one fell back on the PAR and, of course, the reputation of the officer.

The ambassadorial process is a little tighter, but even there you would have half a dozen candidates for a particular embassy and you would consider quite a number of embassies at any one meeting. In my day, it has now changed, we tended to look at ambassadorial appointments by region so that we would look at all the AF vacancies and would ask the assistant secretary for African affairs for a competitive list of officers who would be suitable. We asked all the under secretaries and functional assistant secretaries if they knew of candidates whom they would like to see named for any of the posts we were considering at the time. That gets a very wide pool of people. The D committee meetings were preceded by what was known as the D+ committee at which any of the other under secretaries, excluding P and M who sat on the D committee, E, T & G could come for a preliminary meeting and lobby for any particular candidate that was already on the list or offer additional candidates if they wanted. Joan Spero (E) was very active in looking out for economic officers. Tim Wirth (G) was not terribly active and Lynn Davis (T) was not active at all.

They have now changed the system to look at the total universe of embassies available so that they can look at all the candidates worldwide. The disadvantage of the system that operated when I was there was that you would look at the Africa list and then the

unsuccessfulls would show up again on the Latin American list. We often found ourselves looking over and over again at the same small group of people who had been put forward by one of the functional assistant secretaries. EB would be a good example where there were a lot of good economic officers, and the bureau of consular affairs and bureau of administration were keen to see their people advanced, too. In some specific cases, it worked well. What I did as director general at the D committee was to try and get from my staff a general assessment of the quality of the officer and I would give an oral briefing saying, "We are looking at candidates for Togo and have the following five people. Candidate number one speaks excellent French, served in Africa, has good recommendations and experience as an administrator. Candidate number two has never served in Africa but has been a country director, etc." I tried to describe each candidate as succinctly as possible for the committee so that they could make their decision. Often, I regret to say, decisions were not made on the basis of qualifications but on whether the Secretary wanted it, or the National Security Adviser wanted it, or the deputy secretary wanted it, etc.

Q: A special assistant to someone high up often seems to get the support and nod because they are close to the mighty person, but as a practical measure a staff officer is probably the worst place to find somebody to be an ambassador. Can you comment on that?

QUAINTON: There certainly were cases of special assistants to the principals whose names would be put forward, who did not have, in my judgment at least, the necessary background and preparation for the ambassadorial position they were being considered for. I often argued that the appointment was premature, premature in a logical career sense. The people who are chosen to be staff officers on the seventh floor, for example, or who are chosen to be at National Security Council, are usually our very best and ablest officers. So, it was not a question of whether this was an able officer, but did the officer have the necessary experience and managerial training. In some cases, the officers may have served as DCMs, in which case it was probably all right, in a couple of other cases that came my way, the officer had never served above the section chief level and in some cases not even that. It is a big jump if you go from having been just a member of a political section to having your next overseas job as ambassador. There was such a case where an officer had served only two years abroad in the first years of his career and then the next overseas job was as ambassador at a major post. Well, he was an able person but in terms of thinking of the career service and the logical advancement of people up the ladder, it is a disservice to the Foreign Service to operate in this way. I drew the deputy secretary's attention to some of these cases. They always had, of course, very high level backing. He would acknowledge that the principle was right, but the specific case was not one where the principle could be acknowledged.

Q: In many ways you were the only one to really talk about this as a career. A career ladder, a progression, etc. Was an awful lot of this is just trying to do favors for people who might be quite able but essentially State Department patronage in a way.

QUAINTON: It wasn't that bad. There was some of that and I objected to it. Of course, the under secretary for political affairs was not always a career officer. Being a career

officer makes a big difference. That historically has been the top job for a career person. Non career people often have a different view of career officers, and not always a positive view, I might say. So, at first, I was the only one talking in those terms. In an awful lot of ambassadorial positions, the real decision is taken at the assistant secretary level, the geographic assistant secretary, and great weight was always given to their views. That was particularly true of the DCM committee, where the principal DAS usually came to the meeting and discussed the candidates and said, "Our preferred candidate is x for the following reasons." We sometimes disregarded the bureau's advice but we always took it seriously, particularly if it was one of their own officers who had served at one of their posts, since they would have a very good fix on that individual. At the D committee level, among the things that I would indicate on the check list that the members had was the person who the assistant secretary favored as a candidate. That often counted a great deal if there was not a patronage reason to choose somebody else. And, if you took 30 cases, you might have 5 patronage cases, the other 25 being decided by a much more proper process. Five patronage cases were probably too many.

Q: At this time, 1995-97, the courts were playing quite a role. I heard somebody say, and I find this hard to believe, but I'm told that at one point ambassadors were given a choice of DCMs and there were always women on the list. They did not have to take a woman but if they did not they had to justify it, whereas if they did take a woman they didn't have to justify. Is this true?

QUAINTON: It was not true in my tenure as DG, I don't know at what point it changed. But, I can remember when I was choosing a DCM in Lima, just such an instruction was sent to me. I had been given a list of five, but if I did not choose a woman or one of the minorities, I would have to explain why I did not. I sent a message back to the director general saying that I wouldn't do that. I would look at the list, talk to all the candidates and would tell the director general why I did not accept all of those I did not accept irrespective of gender or minority. That is no longer the case. As we looked at DCMships, for example, but also at ambassadors, we consciously would look at race and gender to try to make sure that there was no suggestion that we were consciously ignoring minorities. If they were appropriately qualified, they would be included on the list. I was involved in at least one piece of litigation where an Hispanic officer complained that his name had not been included or if included not been chosen. When we put names on a DCM list, we tried to give very dispassionate descriptions of what the officer had done and why the officer was appropriate for that particular DCMship. We phoned up a lot of people and tried to get an impression about the candidates and would get supplementary information about the qualities, positive and otherwise, of the individuals.

That kind of process you can't do away with, it seems to me. I actually am of the view that ambassadors should not be allowed to choose their DCMs. It is a bad system. I think the central personnel system should choose DCMs, assign them, and assume that the officer, being talented professionally, should be able to do the job. It makes for a system based on patronage where ambassadors can choose their friends. I had eight or nine DCMs. A number of them I inherited and didn't choose, a number I chose. The people I

chose in several cases were not very good, a couple were wonderful and of the people I inherited, a couple were good and a couple were not so good. I concluded that this was a system which nothing had been added by the personal patronage that I was able to exercise.

Q: In a way you were trapped into having somebody saying, "You were tied to them," rather than "Well, that was your choice." So it hangs an albatross around your neck if your choice doesn't do well.

QUAINTON: And it would be much better, frankly, if ambassadors did not choose their DCMs.

Q: What about DCMs? One hears stories about political appointees who come in and are briefed by relatively middle grade or even junior desk officer and decide they would like the briefer as his/her DCM. Did you have problems with that?

QUAINTON: I didn't have any problems with that. The decisions that political ambassadors made about DCMs were sometimes idiosyncratic, but usually quite sound. If one of the candidates happened to be the officer director, the chances were that the political appointee would say, "Well, this is the guy and I have been working and he is really good." Often, he was on the list; so in that sense it was all right. The system was offering up a qualified candidate. Often, it is the officer director who is the right person because the logical next step in his career is to be DCM at a major embassy. Political appointees have considerable difficulty in choosing among candidates because they don't know them and have trouble weighing up the qualifications of individuals. And, they had been told over and over again that this was going to be their single most important personnel choice and that they had to find somebody who would be entirely compatible with whom they could have a relationship of total trust and confidence. Of course, that is all true, but it did in fact result in an emphasis on personal relationship, how they felt about each other. This was very important when the political ambassador got a chance to meet potential candidates to be his DCM. He would decide not necessarily on the qualifications of the individual, but on how they got along together.

Q: Professional confidence really should be the key.

QUAINTON: Yes. But, there is always the danger of being too experienced. I saw this at some of my early posts, Pakistan, for example, where a very competent career officer, perhaps the most experienced senior South Asianist of his day, was chosen by a political ambassador. The trouble with the DCM's being so experienced and knowing much more than the ambassador was that the ambassador took umbrage at being constantly told what to do by someone who said, "On the basis of twenty years of experience, I can tell you, Mr. Ambassador, this is what you must do here." So, professional qualifications sometimes get in the way of human relations with non-career ambassadors particularly those who feel uncertain about some aspects of the job and enormously confident about other aspects.

