Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
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Information Series

YALE RICHMOND

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

US military buildup

Transferred to USIA – 1953

Vientiane, Laos; USIA, Public Affairs Officer 1954-1956
- Environment
- Nation building
- Programs
- Security
- Military survey teams
- AID Mission
- Vietnamese

Harvard University Summer School 1956

Columbia University; East European History and Polish 1956-1957

Warsaw, Poland; Cultural Attaché (State Dept.) 1958-1961
- USIA Program
- Exchange programs
- Soviets
- Soviet troops
- Relations with Poles
- Polish United Workers Party
- Polish role in the Holocaust
- American writers and lecturers
- Vietnam

Vienna, Austria; Special Projects Officer 1961-1963
- Support for USIA posts in East Europe and USSR
- Photo lab
- Assisting the US press
- Facilities
- Propaganda war
- Soviets
- Exhibits
- Environment
- Romania
- Austria
- CIA
- Soviet Union

State Department; Supervisor, Exchange Program 1963-1966
- Polish students
- Security screenings

Visa process
Programs
Defections
Soviet defector
Programs
Soviet visitors

State Department, FSI; Russian language studies 1966-1967

Moscow, Soviet Union; Counselor for Public Affairs 1967-1969
Vietnam
Environment
American press
Travel
Exchange programs
US jazz programs
Social life
Security
Czechoslovakia invasion
Satellite programs
Language proficiency
Local staff
Stirrings of détente
Soviet cultural relations
Economy
Helsinki Accords
US Magazine "America"
Voice of America
Radio Liberty
Director Shakespeare policies

Senior Seminar 1969-1970

Washington, D.C.; USIA, Policy Officer for Europe 1970-1971

State Department; Deputy Director, Soviet Union & E. Europe 1971-1978

Washington, D. C.; USIA, Deputy Asst. Director for Europe 1978-1980
Exchange Programs
China Policy
Opening to the Soviet Union
KGB
Albania
East Germany
Former communist bloc programs

INTERVIEW

Q: Today is June 9, 2003. This is an interview with Yale Richmond. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Do you go by Yale?

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: How did you get the name Yale?

RICHMOND: It's a long story. I'm of Jewish origin and the name in Hebrew is Yoel, which in English is Joel, but my parents, both of them being immigrants, wanted to sound more Anglo and they changed Yoel and Joel to Yale, unfortunately for me.

Q: I don't know if you ever run across Princeton Lyman.

RICHMOND: Yes, and there was a Harvard Wetherbee in the State Department, too.

Q: Princeton Lyman's family came from Eastern Europe, Jewish origin. They took a look around and named his sons Yale, Princeton, Harvard, Stanford, and then Clinton.

When were you born?

RICHMOND: I was born in Boston in 1923.

Q: Could you tell me a little about the background of your father's family and then your mother's family?

RICHMOND: My father came from a place in Russia which used to be called Bessarabia and is now the Republic of Moldova. His family were rather upper middle class people considering the situation there. His father was a land surveyor and a steward on a large estate owned by an absentee landlord. So my father grew up in a very rich agricultural area. When he became 17 and eligible for the Russian draft, which is 15 years, he quickly exited. He came to the United States in 1910.

My mother's family comes from a place a little further north in what is a historic Polish province of Volhynia, but when she was born there, it was part of Russia. Poland had been partitioned at the end of the 18th century. Her family were all blacksmiths on both sides, a very important occupation in an agricultural society, not just putting shoes on horses but repairing metal farm implements. Her family came to the United States when she was 9 and she went to a few years of elementary school and then went into a sweatshop and worked there until she married my father.

Q: Where was she working?

RICHMOND: I don't know, but they lived in East Boston, across the river where the Logan Airport now is. In those days, it was mixed area of old Yankee families, Irish immigrants, and Jewish immigrants. Then it became Italian. Today it's largely Hispanic.

Q: When your father got to the United States, it was 1910…

RICHMOND: He worked for a year in New York City as a plumber's assistant but being a farm boy he didn't like New York City and he went to work on a farm in southern New Jersey. There was a Jewish colony there funded by a wealthy French philanthropist named Baron de Hirsch, who believed that Jews should return to the land, which happened generations later in Israel. My father went down there and worked on a farm for a year and was not happy with that either for some reason. I think the farmer wanted him to marry one of his daughters and my father didn't want that. So he went to Boston, where he had relatives, and became a clothing cutter, a very skilled occupation in the clothing industry where you cut up the fabric for suits and overcoats. In 1917, he was drafted into the army and spent a year in the army at Camp Upton on Long Island and then married my mother and had 3 children.

Q: By 1923, when you were born, you were living in East Boston?

RICHMOND: No, we were living in a place called Beachmont, which is just at the start of Revere Beach near the Suffolk Downs racetrack. It's right on the beach. There is a wonderful, beautiful beach, Revere Beach, which before the Depression was a rival of Atlantic City as a resort and there is a big hill there called Beachmont. My family and all my cousins lived there, too.

Q: How long did you live there?

RICHMOND: I lived there only a couple of years. It was really one block from the ocean and we all suffered from colds and the grippe. It was very damp in the wintertime. Then we moved to Roxbury, which at that time was a very lovely middle class neighborhood just adjacent to Franklin Park, the municipal park in Boston. That's where I grew up and went to high school and started college.

Q: What was family life like as you grew up?

RICHMOND: It was very communal in accordance with the traditions of immigrants from that part of the world, from Russia and Eastern Europe. It was one big kibbutz. We socialized mostly with our relatives, of whom there were many sisters and cousins and aunts. We saw them regularly on weekends. We fraternized with them. We celebrated holidays together. We went to their weddings and bar mitzvahs and so forth. It was all largely familial.

Q: Where did your family fit in in the Jewish spectrum of religion?

RICHMOND: My father had a thorough religious upbringing. He could recite parts of the Torah by heart. But when he came to the United States, he gave it up altogether. He always told me that there were 3 classes of fakers in the world: rabbis, doctors, and automobile mechanics. My mother had a similar upbringing. Her father was a man who took care of the synagogue. He taught young boys their Hebrew lessons. He officiated. He wasn't a rabbi, but he was a sexton perhaps. He was a Melamed. That's a Hebrew teacher, a teacher. And that's what my mother's father was and she grew up in a very strict household, very strict Orthodox. When she got married, she left it. She had had enough of it. We celebrated the major holidays. I was confirmed along with my brother. But we didn't go to the synagogue. We kept a kosher house and that was about it.

Q: Where did your family fit in in politics during the late '20s/early '30s?

RICHMOND: My father was a firm follower of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He would have voted for him no matter what happened. They were Democrats and still are.

Q: How about the rest of the family? Was this a situation where people would get around the table and argue like hell?

RICHMOND: We argued but not like hell. One branch of the family became very well to do, very successful in business. They founded a glass company. They started off by walking the streets of Boston with panes of glass on their back and every time they saw a broken window they would go up and ring the bell and say, "We'll fix the window for you." That became the largest independent glass distributor in New England today. It's called Karas & Karas Glass Company.

Q: Where you stand is where you get your paycheck, I guess.

How about reading and things like this? Were you a reader as a kid?

RICHMOND: I was a reader. I was also always a sickly child, although I outlived all my contemporaries. My mother was a great reader and she had shelves and shelves of books. Whenever I was out with what they called the "grippe" in those days, I would sit home and read.

Q: What were you reading?

RICHMOND: Walter Scott, De Maupassant translated into English, classics mostly.

Q: Did the outside world intrude much? Were you following events? You were old enough to feel the Depression. How did that hit you all?

RICHMOND: Very much. My father had jobs during the whole Depression. We did not suffer. He had a job as a clothing cutter and he never was out of work. He brought home $50 a week on which we could live and eat comfortably, but we watched our pennies and nickels and dimes. I worked, I sold newspapers as a boy in high school. I delivered the "Boston Herald Traveler" and I sold the now defunct "Boston Transcript" down on the corner of Arlington Street and Beacon Street where the "Atlantic Monthly" now has its offices. A nice neighborhood.

Q: What sort of subjects were you interested in?

RICHMOND: I was supposed to go to Boston Latin School. I was in a rapid advancement program which was a program in elementary school for gifted and talented children and we did 3 years in 2. I was supposed to go to Boston Latin and my pediatrician advised against it. He thought it would be too much of a strain on me. My mother listened to him rather than to the teachers. So I went to Roxbury Memorial High School. I liked English very much because I had several good English teachers. I made up my mind I wanted to be an English teacher. When the time came for college, I went to Boston College, a Jesuit school, mainly because it was so inexpensive. A semester's tuition was $125 and we could afford that.

Q: Going back to elementary and high school, do any subjects or teachers stick out in your mind that were influential?

RICHMOND: Yes, my English teacher, Paul J. Thayer. I remember him very well. And I had 4 years of Latin. I remember some of my Latin teachers. But it was mainly the English teachers and my French teacher, whom we called Spike Hennessy because he was bald as a billiard ball.

Q: How did you find the school at that point? Boston was and maybe still is renowned for having all these ethnic splits. How did being Jewish in Boston work for you?

RICHMOND: Boston had ethnic enclaves in those days and still has some. There were Jewish districts. A large chunk of Boston was Jewish. When Franklin D. Roosevelt came through in 1932 campaigning, I remember seeing him. He came by cavalcade in an open car right through that Jewish district. That was one of his strongholds. The rest of the city was largely Irish but in the surrounding communities there were Italian enclaves, a Polish, a large Albanian community for some reason, and an old Black community. They didn't intermix with each other.

Q: Were there "no go" areas, areas that weren't as friendly as others?

RICHMOND: Yes. You knew there were certain areas you didn't go into if you wanted not to get beaten up.

Q: How about your friends? Were they mainly family?

RICHMOND: They were school friends.

Q: How was your school ethnic-wise?

RICHMOND: The school was about 1/3 Jewish, 1/3 Irish, and 1/3 Black. In those days, you had the 2 track system. You had to elect a commercial course or a college course. We also had the printing course for the city of Boston, so anyone who wanted to be a printer came to our school.

Q: How did this fall out? One always thinks of the Jewish kids doing better. Did this work that way?

RICHMOND: In the college course section, almost all the kids were Jews – not all but most of them were Jews. They were driven by their parents. First of all, you had a long tradition of study, people of the Book. My father and all of his contemporaries went to Hebrew schools until they were 15 or 16. There is a long tradition of study and parents just automatically expected that their children would study and go on to be something in the professions.

Q: You were pointed towards college?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, I always knew that I was going to go to college and my brother also. But not my sister. She ended up working in Jordan Marsh as a sales girl in the picture department. She knew she was not going to college.

Q: How old was your sister compared to you?

RICHMOND: Three years older. I have a brother 3 years younger. He's a lawyer today in Boston.

Q: How did your sister feel about this? Did you pick up any vibes?

RICHMOND: No. Very few girls went to college in those days. In my large extended family, only 2 girls of my contemporaries went to college. Two of my girl cousins went to college.

Q: When you went to Boston College, it's run by Jesuits… Was this a problem?

RICHMOND: It was not a problem. There were only 4 Jews in my class of about 400 and 2 of them went on to be doctors and one became a sociologist and I became a Foreign Service Officer. I never encountered any hostility for being a Jew, but you definitely felt you were an outsider because before every class, the lecturer, whether it was a priest or a layman, would kneel down and recite the Lord's Prayer or Our Father. I learned it in French. I can still recite it in French.

Q: At one time I found I could do practically any entire Catholic Mass in Italian when I was in Naples, I went so often.

How about the Jesuit teaching? How did that fit into your aspirations?

RICHMOND: Boston College today is really a university. Like the Jesuits, it's a very liberal place within the spectrum of Catholicism. But in those days, it was not. It was very conservative. I think it was just really a continuation of high school. The teachers lectured. You listened and you gave it back in the exams. There was very little discussion. It was a rather traditional teaching system in those days, the early 1940s.

Q: The catholic diocese of Boston has always been one of the very Irish, very conservative, hard-line aspects of Catholicism. The priest was God and that's it and don't question it.

RICHMOND: Except for the Jesuits today.

Q: Did you get any feel of the Jesuits fighting the system?

RICHMOND: Not in those years, no, not at all. They went along with Cardinal O'Connor, who lived in the St. John's Seminary grounds adjacent to Boston College campus. Cardinal Law, the outgoing cardinal, was not very happy with the Jesuits at Boston College because they were too liberal.

Q: When you were at Boston College, how about the outside world? You were there from when to when?

RICHMOND: '39 to '43.

Q: Even before you went to high school, how aware were you of the plight of the Jews in Germany?

RICHMOND: Only to the extent that there were reports in the press of persecutions but we had no idea at all that there was a Holocaust, that the Jews were being exterminated.

Q: That really hadn't happened yet.

RICHMOND: We followed that closely.

Q: Kristallnacht and all that. Was Boston a recipient of German refugees?

RICHMOND: We met some. I was at one point engaged to marry a girl from such a family. We broke the engagement, but I was on the verge of marrying a girl whose father had been a very wealthy owner of a textile plant in Meiningen in what became the Soviet zone of Germany. I was very much aware of that.

Q: At college, the war was on. This must have been a major subject of interest.

RICHMOND: It was, and the Jesuits advised us all to switch to science. I changed my major from English to physics and math and got a bachelor of science, which helped me later on in my career.

Q: What was the rationale for science?

RICHMOND: They thought it would be useful in the war effort, and it was because a lot of us went into the army directly with commissions in various fields related to science.

Q: Was there an ROTC?

RICHMOND: No. This was a commuter school and most of the kids got on the streetcar and went home at night.

Q: So for the family it was a continuation of your early life?

RICHMOND: Right. We finished college in 3 ½ years. In the last 2 years, they had an accelerated program. We had a summer semester built in there, so we finished in 3 ½ years. The day after I received my degree, I went into the army.

Q: You mentioned you sold newspapers. What else did you do for jobs?

RICHMOND: I sold magazines one summer job. I worked in the main post office in South Station during the Christmas vacations sorting mail. I delivered orders for grocery stores on Saturdays. That's about it.

Q: In 1943, you went right into the army. What did you do?

RICHMOND: In my junior year, I joined – because I was a physics and math major – something called the Electronics Training Group, which was supposed to lead to radar work. We were supposed to get commissions when we went in as second lieutenants, but I flunked the physical because of my bad eyes and instead of going in as a second lieutenant, I went in as a private to the Signal Corps and went through basic training at Camp Edison, New Jersey, which was the summer home of Woodrow Wilson when he

was governor of New Jersey right on the beach at Sea Girt, New Jersey. Then I went into radio repair school. Then the army came up with a brilliant program to keep colleges and universities open during the war. There was a Colonel Byroade, who later became an assistant secretary of Army, and he thought that we ought to have some program to keep the flow of engineers and doctors and humanists going during the war so there wouldn't be a 4 year gap. I was selected for that program and was given my choice of foreign languages or premed or engineering. I took the engineering because I already had the physics and math. It was a breeze for me. They sent me to City College of New York, which in those days was a great institution that produced many Nobel Prize winners. There I went through about ¾ of the electrical engineering program. We were supposed to be going to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, which nobody had ever heard of, but by then they didn't need us at Oak Ridge and I went again back to radio repair school.

Q: So where was radio repair school?

RICHMOND: At Camp Crowder, Missouri, which we called "Camp Crowded." After the war when I still didn't know what I wanted to do when I grew up, I figured I might as well finish the engineering course and I went to Syracuse University for a year and got a bachelor of electrical engineering magna cum laude and had 3 good job offers, one of them from General Electric. But I was restless. I hadn't been overseas and I thought I had missed something. So I saw on the bulletin board one day that the War Department was looking for 100 young men and women, college graduates, to go to Germany to work in military government as interns. In those days under the Morgenthau Plan they were planning a 25 year occupation of Germany and they thought they ought to have the second generation of people in line. So I said, "Here's my chance to go to Germany and have fun for a couple of years." I signed up, was accepted, and went to Germany for 2 years, and worked in military government. And then when the State Department took over the whole German operation in 1949 after the Federal Republic of Germany was established, I was interviewed by a panel and because I had learned to speak fluent German by then because I answered all the right questions on the interview, and because I had somehow managed to stay out of trouble during the occupation, I became a Foreign Service Staff officer and eventually a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: You were in Germany as an intern from when to when?

RICHMOND: I arrived in the summer of 1947. I went first to Berlin for a month of orientation on the Four Power occupation system. Then I went to Bavaria, where I served for the remaining 2 years. It was in the summer of '49 that I became a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Where were you in Bavaria?

RICHMOND: All over. I started off in Rosenheim in Oberbayern in the foothills of the Alps learning about military government on the county and city level. Then I went to Freising, a town just northeast of Munich, where I was executive officer in a large district

of 5 or 6 counties. Then I got my own county. I was the military government officer in the second year at Wasserburg am Inn, an old medieval city on the Inn River between Rosenheim and Passau. There I was military governor for one year. We didn't have any authority over Germans in those years, but the German police and legal authorities could not touch foreigners or displaced persons and I had 2 Displaced Persons camps in the county, so that's why I was there. Then HICOG took over.

Q: By this time the whole idea of a 25 year occupation was sort of passé, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes. The Cold War had already started and we realized that Germany had better be an ally rather than an adversary and the process began to produce an independent Germany which could be democratic and liberal in the political sense of the word which would be integrated into a unifying Europe which was just then emerging. So what we did on the county level was work on the democratization program which we called the reorientation program. What it consisted of mainly was encouraging town meetings. The Germans had never had the tradition of a town meeting and we encouraged them to hold them where citizens could meet in a local gasthaus and as they sat there drinking their beer they would question their elected officials as in a traditional New England town meeting. That caught hold. That was a very interesting program. We also had a large film program showing American documentary films that had been dubbed in German. We had a projectionist who drove around in a jeep and showed films every night in gasthaus all around the county, films about the U.S. and the rest of the world and the new Europe that was emerging.