Q: Did you have problems with women ambassadors, both career and non-career, being reluctant to have a woman DCM?

QUAINTON: I can't think of any case where that was true, or the reverse, male officers who had women as DCMs. If they did, they never articulated it. I am trying to think how many women ambassadors we have had, career and non-career, who had women DCMs. There are some. That didn't seem to be a problem. Lots of other problems, but that was not one that I spent any time on.

Q: What was your impression of Warren Christopher? Was he someone who looked upon the management of the Foreign Service as your responsibility? How did he relate to that? He had already been under secretary so he certainly didn't have to learn about the Foreign Service. He knew what it was, its strengths and weaknesses. How was your relationship with him during this time?

QUAINTON: My relationship was, in fact, more with the deputy secretary, largely because of the ambassadorial selection process. Secretary Christopher generally did not intrude in any personnel decisions and there were very, very few personnel issues that had to go to him. Lots of things went to the deputy secretary and I often talked to Strobe Talbot about such issues. I think the secretary felt he was basically well served by the system as it was. He could call on talented officers in the Foreign Service for information whether on the Middle East, Africa, etc. He was not interested in the structural form of the Department. That was a great pity since it undercut the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) and efforts to reform the Department.

I don't think we have talked about this. I was assistant secretary for security at the time of SMI in 1993. With the new administration a major effort was made in all government departments to reinvent, and beginning in the summer of 1993 and running right through until the spring of 1994, the Department organized itself into a series of task forces to look at how the Department might be made more efficient, how it might be delayed, and how it might do its business in a completely changed bureaucratic and financial budgetary environment. The results were very limited. A series of papers were produced; the number of deputy assistant secretaries were dramatically cut, and some consolidation of offices was made.

This effort culminated in an off-site meeting at the Foreign Service Institute, at which all the assistant secretaries and all the under secretaries spent a full day together. This was the first time in history when so many senior officers had gathered together to consider management reform. Vice President Gore personally exhorted us in a meeting on the eighth floor, to think "outside the box." They looked at such critical issues as whether the Department should increase the authority of functional bureaus and decrease that of geographic bureaus or the reverse. This was, in fact, a very important issue since foreign policy now focuses on functional issues more than on geographic relationships. The participants came up with some important recommendations and when they were presented to the Secretary, the Secretary said that he didn't want to make any radical changes in the Department and didn't want any thinking outside the box.

Secretary Christopher did not see any imperative need for change in the Department of State when it came to structure. This was in one way his strength, the strength of a lawyer who approached diplomacy as a series of cases which could be studied one at a time, with a very careful, thoughtful approach to every major issue and crisis. He would segregate them and deal with them one at a time. He was very effective in many of the things that he did. But law firms are not noted for their management. Lawyers are not interested in management; they are interested in problem solving for their clients. In this case, the Secretary's client was the United States. The Secretary also tended to push aside management issues. And, unfortunately, and perhaps this is unfair to the deputy secretary, his background being that of a journalist, another non-bureaucratic profession, he was also not interested in management. He was an intellectual interested in themes, issues, events, but not in management. He never managed *Time* magazine; he was there because of his enormous intellectual ability as a journalist. He brought all of that to the Department. Thus, you had the two top jobs filled by men whose interests were not bureaucratic. We haven't had very many secretaries or deputy secretaries who have been interested in management.

Q: George Shultz stands out among all of them.

QUAINTON: I think that is right. Partly because of his managerial background in the private sector. And, also some of the deputy secretaries have come with that same kind of background. So, we have the problem that the ministerial level of the Department has not been engaged in management issues to the degree that changes in our society and the world require.

And that has meant that the management of the Department has fallen to the under secretary for management. But the under secretaries in recent years, it seems to me, haven't had the strong support or interest at the highest levels in the Department. Change has been difficult to bring about.

I can remember at the beginning of the Clinton administration the deputy secretary was brought in for his management skills, Clifton Wharton, who had not only run TIA/A/CREF, a major insurance company in the education industry, but also had been president of the Rockefeller Foundation and the University of Michigan. I don't pretend to know under what circumstances he left the Department, but I remember hearing him say, when commenting about his time, that he had found the Department very hard to manage because he was used to a variety of models. The private sector model which was directive from the top. The CEO decided what the priorities were and told everybody to get marching to change them. He quickly found that the Department of State didn't operate that way. And, he was also used to the academic model which was endlessly consensus building through the professors, the deans, and the students. Consensus for change was developed from the bottom up, and he had discovered that didn't work in the Department either. He was rather baffled as to how to get change. And, there is some truth to his view. It is a very conservative institution that was and is really not anxious to change.

Q: Is there anything else we should discuss concerning the time you were director general before we come back to other general comments?

QUAINTON: Let's talk about workforce planning. One of the most consistent criticisms levied against the Department by outsiders is the lack of workforce planning. The inability to articulate clearly how many people we need for particular functions at particular grades. One of the primary things that Under Secretary Moose was interested in was developing a more coherent workforce plan. That has a number of elements. Getting the number of jobs right by function and getting the level of the jobs right once you have decided how many individuals you need to carry out a particular function. In both these areas, the allocation of resources in the Department is almost certainly misapplied. We spent a good deal of time in trying to figure out what were the ideal grade levels, because if you get that right, then you get the promotion system right. There was always controversy about how many promotions there should be at any given level, particularly in the Senior Foreign Service which was and is widely perceived to have been penalized by a foolish adherence to strict time in class rules and denial of career extensions to officers whose time in class had expired.

I spent a good deal of time on this issue and concluded that the data, given me by my staff, clearly demonstrated that we had a substantial surplus of senior officers over the number of senior jobs. And, indeed, when it came to assigning officers to senior jobs it was my frequent observation that assistant secretaries wanted to put FSO-1s into senior positions even when there were available senior officers. This exacerbated the problem of senior overhang, of having too many senior officers who were not productively employed. We got into the absolutely ridiculous point where we had one career minister filling the job of an FSO-2. That is not to suggest that we have too many career ministers, but that we didn't have a properly designated fit between grades and jobs. It was quite a complex problem.

The solution which I advocated, which is now being turned around by my successor, was that there should be fewer people in the Senior Foreign Service. We didn't need as many generals as we had. As the Department had downsized it was very hard to justify a lot of very high priced talent doing relatively menial jobs. We lost quite a lot of senior officers by attrition and by time in class, but we didn't have a hemorrhaging of the area skills that was alleged, in fact, in every major linguistic area, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, we had a surplus of officers who had language qualifications. Often, they did not want to go to places where their languages were spoken. But, it wasn't because we had a lack of skills in a downsized Foreign Service.

Another question I kept asking was, did we have the people allocated to the right functions. That nobody could tell me. Why were our embassies the size they were? Why were there 1,000 people in Moscow and 150 in Beijing? What was the rationale? There was no rationale. So, we spent a lot of time, almost all of 1996 and into mid 1997, working out an overseas staffing model which was designed to create a basis for calculating staffing in terms of interests, American presence, agency representation, the

number of administrative, consular, political, and economic officers that were needed at any given post. A matrix was devised, criteria were developed, the geographic bureaus were consulted and we eventually devised a five tier system from very small embassies, where we calculated a need for perhaps less than five officers to the mega embassies where you might have a hundred. This was an effort to tell the Congress that we had a rational basis for the size of the Foreign Service. There is no domestic counterpart to the overseas staffing model, so nobody can explain why some offices in the Department are the size they are and others are not. It seems to be entirely a function of how successful assistant secretaries have been in lobbying for staff resources to support their agenda. But it was a constant issue with the congress, particularly with Congressman Gilman's staff, as to why we had so many people. The White House, of course, had announced the national performance review. The government was getting smaller. The President was committed to 320,000 fewer employees, yet the State Department said we needed more, not less. The overseas staffing model was an effort to say, "Yes, we really need these people for the following reasons." In fact, the model showed a need overseas for a slight increase in the number of State Department officers to do the essential work that we had.

All of this fell short of a comprehensive workforce plan because it didn't include the domestic side of the business. That remains one of the great challenges: to develop appropriate criteria for deciding on the size of particular bureaus or offices and the allocation by grade of these resources. This was a major challenge that we worked at pretty continuously throughout the time I was director general.