Q: I might mention that a gasthaus was a restaurant/beer place which was really the center of most of these activities in these small places where people went to the same table and sat around for generations. If you wanted to touch the nerve of the German folk out in the country, that's where you went.

RICHMOND: It's like the pub in England or Ireland.

Q: You were there in '48 when the Berlin airlift went on. How was this viewed? Was there a feeling that we were pretty close to war?

RICHMOND: That was only about 3 years after the end of the war. The Germans were apprehensive. Berlin was always a flashpoint and there was always the fear that something could happen at one of those checkpoints. If somebody shot a few rounds of fire, you might have started World War III. But the Germans were very apprehensive about that. Most of them thought that you could never save Berlin through an airlift. I remember talking to a German who had been in the Luftwaffe during the war and he said, "You'll never be able to supply the city of Berlin by air." But we did it, we and the British and the French to a lesser extent.

Q: It was quite an effort. I guess the Germans had tried to save their army at Stalingrad with an airlift which had enemy opposition but it didn't come close.

What was your feeling towards working in Germany so shortly after the war and coming from Jewish origin?

RICHMOND: I didn't advertise the fact that I was Jewish but I didn't deny it when it came up. I tried to separate my personal feelings from my job. Of course, in those days, we still didn't know the extent of the Holocaust. That was slowly emerging. All I had to go by was the Stars and Stripes newspaper, radio broadcasts of the Armed Forces Network and the Post Herald Tribune. The supply of information was accurate enough but it was rather limited. But wherever I was, I tried to keep the 2 things separate: my own views and the views of the government that I was representing.

Q: The elite military, the real fighting army, had gone home and the second group that was staying on was not always the cream of the crop of the military officers. Did you have that feeling?

RICHMOND: We had our share of carpetbaggers. But we also had career officers. The army in World War II was largely a civilian army. The top commanders were military men, West Point grads, but below that it was largely a civilian army. A lot of those people were former city administrators, lawyers, college professors, and many of those stayed on and some stayed on because it was comfortable living. Financially, it was lucrative. We got free housing. We had access to the PX. You had cheap gas which was something like 10 cents a gallon. And you lived in Europe. You could travel. So it was nice. But when HICOG took over, they cleaned out a lot of the carpetbaggers. That's one of the first things they did. In Bavaria, our commissioner for Bavaria was George N. Schuster, a very prominent Catholic layman who had been editor of Commonweal magazine and president of Hunter College in New York, the city college for girls. And he cleaned out some of that dead wood. Then they decided to get Foreign Service officers assigned to those jobs and gradually the whole personnel changed.

Q: This was during the period when the Foreign Service was taking over these jobs, there would be a transition, and then the Germans would take over completely.

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: And you were sort of the buffer.

RICHMOND: I was a Kreis Resident Officer.

Q: Many in the Foreign Service came in… This was the incubator of the Cold War Foreign Service.

RICHMOND: And it was a very useful incubation period. That's where I learned all about European politics on the local, city, and county level. That helped me in every future assignment I ever had in the Foreign Service. I started off in Dinkelsbuehl, a big

tourist center, a Middle Ages city that history passed by because the railroad, when the railroad came to Germany it never went through there. Its fame rests largely on the Thirty Years War and then more recently modern tourism. I was there only a year, didn't accomplish much.

Q: What were you supposed to be doing?

RICHMOND: I was supposed to be the eyes and ears of the occupation, reporting on what was going on, encouraging democracy and working with local groups. I also had a military installation there. There was a Signal Corps unit up on top of a hill outside the town that was monitoring Soviet broadcasts from the east. That was probably the reason I was stationed there. I had 3 counties, but I was in the one that had this military installation. After a year, I was transferred to another town that nobody ever heard of: Pfaffenhofen, which is halfway between Ingolstadt and Munich. That was the headquarters of the Signal Corps unit. Otherwise, they never would have had us there. I was there for a year. Then I went to Schweinfurt, the big ball bearing center of Europe that had been heavily bombed. That was my most interesting assignment. There, I had all the major parties across the political spectrum of Germany on the local level. The city was Social Democratic. The surrounding county was agrarian and Christian Social, the Conservative Party. They had a strong Communist Party in the city. They had the Liberal Party. And I was at the tender age of 27/28. I sat in this big office that had formerly been the office of the chief judge. I was the "Gouverneur," the "governor."

Q: Back when you were with the military, how did you find the Displaced Persons camps? These must have been a real problem. These were a bunch of people who were restive and were refugees sitting in the middle of Germany.

RICHMOND: It was a very difficult problem for us. What we wanted to do was to get them out of Germany as quickly as possible. They were just sitting there doing nothing and trying to support themselves with all kinds of black market activities, which was the real underground economy in Germany in those years. But the processing took time. They had to be cleared. You had to get countries willing to take them. Our task was to keep them quiet, settled, and get them out as quickly as possible.

Q: Did you have a problem as the in-between person between the German police authorities and the refugees? The refugees were out making a living as best they could, which had to be almost by nature illegal. The Germans sort of like police authority.

RICHMOND: We had no problem that I can recall with the Jewish displaced persons. In Pfaffenhofen, I had a displaced persons camps of Kalmyks, a Buddhist tribe of Russia who were exiled by Stalin.

Q: Many of them ended up in New Jersey. Did you get involved in that?

RICHMOND: No. Things were pretty quiet there.

Q: When I was consul general in Saigon, I had Naran Ibanchukoff, who came from that Kalmyk thing. He was a CIA officer working with me.

Here you are, a 27 year old governor. Germans move rather quickly into taking over things for themselves.

RICHMOND: Well, they had a denazificaiton program which initially was very strict and then became sort of a whitewash job. Eventually, everybody was denazified. Local government was given to them in 1947 and federal authority in 1949 although the United States still had some residual powers especially in Berlin, which continued to have a special status.

Q: How did you find you were able to operate? Were you an observer or a participant?

RICHMOND: I was mostly an observer and was called in only when there was something that demanded my attention. Because I spoke German by that time, I was often invited to speak at public meetings where people were debating the issues that were going on in Germany. I remember one particular meeting… I was invited by the local chamber of commerce to a debate on freedom of trade, which was a program we were pushing the German Bundestag to apply which would have ended the guild system. We had all these refugees from East Germany and Sudetenland, ethnic Germans, who came in with skills in business and commerce but weren't allowed to practice because they couldn't break into this guild system which required that you had to pass an exam to show your competence and they allowed only a certain number. If you had a certain number of butchers in a town, that was enough. You didn't need any more butchers. We tried to get them to have a freedom of trade system. I remember standing up there in front of all these businessmen arguing that this was going to be good for Germany, which it turned out to be. They eventually adopted this.

Q: Did you feel that the authorities were getting restive by having these Americans around?

RICHMOND: No, the Germans were very observant and respective of authority and I was still the representative of the Besatzungsmacht, the occupation power, and accorded all rights and privileges.

Q: I imagine, too, that when the airlift finally proved to work, did that change the atmosphere, did you get a feeling that the Germans were saying, "These guys are probably going to pull this off?"

RICHMOND: The Germans were very appreciative of all the assistance we gave them. We gave them a lot of economic aid, food aid. I remember going to many dedications of housing projects and buildings that had been put up with American aid and there was usually a plaque on the building, the stars and stripes shield of the United States saying,

"This building was erected with help from the American government." Also, there was an undercurrent of feeling that if the Americans weren't here, the Russians would be. So, the Germans looked upon us as the best they could do under the circumstances.

Q: In view of your later career in the Foreign Service, was there a network of Amerika hauser or not?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes. I opened a small one in Schweinfurt. In those days we had Amerika hauser in all the major cities. There was one in Stuttgart, in Nuremberg, in Munich, and I opened a small one in Schweinfurt, which was little more than a reading room where we had lectures and so forth.

Q: Were they taking?

RICHMOND: The Germans welcomed it. These were tough times and the Amerika Haus was always a good place, like any library, where you could go in and find a comfortable chair and good light and heat during the winter. You got a number of those people who came in just to get out of the cold and the rain. But you also had a lot of people, young students, who were interested in studying English, in listening to the lectures, the music concerts, the debates we had there. It was like a big community center.

Q: Did you get a feel that the younger generation were a different breed of cat than the older generation?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, definitely. They felt that they had not been responsible for the war, they were not guilty of the atrocities. The Germans had an expression: *kollektivshuld*, collective guilt, that they should not be included under that umbrella.

Q: Did you get a feeling that there were a lot of denunciations?

RICHMOND: No, I didn't experience that at all.

Q: I was wondering if people were saying, "Well, he was with the Tukaheinztins" or something like that.

RICHMOND: No, you get that in Eastern Europe, but you didn't get it so much in Germany.

Q: Schweinfurt. After all, we had bombed the hell out of it. Our raids on the ball bearing plants… We took a lot of losses there. What was the feeling towards Americans there?

RICHMOND: I encountered no hostility despite the tremendous damage there. We had a battalion of American troops there in what was called the Constabulary. Their mission was to patrol the border and be the first to trip wire in case of a Soviet invasion, which people were seriously considering. The Soviet army was just across the border a few

miles away. For that reason, the Germans were very happy to have us there.

When the Korean War broke out, the army changed a lot of things in its disposition of forces. I remember some top brass from Frankfurt came down to this little battalion of Constabulary which patrolled the border in jeeps and ordered them to get one of their companies up on the border tomorrow morning. They had to go up there and pitch their tents and they were right on our side of the border. They kept rotating. They had one company up on the border. That was to move the tripwire closer. In those days, everybody thought the Russians were on the verge of invading Western Europe, which was hogwash. The Russians had been seriously damaged in the war and they wanted to protect what they had, the territory in Central Europe that they had conquered, but they had no intention of starting another third world war.

Q: One of the major concerns was that the Communist Party seemed to have real clout and might take over particularly in France and Italy. How did you feel about the communists in Germany?

RICHMOND: In contrast with France and Italy where the Communist Party had been really strong largely because they had very effective city administrators. In the cities where they controlled the local government they were good, honest administrators. In Germany after the war, the communists never had a large following, particularly in Bavaria. The strongest parties were the conservative parties and the Social Democrats. In the city of Schweinfurt, that was also true. There was a small Communist Party of dedicated Marxists. I used to go to some of their meetings just to see what they were doing. They knew who I was. They knew I was in the audience, never gave me a hard time.

Q: What about Franz Josef Strauss? Was he a presence?

RICHMOND: He was just starting in. He had been appointed the burgermeister of a small town in the foothills of the Alps. He had not been a Nazi. When the American troops marched, they looked for people who were not Nazis. That got him his start. Then he went up to Munich on the state level.

Q: Did we get involved or were we concerned about the socialists? Socialism was not necessarily the regime we looked with great favor on.

RICHMOND: The German Social Democratic Party, the SPD, was going through a transition in those years. You had the old guard, like the British Labour Party, who were Marxists led by Kurt Shumacher and a much more moderate deputy, Ollendorf. Then you had a younger generation who was coming up. The party was gradually changing. In Schweinfurt, the mayor was a Social Democrat, but he was a lawyer, not a worker. A lot of people sincerely believed that that was the way to alleviate the social ills of Germany and other countries. On our program of domestic reforms within Germany, the Social Democrats were our strong supporters, and the Christian Democrats only lukewarm. On

foreign policy, it was just the other way around.

Q: When the Korean War came, did this change… There had been the coup in Czechoslovakia and that scared the bejesus out of everybody.

RICHMOND: It sure did, and refugees started coming across the border. All of Germany was very uptight about the whole thing. The coup in Czechoslovakia was not exactly a coup. Germany was also divided and everybody was thinking, "Well, if there could be a war in divided Korea, maybe there might be also be a war in divided Germany." There was a lot of apprehension about that.

Q: What sort of directions were you getting as this Kreis officer?

RICHMOND: Not enough. We had all kinds of publications and directives on what we should be doing. We had monthly meetings in Munich. But we were left largely on our own. I can't recall at any time – well, only once in Schweinfurt, George Schuster and my other boss came around to visit me, but that was the only time.

Q: Did you get any feeling about the Foreign Service then?

RICHMOND: When I was stationed in Munich for a year working on the exchange program, we were in the same building on the Ludwigstrasse with the Consulate General which at that time we were part of the Consulate General which at that time was the largest consulate general in the world. We were aware that the consulate general was in another part of the building but there was no interchange at all. We were there as the successors to military government and they were doing what consuls usually do. When I was in Stuttgart my last 2 years, it was quite different. We were integrated into the Consulate General. We were in the same building. We were the public affairs section of the Consulate General and we had a lot of contact with the political and economic sections.

Q: When you left Schweinfurt, is that when you went to Munich?

RICHMOND: I went to Munich for one year working on exchanges.

Q: What did that mean in those days?

RICHMOND: We had a huge exchange program with Germany that brought 13,000 or more Germans to the United States and to Western Europe. This included everything from high school students to college students to graduate students to professionals of all kinds, trade union leaders, government leaders, religious leaders, writers, artists, musicians, a huge program selecting people. We had joint German-American committees. I served on many of those committees. We had Germans as well as Americans doing the selection. They went to the U.S. for periods of anywhere from 90 days to one year for study and research.

Q: How did the selection process work?

RICHMOND: For the college and high school students, what eventually became Fulbright programs, they were selected on local levels with local committees. I served on some of those local committees when I was in Schweinfurt. Then they were selected by a state committee and the final selection where we had joint Americans and Germans making the selection.

Q: What sort of feedback were you getting on this program?

RICHMOND: In those days, it was too early to measure. I had the interesting experience of being in on the selection of high school students in Schweinfurt and being there a year later when they came back. Some of them had a marvelous experience and some of them went on to make careers in U.S. Studies. One of them eventually became a professor at a university but then immigrated to the United States. One of the girls came back and the first thing she did was to make a beeline for that American military battalion on the edge of town to find an American boyfriend. You had all kinds of reactions.

Q: You were in Schweinfurt from when to when?

RICHMOND: It was around ’50-’51.

Q: Then from Schweinfurt, you went where?

RICHMOND: Munich for one year.

Q: Was this concentrated on exchanges?

RICHMOND: Yes, exchanges over the whole state of Bavaria. And then we opened an office in northern Bavaria. It got too big to handle in Munich and we opened a HICOG office in Nuremberg for Franconia in northern Bavaria. I went there for a year where I was exchanges officer for all of northern Bavaria.

Q: HICOG stood for what?

RICHMOND: High Commission for Germany. OMGUS was Office of Military Government U.S.

Q: Where did you go? How was Munich in those days?

RICHMOND: Munich was reviving. It was doing rather well. The food was plentiful. The beer was great. There was a wonderful music scene there. I had an apartment that was literally a hundred yards from the opera house. I could go down there any night and sit in on any opera I wanted to, which was a marvelous experience.

Q: At this time you were unmarried?

RICHMOND: I was still single.

Q: Then you moved up to northern Bavaria in Nuremberg.

RICHMOND: The big headquarters of the Nazi movement.

Q: You were always looking around for hidden Nazis, weren't you?

RICHMOND: No, by that time that had died. We were interested in a reconstruction of Germany, the democratization program, and integrating Germany into European organizations.

Q: What was the feeling on how it was going?

RICHMOND: We thought it was going rather well. Of course, we were still there in a massive presence. The American officialdom was widespread and really massive. We had several thousand Americans in the country. Americans still out in the kreis resident officers were still resident in the major counties. We all felt that after we left we would see what would happen.

Q: Did you get any feel for the area of French occupation? Was it a different sort of circumstance?

RICHMOND: When I was in Stuttgart, we had Landwurtemburg under the consulate general in Stuttgart and that included the French zone of Baden and this capital in Freiburg. Things were rather quiet there. There wasn't any industry there to speak of. This was land that was east of the Rhine River and had been back and forth between Germany through the centuries. The French had a strong influence there. It was rather quiet and there wasn't much going on there. The French did not have the same kind of program we had to democratize Germany. They didn't oppose it but they didn't support it in any way.

Q: You were up in Nuremberg from when to when?

RICHMOND: I think '51-'52.

Q: That big stadium was still there, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: Yes, it was.

Q: Was this used for anything?

RICHMOND: Sports events. That's all.

Q: Any reference to Hutterzeit?

RICHMOND: No, they were trying to live that down.

Q: What were the politics of Nuremberg?

RICHMOND: Nuremberg was also socialist. Nuremberg had really heavy industry. It was an SPD town.

Q: So, about '52, you left?

RICHMOND: I went to Stuttgart in '52.

Q: But there was a different setup, wasn't it?

RICHMOND: We were an integral part of the consulate general. Ed Rice was our consul genera. He was an old China hand. When Senator McCarthy's henchmen swept through Germany leaving many wrecked careers in their wake, Ed Rice was very vulnerable. They left him alone for some reason. They never came to Stuttgart.

Q: This is the infamous tour of Cohn and Schine.

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: These were 2 rather reckless young staffers who went through and created absolute havoc.

RICHMOND: Pulled books out of libraries, held inquisitions, and wrecked a number of careers.

Q: Were you there at the time?

RICHMOND: They didn't come to Stuttgart, but I was there at the time they swept through Frankfurt and Munich.

Q: That was really the nadir off…

Do you know Frank Hopkins?

RICHMOND: Frank Hopkins was a Foreign Service officer who came in after the war. He was our public affairs officer in Stuttgart and then went to Australia. He had come from FSI, where he had been deputy director.

Q: Were you feeling McCarthyism? Were people beginning to look over their shoulders

and wonder what the hell was going on?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, everybody was wondering whether he or she would be vulnerable. Later on when I was a student at Columbia University studying Polish history, I was dating a girl who had leftist sympathies and I remember how I was wondering, are they going to bother me because I had dated this girl who was left of center?

Q: You were at Stuttgart until when?

RICHMOND: Until the spring of '54.