Q: Was that put in place?

QUAINTON: The overseas staffing model was put in place. It was briefed to the congress, but it still has not been used, and perhaps never can be used mechanistically, so that embassies would be forced down to the numbers the models suggested. But, where there were substantial differences in actual staffing from what the model suggested, it did provide a basis for adjustments in the direction of getting down to the model's norm. And, that was useful to assistant secretaries and, by and large, they accepted it, although there were some assistant secretaries that fought the process as an infringement on their autonomy. What we said to assistant secretaries in the end was "You can aggregate the number of consular positions you have in ARA and if you really felt that you need five more in Brasilia, you can take them from somewhere else." They didn't like that, but we said that we had come to the conclusion as to just how many were needed at each post. If an assistant secretary felt he had to make some adjustments as a manager, he could make those adjustments. They grudgingly accepted that.

As hiring has been ratcheted up in 1998, a lot of the pressure to have a model and make it work has gone away. All of these things took place against the background of the OMB projections for the year 2002, which showed the State Department declining in size by another 50 percent. If anything like that was going to happen, there had to be a very rational basis for calculating resource allocations, for deciding how many people to hire. We had no reason to suppose that the President was going to provide any additional resources to the Department beyond what had been authorized by OMB. The OMB

numbers that we got forced us downward, and we tried to use these mechanisms to figure out where we ought to be putting our resources as we got smaller.

Q: During the time you were there, did you have to face up to the theme that seemed to be more vocalized of why do we need embassies now that we can do everything by telephone, airplanes, faxes, and e-mails?

QUAINTON: This was a theme which I espoused, not dealt with. I came to the realization as I went through this process against a shrinking resource base, that it was not clear to anybody exactly why we had embassies where we had them and what the role of the Foreign Service was in the embassies that we had. Partly that was the result of changing technology. But, it was clear, for example, that the information revolution and the Internet were providing quantities of information in ways that we had never had before and that the role of reporting officers in the field, political and economic officers, would have to change. Factual reporting was going to be less important and analytical reporting was going to be more important. It was also pretty clear that if you had a different security environment, the platforms which our embassies represented for other agencies could be operated differently. The need for administrative officers in many places was going to change. It was my view and is my view that, for example, in Germany or in England and a number of other places, you could recruit all of the administrative support that you need locally and have virtually no Washington-based staff. In those places, you could hire American citizens locally, if you chose not to trust the British or the Germans. That would have changed the whole way we did our administrative work.

I started asking questions about what the Internet really could do. I recognized the possibility of greatly enhanced government to government communication. There is no reason, in my judgment, why the Canadian desk officer in the Department should not be talking every day to the U.S. desk officer in the Canadian foreign ministry in classified or unclassified modes. They could discuss issues back and forth every day. The desk officer could fly up once a week on the 7:30 flight to Ottawa. Those things were not possible a few years ago. So, the role of embassies and of the traditional Foreign Service officers in those embassies will have to change and be redefined. That is not to say that you don't need a Foreign Service or embassies. Unfortunately, there has been a real reluctance to rethink the role of the Foreign Service, and the valued added of the Foreign Service in terms of language, area, and analytical skills, on which we have always prided ourselves.

I was talking to an Australian diplomat recently who pointed out that European ambassadors in Europe no longer have anything to do because the work is all done by the political directors who fly around from capital to capital. We are seeing more and more of that. So, I argued throughout most of the time that I was director general that we really ought to be radically changing the way our embassies operate, grouping officers by function rather than the traditional four sections which we have always had. There is no reason why in China one shouldn't have a democracy section. You would have AID people and USIA people and State people in the same section. One might have a trade and investment section which would have FAS, FCS, and State economic officers

working together. The ambassador would structure an embassy around the things the embassy had to do rather than around the traditional bureaucratic structures.

All that is very threatening, however, to the Foreign Service, to suggest that other people will do our work. There was a real lack of confidence in the brains and the value added that the Foreign Service provides in competition with others. And so to preserve the existing Foreign Service, we have chosen to preserve enclaves in which the Foreign Service is supreme. I did not argue, however, that CNN can replace the Foreign Service.

Q: CNN being the international television service, an American-run service.

QUAINTON: That is correct. So, I think there are some real issues [there] about the future of diplomacy and of the Foreign Service, and I tried to articulate those issues as director general with the result that I was thought of in some quarters as the Dr. Kavorkian of diplomacy.

Q: Dr. Kavorkian being the Detroit practitioner in assisted suicide.

We are going to stop at this point. In a way, we have finished the general career, but you have mentioned several things you would like to talk about: Bhutan, dealing with the American community which means business, missionaries, and other parts of the community, crisis preparation, representation, relationships with other agencies and you will probably have more to add at that time.

QUAINTON: Good.

Q: Today is July 10, 1998. Tony, first you mentioned Bhutan. What about Bhutan?

QUAINTON: It is not a place I think about very often, but for a period in the early 1970s and late 1960s, I was considerably involved with the early days of our relations with Bhutan, both because I was a participant in the first two official visits to the capital of Bhutan. Then later as desk officer for India, I was present when we decided to admit Bhutan to the United Nations, or to vote in favor of their admittance, and then at the first meeting between the Secretary of State and the Bhutanese permanent representative. So, these were the early days of the U.S.-bilateral relationship. In point of fact, an American diplomat had been on Bhutanese soil before I went on the first delegation in 1967, and that was John Kenneth Galbraith, who actually crossed the border in the early 1960s and met with Bhutanese officials just on the other side of the Indo-Bhutanese border. But, he did not travel up into the mountains, the Himalayas, which are the real heartland of the Bhutanese people.

Washington decided that it would be desirable to have exploratory missions go to Bhutan. One went in 1967, another one the following year, composed of the external counselor in New Delhi, first Galen Stone and then Herb Gordon, accompanied by a political section

officer, in both cases myself, and by a representative of our consulate general in Calcutta, which had consular responsibility for the territory of Bhutan. We did not have diplomatic relations with the Bhutanese. In fact, no government had diplomatic relationship with the Bhutanese except the government of India. So, it was really quite an important decision to send a delegation to Thimphu with a view of meeting with the senior members of the Bhutanese government. On neither occasion did we meet with the king but we met with ministers of his government and senior officials.

On both occasions we first flew down into the lowland area bordering the Indian state of Assam and then flew on from there into Paro, the only airport in Bhutan. The little border town of Phuntsholing was nothing more than a handful of houses and a large stone marker indicating where the Central Bank of Bhutan was to be built. The Bank, however, did not yet exist. Bhutan did not have its own currency with the exception of one coin, a one rupee coin, which had been issued several years before. Otherwise, Bhutan used Indian currency for all of its transactions. Indeed, there weren't very many transactions to be carried out. Most of Bhutan's foreign exchange was derived from the sale of postage stamps. These sales began after the Second World War when Bhutan issued its first postage stamps and the Indian government permitted it to join the International Postal Union. This was Bhutan's first foray into international affairs. The Bhutanese issued all sorts of stamps, square, triangular, circular, three dimensional, trying almost everything that would make their stamps saleable on the international market. This limited international activity was much encouraged by Shirley MacLaine, who was one of the principal advisers and supporters of the Bhutanese government.

Q: She is a movie actress.

QUAINTON: Yes. But until 1967, very few foreigners had gone to Bhutan. It was and is a beautiful mountain kingdom run by a royal family. Tibetan Buddhism is its national religion. In every valley there are monasteries. The country was then, and I suppose still is, largely run on feudal lines. The peasants provide contributions in kind to the monks in the monasteries in each valley, and the monasteries provide centers of culture, local defense and civil organization. It was then an extremely primitive country which was just emerging into the 20th century under Indian tutelage.