Q: How about the East Berlin riots of '53? Was that at a flashpoint?

RICHMOND: We were far away from it. We didn't get involved in that.

Q: Was there concern that this could lead to a bigger conflict?

RICHMOND: Some people thought so. I didn't.

Q: I was in Darmstadt in the air force as an enlisted man. We were confined to barracks. I think there was a concern that this might lead to a larger…

RICHMOND: You were in that area of central Germany which the military called the Fulda Gap. It was commonly believed that if the Soviets were going to invade Germany, they would come through there.

Q: What about the Soviet threat?

RICHMOND: We thought it was real. We were constantly given all kinds of briefing papers to show that the Soviet troops were here and there and everywhere and they were in an offensive mode, not a defensive deployment. There was a real fear that someday the Soviets might march over the border. And there was not much to stop them.

Q: But you were in a time when the American military really came back into Germany in a big way.

RICHMOND: Well, they were beefed up. The headquarters was just below Stuttgart, the headquarters of the army command for U.S. Military Command for Germany. There was a big military presence there, but it still didn't compare with what the Russians had on the other side of the border.

Q: Was the exchange program going through any changes while you were in Stuttgart? Were you seeing a different emphasis or was it just getting bigger?

RICHMOND: It was continuing to be big. After I left, it was reduced somewhat. I don't

know why. There is a book I have on it that I'm reading now: "A History of the Exchange Program in Germany" written… Did you interview Henry J. Kellermann? He ran the exchange program in the State Department for years and he wrote a history of it. He has statistics in that book on how the program gradually declined… Kellermann is dead, by the way. The State Department library has a copy of his book.

Q: By the time you were in Stuttgart, '54 or so, were you in the State Department? Had the job coalesced into a more line Foreign Service type job?

RICHMOND: But we were Foreign Service Staff. The Foreign Service officer, information officer, came later on when USIA was established and we were really integrated into the Foreign Service. At that time, we were Foreign Service Staff officers.

Q: So, in '54, whither?

RICHMOND: In '54, I was assigned to Laos. I had had 5 years of high school and college French, I was single, and healthy. I was assigned to Laos and arrived there a couple of months after the battle of Dien Bien Phu when the French agreed to withdraw, and the Geneva Conferences which set up and divided Vietnam and an independent Laos and Cambodia and Republic of Vietnam. I was there for 2 years of what later came to be called "nation building." We didn't know the term then, but that's what we did in Laos. We were involved in nation building.

Q: So you were there from '54 to '56?

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: Tell me about Laos when you arrived. What was it like?

RICHMOND: Laos was a buffer between Thailand and Vietnam and for the French in French Indochina. It was a very quiet place. There had been a war. There had been some battles there and some destroyed bridges and roads but the French were still there but steadily withdrawing and there were still French troops up in the north in the mountains around Luang Prabang. There was a French lycée. There was a Lao government and a Lao army which hadn't been paid for months. One of the first things Charlie Yost did – he was our first minister when he came in – was to get a check for two million dollars which we presented to the prime minister to pay the army so they wouldn't rebel. When I arrived, it was a 5 man mission for the whole country. I was number 5.

Q: Who were the others?

RICHMOND: The chargé d'affaires was Lloyd Michael Rives, who is now long retired. We called him Mike Rives. He's up in Boston. I bumped into him once by chance in San Francisco on the street. Mike Rives was there because he was practically bilingual in French. He had been raised in Paris or gone to a French school. He was bilingual. But he

was an FSO-6, which in those days was the lowest rank, which shows you how important Laos had been to the United States government. Then we had what later became AID. We had a woman named Nan McKay, who was the USOM representative. She was in charge of our economic assistance program as small as it was. Then we had Ted Tanen, the public affairs officer. I was his deputy. Then we had a vice consul, Ted Kobrin. He's living out in Bethesda. That was it. I was number 5.

My introduction to Laos was very interesting. I wrote about this in the Foreign Service Journal years ago. The first weekend I was there, I received 2 invitations to dinner on a Saturday night. One was from the minister of foreign affairs, who wanted to invite this new American in town to see who he was, dinner at his home. The other was an invitation to dinner from a French anthropologist who was one of the French experts on Laos. His wife was a Shan princess who spoke Lao. The Shan are related to the Lao people. Of course, I accepted the Frenchman's invitation because that was more interesting for me. Lucky I did because at the minister's home after the dinner when the guests were sitting in the living room, someone threw a hand grenade into the room – they didn't have screens there – and killed the minister and several of his guests. Had I accepted that invitation, I would not be here today.

Q: What was the political situation?

RICHMOND: Laos was nation building. Here was a country with about 2 million people. There was a royal capital up in the mountains of Luang Prabang, a beautiful little town, where the king lived when he was not in France taking the waters. And you had the administrative capital down in the Mekong River Valley where the French had set up an administrative center. That's where the government offices were. But the people were all very inexperienced. The minister of defense had been a sergeant in the French army and here he was minister of defense commanding an army. There was only one European trained doctor in the whole country, a Lao doctor, and he was the minister of public health but his specialty was gynecology because that was fashionable when he studied in France. And the rest of the officials, some of them had secondary school education, some did not.

Q: What were you doing?

RICHMOND: There was a Lao information service which was supposed to be putting out information about the government, the country, the communist insurgency in the north, and we were supposed to be helping them. But in effect we were doing it for them. They just didn't have the wherewithal, the means, the know-how, to do it. We did 2 things which we were very proud of. First, we established a monthly photo magazine for Laos in the Lao language. USIA in Southeast Asia had a magazine called Free World published in Manila and distributed in language editions in Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, Filipino, and so forth. We said we wanted to start a Lao language edition. Everybody said, "You can't do it. It's going to be too difficult," but we did. We would get the dummy edition every month and pull out the articles we didn't want and put in articles that we liked. I was the photographer with my Leica camera. I knew quite a bit about

photography. I would take the photos and then we would write stories about what was happening in Laos, how the country had come into existence, it had a king, it had an army, it had a parliament. We were the news service in that monthly magazine. I kept a number of copies and donated them to Cornell University which has a big center on Southeast Asian studies, and they were delighted to have it.

The second thing we did was a monthly newsreel, which sounds even more fantastic. This was a country that had never had a publication in the Lao language and we were going to do a newsreel in the Lao language. They gave me a Bolex camera, a 16 millimeter, and I went around the country filming events and we would have them developed in Saigon, which had a big USIA photo lab, and we would put it together and write a narration. This became a monthly newsreel. I want to donate that. I have 30 minutes of that. I'm going to donate that to Cornell also. And how we did the narration was very interesting. I did not speak Lao. I learned enough to get along with people. I could talk about people in any person-to-person situation but I couldn't talk politics. So I would write the narration in English. Then we had a Thai employee who spoke English and he would put it from English into Thai. Then we had a Lao employee who knew Thai and Lao and he would put it into Lao. Then we had another Lao employee who would read it back to me in French. That was our way of ensuring that what we were saying was okay. And how would we show the films in villages which had no electricity? We gave each province chief a small generator, gasoline run. We gave them a Bell and Howell projector with speakers and a screen. And the local chief, called the Chao Kueng, would go around his province showing these movies at night in villages where they had never seen an electric light bulb.

Q: It must have been quite successful.

RICHMOND: It was. It was a very exciting thing.

Q: Were the Pathet Lao doing their thing at that point?

RICHMOND: They were, but it was safe. I had traveled around the country all by myself. In fact, I enjoyed getting out along. I did a lot of traveling in the country. In Vientiane, we were trying to live like westerners in a place where there was almost no electricity, usually no running water. It was difficult. But out in the villages, I could put on my sarong and live like a Lao. I did a lot and wrote a lot of reports that Ambassador Yost came to appreciate.

Q: What was going on in the villages?

RICHMOND: Not much. People were living just as they had always lived. Laos was a very fertile land. When there was enough rain, there was plenty of rice, there was fruit, there was fish, there was game. They only suffered when there was a drought. In the years I was there, there were never any droughts. So the people were living as they had for generations.

Q: Within 3 or 4 years of the time when all of a sudden you had the President of the United States explaining what Laos was and why it was important, special missions and everything else… None of that was in the offing at this point.

RICHMOND: No, but we did have a visit from John Foster Dulles with Douglas MacArthur II and Robert Bowie of the State Department.

Q: These were Dulles' top guns.

RICHMOND: Yes, they had come to Saigon. They also had a trip to Laos. They were with us for a couple of days. I have some wonderful photographs of that. Laos was becoming important. The U.S. army recognized its importance. The army had several military survey teams that came in that were mapping and checking on roads and geographic features.

Q: Wasn't there something afoot about building a base in the middle of Laos?

RICHMOND: That came after me. There was talk about it. When I first arrived in Laos, there were 5 Americans in the U.S. mission. When I left, there were 1,000 and it was going up.

Q: Who were these people who were coming in and what were they doing?

RICHMOND: We beefed up the economic aid mission, which became a big program of economic aid, largely foodstuffs and food oils. How many of those were really USAID types and how many were military and how many were CIA, I don't know. But it was a big mission. They had built a little community on the edge of town which they called Silver City because they were all aluminum-free prefabs. And that's where they lived.