I remember on our first visit we stayed in the Indian guest house in Thimphu and went to call on the finance minister. The embassy's external counselor, Galen Stone, cashed the first traveler cheque in the history of Bhutan. He asked the finance minister where it would be possible to cash such a check since there didn't appear to be any banks in the country, and indeed there were no banks as far as we could judge. The finance minister pulled a tin box out of a drawer in his desk and did the exchange himself at the current rate of exchange for the Indian rupee. There was almost no foreign aid. The Indians had built some roads. The Japanese had a small program which they supported in the Paro valley to help the Bhutanese grow vegetables on the basis of Japanese experience of growing vegetables in cold climates, Bhutan being a relatively cold country. Unfortunately the project was something of a failure because the Bhutanese were not vegetable eaters but meat eaters and were not much interested in the cabbages and other

vegetables that the Japanese taught them how to grow. The Japanese themselves fell on very hard times in 1967-68 when there was a famine in the mountains, rain being short. The Japanese were kept alive by food contributions from the Bhutanese peasant farmers even though there wasn't very much being produced. In short, economic development was very difficult.

The second visit was very much like the first. We again visited a range of officials, tried to develop limited contacts, saw some of the historical sites and monasteries, which were very beautiful. But, we didn't go beyond that towards any kind of developed political relationship. And I don't think there was another such visit to Bhutan for several years thereafter. However, the Bhutanese decided in 1970 that they would like to join the United Nations. This raised an important issue for us. I was at that time the political officer for India with responsibility for Bhutan. There was nothing that required any work until a senior Bhutanese official came to Washington with the express purpose of seeking the U.S. government's support for the entry of Bhutan into the United Nations.

We consulted the bureau of international organizations affairs which expressed very strongly negative views. Bhutan did not meet the existing criteria for membership, which we had invented. The criteria were based on population, gross national product, size of export revenue, designed to keep mini states out of the United Nations. We did not want a collection of tiny states with no economic or political significance in the UN. We prepared an appropriate briefing paper for Alexis Johnson, then the under secretary of state for political affairs, who was the senior official designated to receive the Bhutanese representative. The key recommendation in the paper was that he convey to the Bhutanese our inability to support their candidacy for membership in the United Nations at that time. We got the memo up with suitable advanced notice. I was the notetaker. I think the assistant secretary for Near East and South Asian affairs, Joe Sisco, was the other person who sat in. The Bhutanese, if I remember correctly, was a relative of the king, perhaps his younger brother. He came in and made a pitch to the under secretary about the importance Bhutan attached to its emergence into the modern world and its desire for membership in the United Nations. Under Secretary Johnson, who presumably had not read his briefing paper or did not understand it, said, "That is fine, we will certainly support you." We then became committed to the recognition of Bhutan's international aspirations. There was horror in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs that the threshold that we had set was going to be ignored. Bhutan's gross national product was very small. It had only 800,000 people and I think we had a threshold of a million population to meet our criteria.

At the following session of the general assembly, the Bhutanese having been duly admitted sent a permanent official there and it was decided that Secretary Rogers would meet with the newly admitted member of the United Nations. He, Assistant Secretary Joe Sisco, and I, greeted the Bhutanese representative, who in this case was the king's brother and, I think, prime minister at the time. Secretary Rogers had had no time to read his briefing paper either and he received his briefing from me as I stood at his side in the men's room before we went into the meeting. The meeting was something less than satisfactory.

Our only interest was that Bhutan join with us in opposing the entry of the People's Republic of China into the United Nations. Our position on the "ChiRep" question was still very firmly opposed to the entry of the People's Republic. Secretary Rogers made a strong pitch on this point. The Bhutanese explained that, given their geography, it would not be possible for them to agree to this. They were committed, as were their neighbors to the south, India, to supporting the aspirations of the People's Republic of China to join the United Nations. Before we got to that stage, Secretary Rogers, in order to be pleasant, tried to ascertain something about the country about which he knew nothing. He began by asking the Bhutanese representative where their country was located. The representative politely explained that it was situated between China and India. What did they export? The representative said they didn't export anything. What were their industries? They did not have any industries. The conversation went from one negative to another as Secretary Rogers tried rather desperately to understand what it was that kept this country together. It was entirely amiable, but we did not look very well informed about Bhutan. Then, when the conversation shifted to the Chinese representation issue, the Bhutanese were, unfortunately, not forthcoming.

But, it was an interesting case study of how a little country managed to manipulate us into getting what it wanted, which was essentially a degree of political independence from India by getting itself into the United Nations. Of course, we still do not have relations with the government of Bhutan in a formal sense. There are no missions in Thimphu except the Indian mission, but visits have become more regular and the Bhutanese have, I think, gone beyond the production of postage stamps in their national development.

Q: I would have thought right from the beginning when you were dealing with this, the Indians would have said no and kept you from going up there just so that they could keep Bhutan as theirs and not have it play at all an independent role.

QUAINTON: It was quite hard to get the first authorization to go in. We waited many months for permission. We made it clear to the Indians that we were not at this point seeking diplomatic relations with Bhutan, that we wanted to inform ourselves about the country. The Indians were very suspicious that what we were trying to do was to pry Bhutan loose from the Indian sphere of influence. On the other hand, the Indians did not oppose Bhutan's admission into the United Nations. I think they thought that they would be able to control Bhutanese foreign policy as long as other countries did not set up autonomous embassies in Thimphu. But, it was always one of our concerns that we not get crosswise with the Indians over a country which was of no fundamental importance to us.

Q: What was the push for us doing anything?

QUAINTON: Largely because it was there. There were no American citizens resident in Bhutan. There was no trade with Bhutan. Americans bought a certain number of Bhutanese postage stamps, but this was not a basis on which you could build a very substantial relationship. We were concerned throughout this period about the border

states as potential areas of Chinese influence. That is, Nepal and Bhutan as independent states, and Sikkim as a quasi independent state. Of course, this is only six or seven years after the Chinese invasion of India in 1962. So, we also wanted to keep track of Chinese activities to the degree we could. There didn't seem to be any particular Chinese activity in Bhutan. But, we also wanted to demonstrate that we recognized the independence of Bhutan even though our concern was about a threat from the Chinese, not from India. But, I think there was also a desire to show our presence along the southern frontier of China at a time when we were very concerned about Chinese hegemonic aspirations in South Asia.

Q: One of the other subjects that you mentioned was general comments or experiences dealing with our missionaries and then talk about other non-governmental organizations.

QUAINTON: Yes. At every overseas post where we served, with the exception of Australia, our first post, the American missionary presence had an important impact. It varied from Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, but everywhere it was very real. In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s, the Vatican made a strong pitch to religious orders, both of priests and nuns, to engage in missionary activity. Many of them had not done any previous missionary work. They had been engaged, for example, in the United States as school teachers or ran hospitals, etc., but their focus was domestic. So, there was a sudden outpouring of American Catholic missionaries all over the third world, particularly into Latin America, they were scattered, in Nicaragua and Peru, for example, into almost every town of any importance in the country. In the case of Protestant missionaries, their presence was much more deeply rooted in many parts of the world, and this was certainly true in Central Africa, for example, where we served from 1976-78. There during the First World War, two groups of American missionaries, the Independent Baptists and the Grace Brethren...

Q: This is July 24, 1998. You were talking about Central Africa.

QUAINTON: The two Protestant missionary groups came up the Congo River and then the Ubangi River. They divided the country in half, the Baptists went east and the Brethren went west. By mutual agreement, they undertook not to poach on each other's territory, and in fact the issue never arose until the post-independence period of the 1960s and '70s when, as in most any third world country, there was a steady influx of peasants from the rural areas into the capital city and suddenly people were living together with different backgrounds. For an American ambassador these two groups were both a problem and a source of considerable help. A problem in the sense that there was always a certain amount of resentment about the style of the American missionaries, how they went about obtaining converts. There were also suspicions that they bought their conversions with food and other benefits.

Q: Rice Christians.

QUAINTON: Rice Christians, as they were called in other parts of the world. The missionaries in Africa were very conservative, not only theologically, but socially. Many Africans felt that the white Protestant missionaries treated them like children and as inferiors. On the other hand, the missionaries had been there some 60 years by the time we got to Central Africa, and many of them had personally been 30-40 years in the mission field in Central Africa and knew the country, the languages, and the people. While they didn't necessarily sympathize with African customs and traditions, many of which they tried to change as part of their missionary endeavor, they also were more plugged in than any other group of foreigners working in the country. They looked on their mission as one which was really in the sight of eternity. There was no short term goal as there is with AID and Peace Corps projects. They built hospitals and clinics which did enormous good. They had some schools, mostly Bible colleges, training young Central Africans for the pastorate.