Q: Was this having any impact from your observations on Laos, the corruption of too much money and too many foreigners arriving with too many demands?

RICHMOND: No, I didn't notice that at all. This all happened during the closing months of my stay. After me, that may have happened after I left.

Q: How did you find the Lao reacted to the Vietnamese both North and South?

RICHMOND: The Lao people had never liked the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese were the entrepreneur class. All of the stores and little shops that you see in these side-by-side shops in these typical French-built towns were either owned by Vietnamese or Indians. The Lao people were not entrepreneurs. When the French came up the Mekong River in the mid-1800s, they brought with them Vietnamese as their technicians and administrators and when the Indochina War broke out all the Vietnamese left and the administrative and technical services collapsed until they could be rebuilt with American

aid. We had electricity - I don't know how many volts it was. It wasn't very bright – a few hours of the evening. In all our American homes where we lived, the army brought in generators and we generated our own electricity. Water came in a truck, if it came at all, and was dumped into a tank in the back of the house and we had to pump it up on the roof into 55 gallon drums so we had a toilet and a shower.

Q: By this time, were you still a staff officer?

RICHMOND: Yes. After 2 years in Laos, as a reward, they offered me 2 years of Chinese language training, which I turned down. I said I was too old to study Chinese. I was about 33/34 at the time. I asked them if they had Russian. They said, "No, we don't need anybody for Russian, but you have your choice of Polish, Czech, or Hungarian." I wisely chose Polish because it was the largest country and the most important, and the most important to the Democratic Party in the United States.

Q: So you went to Polish training.

RICHMOND: Yes, I spent the summer at Harvard Summer School thinking what I was going to do next. I took 2 courses at Harvard to ease me back into academia. Then I went to Columbia. I had my choice of going anywhere I wanted for Polish language and area studies funded by USIA. I wanted to go to Harvard, but they said I couldn't get a master's degree unless I stayed for 2 years. But Columbia said I could earn a master's degree in one year. So, I went to Columbia, got a master's in arts in East European history, studied Polish there at the same time.

Q: You were at Columbia from when to when?

RICHMOND: From the academic year '56-'57.

Q: What was Columbia like then?

RICHMOND: Oh, like it is now: a big academic factory, lots of people, a very exciting place, lots of good professors.

Q: Were there any political movements going on there at that time?

RICHMOND: No, it was quiet at that time.

Q: Polish. Who was teaching you Polish?

RICHMOND: Ludwig Krzyzanowski, a hard name for Americans to pronounce. He was an adjunct professor. He had an evening class which met a couple of times a week. But the USIA also gave me money for a tutor, so I met several times a week for an hour with a Polish student. We just went down to Riverside Drive and sat on a bench and spoke Polish.

Q: How did you find Polish?

RICHMOND: It's a Slavic language but it's also an Indo-European language like Russian is. Polish is much more western than Russian. Poles have long been culturally and religiously a part of western Christianity. I learned enough so that I could basically get along but not speak it. When I arrived in Warsaw and tried to speak Polish, I learned that all of the intelligentsia that I dealt with spoke either French, German, or English. There was always a tendency to slip back into those languages. I had French and German. I also discovered that when I needed an important word in Polish, I could take the French word and add the Slavic ending, the "ski," and they would know it and that was often the right Polish word. Polish is full of Latin. Also my high school 4 years of Latin helped me.

Q: You were in Poland from when to when?

RICHMOND: From the summer of '58 to the fall of '61.

Q: What were you doing?

RICHMOND: I was the CAO, the cultural officer, or later cultural attaché. I started the USIA program in Poland. We had had a USIA representative there, Ed Symans, who was a Polish-American born in the United States, spoke fluent Polish. He had studied at Warsaw University before the war. Then he joined the State Department and became a courier and a clerk. He was in Warsaw when the Germans invaded. He became a courier during the war and after the war they put him in Warsaw. The Poles had their peaceful revolution in 1956 and Poland opened up to the West. Symans was sent in to be the public affairs officer, but he didn't know anything about USIA programs because he had never served in USIA. I started the Fulbright program. I started a program of U.S.-Polish student exchanges and American lecturers in Polish universities. I started a big book distribution program distributing books to Polish university libraries. I opened a USIA library in the American embassy that was open to Poles and it continued for many years. We had a film program going like we had in Germany. We beefed that up. I founded the International Visitor Program in Poland. All of that goes back to those early years under Gomulka when Poland was really wide open for almost anything you wanted to do as long as the Poles didn't feel that the Soviets would object. The Soviet embassy was still very prominent there.

Q: Who was our ambassador when you arrived?

RICHMOND: Jake Beam.

Q: He was one of the major figures in American diplomacy in that period.

RICHMOND: I also served with him in Moscow years later.

Q: How did you find him at that time?

RICHMOND: Jake was a wonderful guy to work for. He was very relaxed and easy going. He let us do our own things as long as we didn't violate policy. He didn't keep looking over our shoulders to see what we were doing. He had great confidence in the staff and made you feel you were a part of the staff. I'll give you one little incident of what we could do in Poland. A man named Warren Philips, the CEO or the chairman of the board of the Wall Street Journal, came through Poland and the ambassador gave a lunch for him and invited me and the political officer and the economic officer. We gave him a briefing on Poland. At the end of the briefing, this man from the Wall Street Journal said, "Mr. Ambassador, what can the Wall Street Journal do for you?" The ambassador turned to me. He said to me, "Yale, what can the Wall Street Journal do for us?" I got an idea. I said, "Sir, we have 18 higher economic schools throughout Poland in all the large cities. Could you give every one of them a 6 month subscription to the Wall Street Journal? Send it to the library of these schools and I'll tell you what they're doing with it." He said, "Okay." He sent 18 subscriptions for 6 months. I checked around the libraries and the Wall Street Journal was exhibited in the libraries on the racks next to Pravda and Izvestia and all the other communist newspapers. That's the kind of thing we could do in Poland.

Q: Was Poland still… Were you feeling the aftermath of what had happened in Hungary in '56 when they had the brief revolt and the Soviets sent troops in and all that? Were the Poles looking over their shoulders wondering whether the Soviets might come in?

RICHMOND: Well, they always were. There were large Soviet troops in Poland. But Poland for many years was under Russian domination, was part of Tsarist Russia. The Poles had a long history of rebellion against the Russians which were brutally suppressed. That's very much a part of Polish history and every Pole is conscious of it. The Poles were smart enough – smarter than the Hungarians, or more lucky – they managed not to have an uprising against the Russians and to convince the Russians they were going to have their own Polish road to communism but remain within the Warsaw Pact. The Hungarians being Hungarians went further than that and that's what caused the Soviet invasion of Hungary.

Q: How did you find your contacts in Poland in this period?

RICHMOND: I could see anybody I wanted to. This was the amazing thing. All I had to do was call up somebody and say, "Can I come over and talk with you," and sure, we could go anywhere we wanted. I once even called up the guy, Zenon Klishko, the party secretary for culture, and asked him if I could come and see him and he said, "No thanks," but he's the only one who ever refused me a visit.

Q: As the cultural affairs officer, did you see your opponent, the Soviet cultural affairs officer?

RICHMOND: No, I had absolutely no contact with him. I did years later when I was stationed in Washington. I had a very good relationship with the Polish embassy. But in Warsaw we kept our own way, as did the Chinese. There we had the start of the U.S.-Chinese talks.

Q: Had they built that huge Soviet-style Palace of Culture?

RICHMOND: Yes, and it's still there.

Q: I saw it on TV yesterday showing Jaruzelski voting for Poland to join the European Union along with Lech Walesa. This was on French TV.

RICHMOND: It's still there and it's still a monument and it still bothers Poles very much, but they've gotten used to it. A terrible Stalin wedding cake style, they called it.

Q: What sort of a role did that play?

RICHMOND: The Soviet built Palace of Culture became a symbol of Soviet domination. That's how the Poles saw it and that's exactly how the Russians intended it. Just as the churches usually built high steeples on tops of hills to remind people of who they were, the Soviets built this tremendously high Palace of Culture to remind Poles that they were part of the Soviet Bloc.

Q: Was this something that you could point to and say, "That's Soviet culture?"

RICHMOND: We did not have to remind the Poles of that. They were very much aware of it. Poland was a country where the U.S. could do no wrong. It was the most hospitable country toward American that I had ever been in. There were never any anti-American demonstrations in Poland. If there were, they were pro forma pushed by the communists. There was a tremendous immigration from Poland to the United States at the turn of the century and before that. Most Poles have a relative somewhere in the United States. Really the United States could do no wrong. I was told that when Eisenhower was elected President in '52, Poles were dancing in the streets thinking that General Eisenhower was going to come and liberate them from the Russians.

Q: You were there during the election of Kennedy. How did that play? He was Catholic…

RICHMOND: The Kennedys had also a romance with Poland. I was there when the 3 Kennedy sisters, 2 of them plus Lee Radziwill, they came to Poland on a visit. Then after I left Poland Bobby Kennedy came and gave a speech down in Krakow. This was partly political and partly because of the Radziwill connection.