Therein lies one of the major problems that the Catholic Church faces throughout the third world, where the shortage of priests is much commented upon. One of the reasons for the shortage of priests is celibacy, but the other is the very long and intense period of training that is required in order to become a priest, with at least a university education and in most cases post graduate education. To become a Protestant pastor in Latin America or Central Africa required an eighth grade education and a willingness to go for two to three years to a Bible college where students studied the Scriptures, learned some basic theology, and then were sent out to a village to minister to the people. That has meant that Protestant pastors are widely dispersed through many third world societies.

In Central Africa I had one rather interesting experience with the Baptists during the first Christmas we were there. Some members of the American community came to me and suggested that perhaps there could be a Christmas pageant. We had already invited the entire American community, all of which could fit into our living room (There were less than 100 Americans in the Central African Republic at the time.) to come for cider and to sing Christmas carols. Several suggested that perhaps a little pageant would be appropriate - children dressed as shepherds and angels, the traditional sort of stuff. I gave my blessing to the idea; it seemed a fairly innocuous, non-denominational kind of thing to do. Then, to my great surprise, the Baptists all declined my invitation to come carol singing. I got a series of phone calls regretting my kind invitation.

About four or five days before the party, the head of the Baptist church in Central Africa came to call on me and, sitting in my office, he very nervously said, "Perhaps you have noticed that we are not able to come to your carol sing." I quickly said, "Oh. This is not a denominational thing. We are not trying to push any religious agenda. We are going to sing *Rudolph, the Red Nose Reindeer* and other secular songs as well as traditional Christmas carols." I was fearful that he had heard about the pageant and would think this was some kind of Romish plot to introduce liturgical activity into our Christmas celebration. He explained that they had prayed about this decision. They had held a synod of the Baptist Church of Central Africa. The missionaries had met and had decided that in good conscience they could not come. I again said how very sorry I was, that I valued their presence and hoped they would come. He said, "Well, you know, there is going to

be somebody taking part who does not profess the Lord Jesus.” I looked completely baffled at this statement and the pastor then mentioned a particular woman who, in fact, was going to play the guitar for the carol sing. She was a member of the Bahai faith. They had a small missionary endeavor in Central Africa and the Baptists felt that this was somehow a desecration of the Christmas tradition to allow a member of the Bahai faith to take part, although the Bahais were entirely syncretist in terms of drawing from religious traditions, including the Christian one. But, the pastor was very adamant that he could not join in a carol sing with somebody who obviously did not “profess the Lord Jesus.”

It was a real eye opener to me about how people think about their identity and about their religious faith, and, of course, it meant that the American community, itself, was quite divided. I suppose the Fourth of July was the one exception of a time when everyone could get together. But, wherever we traveled in Central Africa, we stayed with them. The missionaries were enormously hospitable and certainly were very kind of us.

Both in Nepal and in Peru, we encountered another group of Protestant missionaries, the Wycliffe Bible Institute/Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), who were engaged in translating scriptures into obscure tribal languages. It is an enormous linguistic effort. In Peru they had a very large mission station with over a hundred missionaries working on the tribal languages of the Amazon Basin. Again you had a group of missionaries with access to parts of the country and to regions that no other Americans ever saw. From an ambassador’s point of view, they were a wonderful source of information. However, in Nepal and Peru on various occasions, they ran afoul of the local authorities, not because there was any objection to their proselytizing per se, but because they worked against the efforts of the national government to create a national language, Spanish in the case of Peru and Nepali. In both, the government’s nationbuilding was focused on using a single national language. The work that the missionaries did in translating the Bible was designed to make literacy possible and preserve languages that were otherwise dying. But many local officials saw that effort as subversive. SIL had been kicked out of a number of countries around the world for just these reasons and its missionaries always lived an uncertain existence as a result of the tension between the work they were doing and the goals of the central government where they were operating.

On the Catholic side in Latin America, American missionaries played a very important role given the extraordinary shortage of indigenous priests. At the time we arrived in Nicaragua over half of the priests in Nicaragua were foreigners; in Peru it was 30 percent and this was after 500 years of Spanish colonialism. This is partly a result of the Spanish disdain for the Indians and the image of the priest as an educated, cultured European. But, it meant that American missionaries when they came to Latin America, both priests and the various congregations of women religious, filled an enormous gap and played a very important role. They came at the direction of their superiors in the United States and Rome as part of the post Vatican II endeavor to energize the Catholic faith. They espoused liberation theology and supported base Christian communities. They almost always were on the left side of the political spectrum. This radical orientation could be quite a problem for American ambassadors and, again, for host governments.

In Nicaragua, the vast majority of American missionaries were on the side of the Sandinista revolution. We had a steady stream of church delegations coming down from the United States to look at the revolution. The information that they had came from the American missionaries. They also represented a strong anti-Reagan political force. Some missionaries would have nothing to do with me in Nicaragua on the grounds that I was an agent of some hated foreign regime, even though they were themselves American citizens. Others were more polite, but there certainly was a great deal of tension.

In Peru there was nothing like the same kind of problem, although the American missionaries had been very suspicious of the military governments, and remain very suspicious of Alberto Fujimori, the authoritarian President of Peru today. The missionaries continually act as a force for human rights, democracy, social justice, which often goes counter to the policies that a particular government may be pursuing.

I mention all this only to say that it was my experience throughout these many different posts that missionaries were by and large a neglected group of American citizens in the country. American diplomats in general, the American ambassadors in particular, didn't spend much time getting to know the missionaries unless they happened to have a particular religious commitment themselves. As a general proposition, most of my predecessors did not have much contact with the missionaries, at least the missionaries said they did not, and I have no reason to doubt them. And, of course, mid-level officers, political and economic officers, by and large never thought to engage themselves with the missionary community unless they had some personal reason to do so. In the political section in Peru we had a very able officer who was a Mormon, and he was much engaged because of the Mormon missionary endeavors in Peru. But, by and large that was not the pattern. When American embassies think about the American community they tend to think about the American business community first and foremost because that has been a major thrust of our diplomacy over the last 75 years and certainly has been a major theme in recent administrations. Quite often they will know the long time residents, people who have settled in the country and are socially well established and who happen to be American citizens. But, they are less likely to know the missionaries who, as I suggest, may be an important source of information and influence.

Of course the missionaries do belong to the warden network, at least as we have developed it in the last 20 years in the face of terrorism and violence. That has created a useful interaction between embassies and the missionary community but it did not always lead necessarily to very friendly relations, missionaries being very skeptical of American morality and concern for them. In the warden meetings that I hosted from Kathmandu in Central Africa through Nicaragua and Kuwait and Peru, missionaries would assert when evacuations took place the diplomats went first and left everybody else behind. This was never our intention, of course, but the perception was a very negative one of American embassies being willing to cut and run, get their own families out long before they will do anything to help the families of the American community.

Q: That is interesting because in some of the interviews the impression I have, particularly dealing with the Congo and other places where the missionaries were in real trouble, was that we would try to warn the missionaries that things were getting black

and they should get out and the reply would be "Oh, no, no, no, we are all right. They are our people and they know us," and then all of a sudden the nationals are on top of them and they come screaming and yelling and it is almost too late. So, I think there are two sides to this coin.

QUAINTON: I think that is absolutely right. Many missionaries take the view that they will be judged by a higher authority and that they are with their people and prefer to give their lives to be there. On the other hand, as we have moved into the '70s and '80s with the explosive growth of terrorism and what came with it, particularly after the Pan Am 103/Lockerbie incident a decade ago.

Q: That was an airplane that was blown up by terrorists.

QUAINTON: There was a predisposition on the part of the embassies to tell Americans of the slightest hint of a threat. So, there was the constant sense that the embassy was a panicky institution. In fact, it was Washington that was the panicky institution which constantly sent us instructions in Peru or wherever saying to be sure to warn the entire American community of such-and-such a threat. The missionaries and others tended to pooh-pooh these threats. In them we were Chicken Little: the sky was always falling and mostly nothing happened. So, there was not always the kind of open relationship which we might have wanted between the missionaries and the official community.

My sense, looking back at the five countries where I was either DCM or ambassador, is that the missionaries were very important players in the local scene and that when we were in touch with them we learned from them and benefitted from their presence more than might have seemed obvious.