Q: I remembering interviewing someone who was there 10 years later who said that he felt that there were probably 3, maybe 4, convinced communists in Poland. Did you get

the feeling that the Poles weren't buying into the Soviet system?

RICHMOND: True. When I was there after the war, there was no Polish communist party. They did not dare call it Polish communist party. They called it Polish United Workers Party. I was supposed to be a union between the Socialist Party of Poland, the major party in Poland of the workers and intellectuals, and the Communist Party. That persuaded a good many Poles who had fled Poland during the war and settled in England and fought with the RAF and the British army to join the new party. There was a Polish army in the west. There was a Polish squadron in the RAF. They had the largest number of kills (shootdowns) of any squadron. A lot of these people, mostly intellectuals, were persuaded to come back to Poland because they knew that the Socialist Party had been so much stronger than the Communist Party and would run things. These people were coopted into the system and they were trapped. They couldn't get out. They couldn't change things. The director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, a big think tank of the government, was a Polish Jew who had served in England during the war. He came back. These people had to go on and be subservient to the Soviet Union.

Q: Did you get any feeling at that time about the Polish role in the Holocaust?

RICHMOND: I would not go so far as to call it a Polish role. The Holocaust took place in Poland and parts of western Ukraine which were part of Poland then. That's where the majority of the Jews of Europe lived. Secondly, it was captured by the Germans and under German military rule. Thirdly, it was away from the West, away from the Western eyes that might know what was going on. The Holocaust took place in Poland, but the Polish people had really nothing to do with it. In fact, the Polish people themselves were victims of the Holocaust. When the Germans marched into Krakow, the intellectual and cultural center of Poland, the first people they imprisoned were not Jews but the Polish professors at the university. They were all sent to a concentration camp and later released. But the Polish intellectuals were the real targets, the first initial targets, of the German occupation.

Q: How did you find the role of the intellectuals in Poland?

RICHMOND: Much greater than here in the United States. Like most European countries, but especially in Poland, which had a large peasant population, the intellectuals were really almost sacrosanct. Writers were greatly esteemed, as they were in Russia. Academics were esteemed. Every Pole wanted to go to a university. To give the communists credit, they expanded the university system and opened it up to everybody. Many Polish families of peasant and middle class origin were able to send people to university for the first time. Writers were especially prominent. In that part of the world where you have authoritarian government, the only way people could really express their views was through literature and fiction, and many of the Polish writers were actually writing political tracts, as they were in Russia also at the same time.

Q: Did you get involved with the intellectual community?

RICHMOND: Yes. We had some interesting visitors. We had Mary McCarthy and Saul Bellow for one month and at the same time.

Q: Mary McCarthy was coming out of the Catholic tradition. Saul Bellow out of the Jewish tradition.

RICHMOND: Mary McCarthy came out of a very liberal Catholic tradition. Bellow and McCarthy were both well known because their books had been translated into Polish. Poland had a large program for translating Western works. There was something called the Informational Media Guarantee Act which allowed the Poles and several other countries around the world to buy U.S. media products. The Poles were very proud of this. They could buy authors rights from the United States. They could buy American movies. They could buy books, pay in Polish zlotys, which accrued to the account of the U.S. government, and the United States would provide the dollars to the American writer, publisher, movie picture studio. So the Poles were showing in those years American movies everywhere. They were publishing American books in Polish translation. Saul Bellow and Mary McCarthy were published in Polish, although they weren't published in Russian in the Soviet Union. We had Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. who came. After I left we had Erskine Caldwell and many others who came. That enabled us, setting up their programs, to tag along and meet people. Then I had this wonderful book presentation program. I could order almost any book I wanted from USIA in those years. I would get the New York Times Sunday Book Review sent to me by airmail. I would go through it and say, "I want 5 of this, 2 of this, 10 of these." They would all come in the pouch, no questions asked. Once a month I would get in my car and dump all these books in the trunk, and go around to Polish universities or call on professors and "By the way, would you like this book?" You can imagine the welcome I got.

Q: Was English being seen as the second language? Was there a competition between English and Russian?

RICHMOND: Russian was required in all schools and continued to be required, but English became the most popular foreign language after the Polish revolution of '56. There were English departments in all the major universities. In fact, there's an interesting story which is almost an interview in itself. I'll try to summarize it. The English department at the University of Warsaw was headed by an American when I arrived in the summer of '58. Her name was Margaret Schlauch. She had been a professor of English literature at NYU for many years. She was a Barnard College graduate, Phi Beta Kappa, doctor's degree from Columbia, and a world authority on Chaucer, Old English and Nordic Sagas, a woman of German-Irish extraction. Her sister had married a prominent Polish physicist, Leopold Infeld, who had worked with Einstein at Princeton during the war. After the war, the Poles, who wanted to have a nuclear program, invited Infeld, back to Poland and put him in charge of the whole nuclear program in Poland. He came with his wife, Margaret Schlauch's sister, and then when the McCarthy period came, Margaret Schlauch, who had been a communist and was proud of it, left the United

States and fled to Warsaw, where they appointed her head of the English department at Warsaw University. She was considered a renegade by the American community there. The embassy had nothing to do with her. When I came, I said, "This is somebody we could do business with." I asked Jake Beam if I could call on her and propose programs. He said, "Sure." I called on Margaret Schlauch and she was delighted to meet somebody from the American embassy. I said, "What can we do together to further American studies in Poland." She had a long list and the top of the list was an exchange of graduate students with the condition that one student every year be from her department. I bought that. The second was an exchange of university lecturers, every year, a lecturer in American literature in Poland and a lecturer in Polish literature in the United States. We both sought the agreements of our governments, which came immediately, and a year later, we had the first 4 students who came to the United States, one of whom was one of her students, who eventually got a doctor's degree at Indiana University and became a professor of American literature at a Polish university. Today he is a professor of American literature at Warsaw University at their American studies center. In that same first year, we had an American professor in Krakow, not in Warsaw because the Poles were afraid the Russians would object, so they said, "Let's put him down in Krakow, where there's no Russian presence." But the second year, we had an American professor in Warsaw why by chance had been a student of Schlauch at NYU years ago. He was a black professor who later became president of Morehouse College in Atlanta. He came with his wife. Ever since, we've had American professors there. At last count, I heard we had 18 American lecturers every year in Poland under the Fulbright program. It all started with this woman whom we called an American renegade, Margaret Schlauch.

Q: One looks at Poland and it's really a remarkable achievement. One cultural side is where you could really make ground. During the Cold War, it's often forgotten how important the cultural exchanges were. It was somewhat under the political radar.

RICHMOND: Well, that's the subject of my latest book, Cultural Exchange and the Cold War, in which I have a chapter on Poland. I call it "The Polish Connection" because Poland had American academic exchanges. Right after the '56 revolution, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundation came in and established big fellowship programs bringing Polish writers, artists, academics, scientists, medical doctors, to the United States and Western Europe for one or 2 semesters of study and research, and this reestablished the historic connection between Poland and the West. Of course, there was nothing like this in the Soviet Union at the time. So Poland became Russia's traditional window on the West. There's a statement in Polish history that Poland has always been Russia's window on the West. When Russians wanted to find out what was going on in their academic discipline, they could not so easily go to the United States, but they could go to Poland and talk to Poles who had been to America and Western Europe and knew what was going on, so Poland again became a great influence in the change that was occurring in the Soviet Union.

Q: How about knowledge of political and the history of the United States, which has not been a very strong point in Western Europe? Were the Poles getting a pretty good dosage

of the development of the United States?

RICHMOND: Yes, they were getting a good dosage. Eventually we had a first professor of American history, Wallace Farnham, who came a guest American professor at Warsaw University. In the mid-1950s we established with the cooperation of Indiana University – I was involved in this at the State Department; I handled the Indiana end of it and my colleague in Warsaw, Len Baldyga, handled the Polish end of it – a Center of American Studies at Warsaw University and a corresponding Center of Polish Studies at Indiana and we funded it with Fulbright lecturers on both sides. That's still going, both of them, still there today.

Q: How did you find the huge Polish-American community in the United States? I remember talking to the Polish council in Chicago back in the mid-'70s. Chicago had the second largest number of Poles in the world.

RICHMOND: Next to Warsaw. True. They moved to the suburbs lately, but they're still there. I have a daughter in Chicago who lives in one of these formerly Polish neighborhoods. You still see the Polish influence in this neighborhood. There are still organizations that have offices there. They were largely supportive of this program. In contrast to the other so-called "captive nations" in the United States – the Czechs, the Hungarians, the Croats, the Romanians – who were bitterly anti-communist and had this captive nations assembly, the Poles were a part of that, but the Poles welcomed the changes that came with Gomulka. While they did not approve of everything he did, the United States economic assistance and cultural programs had the broad support of the Polish-American community.

Q: We did have these ties with Poland. For example, we were buying meat for our military forces in Poland. We had veterinary units in Poland.