Q: I served in South Korea where the missionaries are a major political influence and have been since the 1920s on. So there you have to pay attention to them. Sometimes they are a counter force in what we wanted but they were a major factor because they do have real influence.

QUAINTON: This leads to a related issue for American ambassadors which is the extent to which they should spend their time with the American community, not just the missionary community, but with the various institutions that are likely to exist in a major country to organize American citizens. You have the various missionary groups which are denominationally divided. In many of the countries in which I served there were union churches, a Protestant church which brought together the mainline Protestants. There would almost always be an American club of some kind. There would be an American women's society. There would be an American school. All of these institutions looked to the ambassador and his senior officers for support in one way or another: visible presence at the Union church on Thanksgiving, or Memorial Day, attendance at graduations at the high school; and, in many cases the use of the residence for functions to support a particular group of the American community.

I sense an increasing resistance on the part of ambassadors to support this agenda with the American community. There is so much else to do with the host government, getting

to know the country and the people, etc. And yet there is no doubt that the American community in most countries is an important community, often with considerable economic and political influence. I neglected to mention the American Chamber of Commerce which is probably the one institution that American ambassadors are the most inclined to be engaged with. What we lack is any, I think, clear guidance to chiefs of mission as to how they should relate to the American community in its various institutional forms. It is left up to each individual ambassador to figure out what his or her own agenda should be. Yet, I have a strong retrospective feeling that some attention ought to be given to this issue in the training of ambassadors and in their preparation for the work that they are going to do overseas.

Q: You mention preparation for crises.

QUAINTON: Yes. After my return from the Central African Empire in 1978, almost all of my subsequent positions involved crisis management of some kind or other. As the head of the office for combating terrorism, clearly one of the responsibilities was to develop guidelines for Washington agencies and for overseas missions as to how they should be organized and how they should respond in the face of particular kinds of incidents. While our embassies, for many years before this, had evacuation plans, the evacuation planning exercise was not taken very seriously. Most plans were seriously delinquent and out of date. When from the Office for Combating Terrorism we tried to update those plans or get embassies to update them to include hijacking preparations and other terrorist incidents, we discovered that, by and large, embassies had not done a very good job in thinking through the basic issues that were involved. I will say that, surprisingly, that remained true right up through the time that I was assistant secretary for Diplomatic Security, where from a different perspective, that of our security officers, we wanted to make sure we had adequate preparation for crises.

The crises, of course, that everybody was interested in were of two kinds. One was the hostage taking incident. There had been individual cases of hostage taking of American diplomats in the 1970s and then the hostage taking of our embassy in Tehran in 1979 and that phenomenon continued into the 1980s as individual Americans were kidnapped in various parts of the world and held hostage. Almost all of the crisis planning tended to focus on that particular kind of incident. The other related to evacuation planning; how to get people out of a country if there is a serious deterioration of the situation either as a result of generalized violence and terrorism, or because of civil war and other kinds of hostilities.

The Department continues to put a great deal of emphasis on the former. Officers going to the field have to take a one or two day course in counter terrorism which is designed to get people to think through what they would do if they were taken hostage, getting people to be aware of their surroundings and how they would protect themselves so that they wouldn't be put at risk. All of that has been pretty good, although having gone through the training, and having observed much of the impact of much of this training on personnel of all agencies serving overseas, it appears that the training itself created very high levels of anxiety. People began to worry about whether they should carry their

American passport or any indication that they were American citizens. People devised all sorts of scenarios in their own minds about how they could present themselves as Canadians, etc. This is not really a very helpful way for American diplomats to think about themselves. The real tension here is how do you give people useful advice without spooking them and frightening them about the world in which they live. As a society, we are enormously concerned about risk and how to avoid it. It was only in the early 90s that we began to define the role of crisis preparation in terms of risk management rather than risk avoidance. I think throughout the '70s and into the '80s the strategy of the Department was to develop a whole series of ways to avoid risk altogether. Of course, life is a pretty risky business, particularly in the Foreign Service.

The other aspect of crisis management, however, was how to organize an embassy in the face of sustained societal violence. That leads in some ways into the issue of relationships within our embassies. Who has responsibility for what? We learned as a result of the burning of our embassy in Islamabad, for example, where we were lucky there was not an enormous loss of life, that there were not sufficiently clear hierarchies of command and control. Both the ambassador and the DCM during that particular event were outside the embassy when it was surrounded. So, the question immediately arose of who was in charge inside. There was no clear guidance in the embassy's own planning mechanism.

One of the things we learned was that you must have a defined and accepted hierarchy. It is all very well to write it down, but everyone must agree that you have the right list of people, and that to some degree that is personality-driven. If you have a number three that people regard as a hopeless incompetent, who would have difficulty providing leadership, you may want to make the defense attaché number three or the security officer, both of whom have aspirations to manage crises under conditions of violence. But, it is very important to do this in advance. I found that there was often a great deal of tension around this issue.

Everybody knew the ambassador was in charge and accepted that the DCM was the ambassador's alter ego for these purposes and many others, but below that there was no consensus among agencies as to who is the most important. There was the question of who was going to command the Marines. Well, the security officer says, "That's my job, subject to guidance from the ambassador and DCM." But, if the ambassador or DCM are not there, who is going to make those decisions. The defense attaché invariably says, "Well, I'm a senior sailor or soldier and know about fighting wars and should have that responsibility." Frequently the CIA station chief, certainly in the early days in the '60s, tended to come out of an intelligence background and felt that he had a particular capability and often had autonomous communications which were very useful in certain kinds of crises. And that really goes to the heart of one of the challenges that any ambassador faces, which is to get a clear understanding with the components of the country team, however numerous they may be, as to what their respective roles are in missionwide crises. Every agency knows what its job is, what it is supposed to do. They have programs and they are busy carrying out those programs, usually in an efficient and appropriate way. But, when you have things that in fact impact on everybody, then there is less clarity as to how to operate collegially.

So, one of the great issues that continues to face us is the whole question of how to organize the country team for crisis management. The emergency action committee, as it is called, which is the country team augmented by a few additional people, becomes the central coordinating group. However, the work of the emergency action committee in sensitive situations, for example, in Kuwait and Nicaragua and Peru, can be constrained by the problems of classified information. If you have an emergency action committee which includes, for example, the CLO (community liaison officer), liaison with the families, the administrative officer for obvious resource management questions, etc., and the crisis which you are facing is based on very sensitive intelligence, sometimes of the highest degree of sensitivity, you find that your crisis team may not all be cleared to have access to the same information. The intelligence agencies are very cautious about discussing their intelligence in the presence of people who are not cleared to have it. That issue certainly can be an awkward one, at least I found that to be the case when we were considering the Sandero threats against our embassy in Peru. People wanted more information. They wanted to know how serious the threat was, how real it was, where it was, etc. What we could release even to the people in the mission was rather limited, and what we could release to the larger American community was even more constrained. So, one often gave people only the most hazy idea of the problem that they were supposed to be planning against. That was a real challenge.

In Kuwait and in Peru, we went through crisis exercises organized by the Office for Combating Terrorism in the Department. These were useful exercises because they exercised your country team, particularly if chiefs of mission participated. It was my observation when I was in Diplomatic Security that in a lot of embassies the chiefs of mission were interested in crisis planning but didn't have the time to do it and either pushed it down to the DCM or to the security officer. All of these exercises really depend on the willingness of the chief of mission to be an active participant. Then everybody knows that it is a real priority and that they must participate as well. There is no doubt that if an embassy practices it, thinks through many issues, including communication issues, [this is good]. One of the great problems is how to deal with the press, how to communicate with the American community. It isn't easy where there is a large American population to get hold of them. That brings you back often to the kinds of institutions and the relationships you have with the community. You can get a hold of the students at school; you can get a hold of longtime residents perhaps through the American Society or church, etc. But, you have to have the linkages out into those institutions to be able to do crisis management. We certainly found in Peru, where we had both regular warden meetings and exercises by the country team, that these linkages were very important. Although we never had an actual evacuation, we came perilously close on several occasions to having a declared drawdown of the mission.

During the hostage crisis of 1979, the Iranian hostage crisis, another set of problems of crisis preparation immediately showed itself at the Washington end, which was rather similar to the one I described in Peru, the question of the sensitivity of the information. For reasons which seemed sufficient at the time, no one in the Department below the level of the deputy secretary was authorized to work closely with the military as they

went forward with their planning of the rescue of the hostages in Tehran. The compartmentalization of information seriously affected the military's own planning, and the linkages with the civilian agencies were greatly constrained. One of the things that is clear in crisis management is that you have to have full confidence in all of the members of your team so that you can use their resources fully and that you should not, except in very special circumstances, compartmentalize information. You are not going to get an effective response if all the people who have responsibilities cannot operate on the same playing field of information.

Q: You wanted to make some comments about representation. Would you explain what representation means?

QUAINTON: Representation is the use of U.S. government resources, premises, funds, to entertain foreigners as a means of building relationships with them and ultimately influencing their attitudes toward the United States and its policies. Embassies receive an allocation of funds for representation purposes. All of those funds are distributed directly to the ambassador who can use them all or make such allocation of them to his or her subordinates as he believes appropriate. In my experience as a junior officer, ambassadors made some allocation even to the most junior officers. I could always get government funds to use for purposes of entertainment.

Representation was taken substantially more seriously 30 years ago than it is today. A good example was the first time I was inspected by the inspector general in 1962 in Sydney, Australia. Every officer in the consulate was instructed by the consul general to give a dinner for the inspectors with our best contacts. We were told the dinners didn't have to be large or elaborate, but we were to show off our representational capabilities and that of our spouses in our own homes. The inspectors solemnly went around from house to house, every night to a different house, always arriving promptly and always leaving exactly at 11:00, so no one could say they had shown favoritism to a junior or senior officer, etc. But, the whole assumption that this was an integral part of what every Foreign Service officer did was built into the system in the '60s and '70s.

After 1972, the year in which the Department changed the rules with regard to spouses and explicitly stated that spouses could not be compelled or required to take part in mission activities, including representation, representation was cut adrift from the mission's central purpose. This change came about partly because of past abuses by senior officers (and senior spouses) of their subordinates and their spouses, but also because of the societal changes that were taking place and the general emancipation of professional women in our society. That has meant that for a substantial number of officers, it is now difficult or uncongenial to organize entertainment in their residences, and while they may take people out to restaurants, the tradition of formal entertainment has largely gone except at the ambassadorial level. But, then the whole attitude to entertaining has changed.

That, of course, raises the question, if you don't do any representation, does the embassy lose anything. I think that is a hard question for people to ask, since we always assumed representation is an essential part of diplomacy, but you do have to at least acknowledge

that there is an issue here. I remember, in 1985 I suppose it was, when we were in Kuwait, the Department's representational budget was under pressure and chiefs of mission were instructed to cut back on the Fourth of July, the representational occasion par excellence where at every embassy chiefs of mission give a large reception for all the prominent citizens of government and society, foreign diplomats, American community, etc. I have a literal mind and thought the instruction was serious. So, instead of giving the traditional large reception for everybody in Kuwait, I instructed my staff to invite the chiefs of mission (There were 30 or 40.) and the secretary general of the foreign ministry and we gave them a glass of sparkling wine and an hors d'oeuvre and sent them on their way. I don't think much was lost in U.S.-Kuwaiti relations in point of fact, although we got a certain number of tongue-in-cheek messages from the Kuwaitis, who wrote me and said that they were sorry their invitation had been lost in the mail but they did want to wish me the very best on the occasion of our nation's independence.

This whole question of what you get from large receptions in particular where the ambassador stands in a line and shakes a hundred or a thousand hands really depends on the work that is being done by the chief of mission's subordinates on the lawn, in the living room, etc. Because if it is not used as an occasion to build relationships, then the money is largely wasted. I have to say that as I have observed this process over the years, many officers have tended to congregate with each other. Americans talked to Americans, foreigners talked to foreigners and the whole benefit of interaction seemed to be lost. I think this goes to a whole change in pattern of socialization and entertainment in the United States itself. So, the kinds of activities that were taken for granted 40 years ago in terms of formal, rather stereotyped entertainment are not much done and indeed the typical candidate for the Foreign Service comes out of a background where this kind of entertaining is often quite alien. So, the question of whether we get a bang for the buck out of representation seems to me to be an interesting one. I think a symbol of the decline of representation was the decision of my successor in Peru to saw the residence's dining room table in half. There had been a formal dining room table that sat 32 and was located in a very beautifully paneled room. The chairs were tall and high, suitable for liveried footmen to stand behind, etc. We did some formal entertaining in Peru in the mid 1990s. Peru was a very formal society. But, clearly not all ambassadors were comfortable with this and junior officers even less so. The use of representation remains one of the challenges of the future. If the Foreign Service is to perform its task of providing value-added through its knowledge of societies, of people and their languages, etc., one of the vehicles is social interaction. Unfortunately, the Foreign Service is decreasingly engaged in social interaction and that will ultimately impact on the quality of the work that they do and the services they can provide both to the policy community in Washington and to the resident American community.

Q: One talks about the gathering of information at these representational functions, but even more so is the fact that particularly the formal ones allow you to sort of have both the principal person and the spouse get to know each other so that in time of need you can call on them. You are not going to do that any other way.

QUAINTON: One of the perils of representation and one of the aspects of it that I

observed at a number of posts was the equating of success by a chief of mission with the level of attendance at his or her functions. I think to make that linkage is something to be avoided, but it certainly was easy to do. I remember in Pakistan in the aftermath of the 1965 war, we celebrated the national day in February, on Presidents' Day, because it was a nicer time of year than the sweltering heat of the summer. No senior Pakistani official came at all, and the chargé sent a very long cable describing the state of U.S. relations on the basis of who had not come to the national day party. Conversely, when on the Fourth of July, 1983, it was a matter of some note that Commandante Borge, minister of interior and one of the three founder members of the FSLN, came to my national day reception in Managua. That was seen as symbolically important. We didn't have a long discussion, but he was persuaded to give a toast to the American people, if not to the American government with which he was in some disagreement. When in Peru, at my very first Fourth of July, the foreign minister refused to come because of a protocol lapse. It was not of my making, but we had sent printed invitations to ministers and officials and through the receiving line came the secretary general of the foreign ministry, the senior career officer, who said that he was sorry but the minister had not come because we had insulted him by not sending him a diplomatic note requesting his attendance but instead had sent him an invitation like anybody else. I said that we were very sorry about that, but these things do happen. So, representation can do you harm as well as good, particularly if you forget somebody or don't invite the right people. So, an ambassador has to think just exactly who he wants to entertain because it may well be that he can make enemies by his failure to invite certain people or by including certain people in a mixture with others. It is not necessarily a sure fire way to promote U.S. interests if it is not done with some care and attention to detail.

Q: The final topic on this list was relations with other agencies.

QUAINTON: As I look back, any chief of mission in any post but the very smallest is faced with the task of integrating the work of different agencies of the U.S. government into the overall mission, the bilateral mission between the United State and the host government. In the third world, the agencies involved in most embassies tended to be few: the Agency for International Development, with its development program; the U.S. Information Agency designed to promote American values and cultural exchanges and information; the U.S. military represented either by a defense attaché and/or by a military assistance mission; and, of course, in many areas of the world the Central Intelligence Agency, particularly during the Cold War. It was only in the mega embassies - London, Rome, Paris - that you had the challenge of integrating the law enforcement agencies, for example. As a matter of fact, in Mexico, London, and Paris, there are more than 30 U.S. government agencies represented. The problems of coordination there are different from the first kind of situation, and I will come back to the mega embassy problems although I only served in one such embassy.

What grew up in several countries in which I served, Pakistan, India, Nepal, was that two agency heads often had as much influence as the ambassador, himself. The AID directors in Pakistan and India had enormous resources. In the case of India in 1966, the U.S. government resource transfer to India was just over a billion dollars, an enormous amount

of money. Therefore the AID director in India and Pakistan could have immediate access to the highest levels of the government. Certainly as easy access to the highest levels as the chief of mission had.

In other places where I served, without going into specifics, the station chief had access to the head of state, again a very privileged kind of access, in part because of the sensitivity of the programs that were jointly being carried out with the host government, but also because many heads of government liked the sense of confidentiality, of secrecy, of clandestinity which goes with intelligence operations. If one is not very careful, the chief of mission will find that all the heavy lifting at the post with the highest levels of government, from the head of state on down, is being done by other people and not himself. So, the challenge is how to make sure in the relatively limited environment of where there are only five or six agencies that you are fully informed of what is going on and are not blind-sided or having someone making autonomous policy.

I often thought in South Asia that the AID directors were laws unto themselves. I certainly found as a newly minted DCM in 1973, going to Kathmandu with no training whatsoever, that interagency relations were the single biggest problem that I had. I quickly learned of the power of other agencies, notwithstanding the fact that I was ostensibly the ambassador's alter ego, when I was approached by the regional security officer who said to me as DCM that I ought to insist that everybody wear identification badges. We had identification badges made and they had been issued to everybody, but not everyone wore them. So, I instructed the Marine security guards to let no one come in who did not have their badge. Practically the first person to walk in without his badge was the AID director coming for a country team meeting. His office was across town. He said, "You can't tell me to wear my badge and if you do I shall not come back and the ambassador will be very upset." Well, it was quite clear that we would have to make an exception for the AID director. He was the most senior officer at post. He was senior to the ambassador in point of fact in Foreign Service rank. He took that seniority very seriously and flexed his muscles when it came to making sure that his views were not only understood in the mission but beyond.

I had comparable problems at several posts thereafter with - well, not problems of insubordination if you want to call it that, although I did have one such problem with a representative of the Central Intelligence Agency. But, to my chagrin, I had two station chiefs who worked for me who were thrown out by the host government for improper activities about which I had no knowledge. It is a very nasty shock for a chief of mission to discover that an agency head is being asked to leave by the host government for things that were going on about which one had not been fully informed. Well, there are all sorts of rules for these things. Station chiefs and others are required to keep ambassadors informed, and AID directors are expected to keep ambassadors informed as well. Whether they do or not is, I think, a function of a variety of things: the personality of the agency head, the personality of the ambassador, the sensitivity of the information or the program, and whether there is some kind of competition going on internally. I had an experience in one country where a station chief came to see me and said there was going to be a special team coming to visit. I said, "Fine. Tell me what the team is

going to do.” He said, “No, I can’t.” I said, “Well, then the team can’t come.” He said, “I don’t think you want to take that position, Mr. Ambassador.” I said, “Oh, yes I do. I really must know when people come into country what they are doing.” We sparred on this and I stuck to my guns. He came back and said, “You know, I have to tell you that if you persist in this wayward position, the director will call Dr. Kissinger and you will get an instruction on the subject.” I said, “Oh, that is pretty high level stuff here.” So, I went away for a while and thought about it and tried to imagine what could be going on in this particular post that would engage the director and Secretary of State. I came up with an idea and called the station chief back. I said, “Is it such-and-such? Is that what they are coming for?” He looked absolutely stunned and said, “How did you know? I didn’t tell you. I will be crucified back home if I told you about this particular operation.” I thought, what a funny way to run a railroad. It was quite clear that he was right that if I had tried to take this issue to the very top I would have been told to mind my own business, since the operation did not affect the bilateral relations with the country in which I was serving.

This question of managing relationships with people who have programs and money and power is, I think, the biggest single challenge that ambassadors have. The easiest relationship to manage is usually with the military. The military are, one might say, good soldiers. They have a very strong internal discipline about working for civilian authority. It carries down to every attaché and military mission chief, and they, in my experience, always went out of their way to keep me informed of what they were doing. At the same time they were also keeping a CINC or a headquarters element informed. But, they saw their relationship as supportive, whereas I think both in terms of the intelligence community and the AID, while they would have bowed in the direction of being part of a larger U.S. foreign policy effort, they really saw themselves as being very autonomous in what they did and whom they took instructions from.

When you get to the larger embassies which have 15, 20, 25, 30 agencies, you have a different set of issues. When I was in the counterterrorism business in the early 80s, I traveled to almost all of our major embassies, partly because there was a G7 initiative on terrorism that took me to those capitals. It was interesting that in Rome, Paris, and London, many of the agencies could not be accommodated in the chancery itself and so were relegated to annexes. Sometimes there were multiple annexes in which the FBI, Customs, Immigration, FAA, etc. would be housed. If they were lucky they were invited once a month to a large all embassy staff meeting. They were not part of the country team because they couldn’t all sit around one table. There was a real pecking order of power which had nothing much to do with programs of the agencies but their location and the perception of the chief of mission about the relative importance of those activities. So, in Rome, Paris, London, or Tokyo the country team was composed in a very traditional way of the embassy counselors, DCM, station chief, USIA director, military attachés, but all the other cats and dogs were left to their own devices and didn’t feel part of the team at all. When I used to visit them they were always surprised that someone from the State Department could even find them let alone take an interest in what they were doing. I think that problem has become more acute in the sense that the role of these agencies has become more important. Certainly the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration have grown and keeping them part of a country team, making them core members,

becomes something that is very important. In Peru, the DEA chief was very much a core member of the country team and came to all the meetings of the country team and all the committees of the country team, whether the emergency action committee, the housing committee, the counternarcotics committee, etc.

But, as the proliferation of agencies has taken place, the managing of relationships has become more difficult for a chief of mission. It is aggravated by a trend that has accelerated in the last decade which is autonomous communications. When I joined the Foreign Service in 1959 and right up until the mid-1980s, there were only two communications systems in and out of American embassies and all messages, classified and unclassified, went over those two systems - the State Department system, and the CIA's system. But there were no others. That is no longer the case. Each agency has its own system, AID, USIA, DEA, etc., all communicating autonomously back to their headquarters on their own Internet connections or on their own classified modems, or whatever. So, the central use of the State Department facilities has tremendously eroded, and, as a result, the ambassador's control over information has eroded.

Until the mid-'80s, it was theoretically possible for the ambassador to see every piece of paper that went in and out of his mission. It is not even theoretically possible now because in many cases it isn't all pieces of paper. It may be direct autonomous online communications. So, managing interagency relationships becomes increasingly critical to the success of the work of the chief of mission. It is no longer possible to operate with just the core country team of traditional Foreign Service section chiefs and a few privileged agencies. The network has to be widened. I certainly encountered this problem for the first time in Peru where there were more agencies than at any other post in which I had served. The others were rather small having rather traditional structures.

One of the ways I found I could get after this problem, and I learned by trial and error, because there is no serious training given to chiefs of mission, was to try to organize off-sites which brought all agency heads together for one day or two days of discussion about mission goals and objectives. You could make it as formal or informal as you liked, but the sense that every agency was part of a larger strategy and that they got to know what that strategy was and to participate in defining the strategy, built collegiality. I had considerable success in Peru with off-sites of this kind.

Q: You might mention what an off-site is.

QUAINTON: Well, a meeting away from the embassy building. Theoretically, they could take place in the building where one does the principal work, in a conference room, for example. But, more typically, an off-site is at a location away from the embassy, usually with an informal work environment where people socialize as well as think and work together. The desired result is a corporate identity through interaction. I found that also worked very well, both in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and as director general, where I had off-sites, with my senior staff. But, in DS or the DG's office, you have people who all work for the same institution; they are all State Department officials, and they already start by thinking in the same way, although they may not all be on board for

a particular strategy. When you are dealing with 10, 12, 15 agencies they are basically likely to be ill-informed about what others do. They know what they do, what their mission is, and what their objectives are, but they may not be informed about the larger strategy that is being pursued by the ambassador at the direction of the President and Secretary of State, and they don't have any ownership of that strategy. So, one of the things I did, in Peru particularly, was to get together at least once a year away from the embassy to think through what we were up to. It wasn't necessary to do that for example in the Central African Republic where there were only seven Americans. We saw each other every day and didn't have the same kind of problems. But, when in an embassy as large as Lima, which had 200 direct hire Americans, the problems of interagency coordination were magnified.

Q: Well, Tony, we have run out of topics I think. I will put at the end here that if anything occurs to you when you get the draft of this, please include it, because this is very useful particularly this last part which we can use at some point to move down to ambassadorial training.

QUAINTON: Yes. I am sure as I go over the chronology there will be all sorts of events and incidents that have not been commented on.

Q: Absolutely, more is better. Great.

End of interview