RICHMOND: I'm not familiar with that. But Polish hams were a big item. They were canned. And Polish vodka, which by the way is much better than Stolichnaya.

Q: Did the Catholic Church in Poland play any part in your cultural business?

RICHMOND: Not directly. We stayed away from it. We did not want to get involved and they did not want us to get involved. That would not have been good for them. But there was a Club of the Catholic Intelligentsia, which had membership with all the prominent catholic laymen and professors and writers and they met regularly. They were a force in Poland. There was also a Catholic weekly, Tygodnik Powszechny, in Krakow, whose editor was a Catholic of Jewish origin, that was a prominent newspaper that continued through the whole communist period. It was widely read by all the intellectuals and by the Communist Party officials, too, as to what the Church was thinking on various issues.

Q: Looking at what you were doing in Poland, you had your finger in an awful lot of pies, seeing an awful lot of what was developing in Poland. How were your ties to the

political section? Were they using you to find out what was happening?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, we were thoroughly integrated. There was no USIS post in Warsaw. The State Department rightly decided that the Soviets had once said they would not want any USIA post in the Bloc, so all of us in those years, USIA officers who were assigned to Warsaw and later Krakow and later Poznan, had to resign officially from USIA and then were appointed, given commissions in the State Department, and that was published in the State Department monthly magazine and a lot of my friends wrote me, "Yale, why did you resign?" We had a cultural section in the embassy. We did not have a USIS post. We were involved in so many activities. We brought them into our activities.

Q: Were there any difficult periods in international relations where Poland got involved between the U.S. and the Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: No, only slightly during the Vietnam War when the Polish press had to support the Soviet position and oppose the Vietnam War and they had a couple of symbolic demonstrations in front of the embassy. Poland leaked like a sieve. Anything they planned, we knew about it right away. Through one source, we knew they were going to plan a "spontaneous" demonstration in front of the embassy, so we battened down our hatches and shut all our shutters and waited to see what would happen. I noticed that a car from Polish television with a camera man pulled up across the street, so I went out and said in Polish, "Excuse me, but what time does the spontaneous demonstration start?" He told me the exact time? I went back in and we knew when it was going to start. It was just a pro forma demonstration.

Q: You left there when?

RICHMOND: Just after Thanksgiving in 1961 and went to Vienna.

Q: You went to Vienna. You were in Warsaw from when to when?

RICHMOND: July of '58 to end of November '61.

Q: So you went to Vienna in '61.

RICHMOND: Yes.

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Q: Today is June 19, 2003. You were off to Vienna in 1961. How long were you there and what were you doing?

RICHMOND: I was in Vienna for 2 years from '61 to '63 as head of what was called the Special Projects Office, SPO, which was a great misnomer if I ever heard of one. In the Soviet Bloc, "special projects" always meant something to do with secret services.

Q: It sounded to me like you were in charge of assassinations.

RICHMOND: I don't know why they called it that. We called it SPO for short. Its ostensible mission was to provide cultural and informational support to USIA posts in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which did not have large staffs and didn't have libraries and they couldn't make exhibits, they couldn't run photo shows. So what we did in Vienna, we had a large exhibit section of 15 or so Austrians who could put together an exhibit on anything that our East European posts requested. We also had a large photo lab which was at that time the largest photo lab in Vienna. They could dig up photos of almost anything to use in these exhibits. Then we had a very interesting monitoring operation which paralleled what FBIS was doing. We had on the staff people who could translate bilingually in Albanian, Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Russian, and they would listen to news broadcasts from those countries on their radios at home or in the office and we put out a daily bulletin on what the Eastern Bloc nations were saying about various things of interest to the West. That was distributed to Austrian readers in Vienna but mainly to the foreign press. The western press had a large presence in Vienna because it was first of all too expensive and difficult to maintain a staff in each of the East European countries and there wasn't much they could gather in those days anyway. So, all of the Western press had the correspondents in Vienna who covered Eastern Europe from Vienna and they were recipients of our daily bulletin. They would follow up on stories that we had tipped them off on. That was the stated purpose of SPO.

After I got there, I discovered there was another unstated purpose which unfortunately nobody had briefed me on. I was originally supposed to go from Warsaw to Bordeaux because I had French also. At the last minute, there was a shift and somebody had to be moved around and that caused a whole series of moves and I ended up going to Vienna because I was fluent in German. What I learned that SPO was doing, SPO was getting copies of all the telegrams and despatches sent in by our East European posts and Moscow and at my discretion we could sanitize them, cut out the parts that were sensitive, and give copies to anyone in the Western press that we thought could use it. When I first heard about that part of my job, I said, "This is very interesting, but if I make a mistake, will Washington back me up?" They said, "No, you're on your own." So, I did that for 2 years and fortunately never made a mistake, or one that anyone caught. We would regularly sanitize despatches and give them correspondents of the New York Times, the Viennese Press, the International Harold Tribune, etc.

Q: How did the press use these? Was this a press that was friendly to us?

RICHMOND: This was the Western press. These were all very friendly, even the Austrians, who were supposedly neutral. What they would do with it, they would frequently say, "Travelers from Sofia or from Warsaw report back" and then they would cite whatever we had said in these telegrams that was of interest to them.

Q: Were the embassies of these Eastern European countries or the Soviet Union figuring

out what this was and coming around and protesting?

RICHMOND: No, there were no protests, but they were aware of what we were doing. Vienna at that time was the largest center of international intelligence and intrigue in the world. The Soviet Union had large KGB operations there and we had a large CIA station there. Everybody knew what everybody else was doing. It was part of the propaganda war.

Q: Going to a cocktail party, you would feel that you were surrounded by spies of various hues.

RICHMOND: That's right. And we would have lunch with them, too.

Q: Did the Soviets have a counterpart?

RICHMOND: Well, the Soviets had for years been spreading what has come to be called "disinformation." Our SPO stories were what our embassies were reporting to Washington. You had to believe if you were in the Foreign Service that what they were reporting was accurate. It may have been wrong sometimes, but it was accurate, whereas the Soviets were masters at spreading disinformation throughout the world. They were doing it from their diplomatic and intelligence posts around the world in various countries. There were several Indian newspapers that they often used. They would leak stuff to an Indian newspaper. Then they would report, "The Indian newspaper such and such says" and most of the people who read that around the world would not know that this Indian newspaper was in cahoots with the Soviets.

Q: When you say "Eastern Europe," could you explain what that meant at that time?

RICHMOND: Eastern Europe at that time… The Soviet Union was considered separate. But Eastern Europe at that time included the other members of the Warsaw Pact – Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Q: And East Germany.

RICHMOND: East Germany was a special case. I never worked on East Germany, but it formally was not considered a part of Eastern Europe in the State Department. That would have meant that the West Germans had formally recognized having lost it. The same way Yugoslavia had a unique position. Yugoslavia was "communist" but was largely open to the West. You could buy all kinds of Western newspapers there. It was communism under Tito, who had his differences with the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia was not a part of the Warsaw Pact, but it was considered Eastern Europe for the State Department, as were the 3 Baltic states because we did not recognize them formally as being a part of the Soviet Union. So, the 3 Baltic states were also in the State Department hierarchy in Eastern Europe, as was Albania, another special case.

Q: What sort of support would you give, what type of exhibits?

RICHMOND: Well, each of our embassies had a display board outside. It was a showcase outside the embassy usually attached to the wall of the building or in Moscow to the wrought iron gates that surrounded the embassy. They were illuminated at night. They had glass fronts. We would have photo exhibits about the U.S., various things that we thought we could present and which the Soviets would not consider dangerous for them, or too dangerous. We had these in all of the East European embassies. Romania also had an American library which the Romanians allowed us to open which was staffed by a USIS officer. Romania also had a special relationship with the United States in those years.

Q: These exhibits had to be crafted rather carefully so that you were getting across whatever your message was but not to upset the local populace.

RICHMOND: For example, if we had a new president or a new congress, there could be an exhibit. I don't recall exactly what the exhibits were on. There were so many of them in each of these different countries. But the post would cable in or call us up and tell us what they wanted, what was of interest to that country. For example, if one of their leaders went to the United States on a visit, we would make a photo exhibit of that visit. Or if an American president or a vice president visited Eastern Europe, we'd do the same kind of exhibit.

Q: How did you find working in Austria?

RICHMOND: I had just come from Warsaw. I had to make the inevitable comparison. Vienna had an old history and was full of old museums and the city itself was one big museum. I found that the Austrians were living very much in the past. Warsaw had been lively, creative, imaginative, full of energy and creativity in the arts and sciences and everything. When I got to Vienna, I found it rather dull. The Austrians were still living in their past and there wasn't much new. They were living in their past glories and not much new was being created.

Q: Vienna had a real problem since the end of World War I in that it was the center of an empire and there was no longer an empire. It had too many people sitting there with nothing to do.

RICHMOND: True, so they gave them all jobs in the government.

Q: Did you get to travel around much?

RICHMOND: Yes, I made my first trip to the Soviet Union from Vienna, although we were not providing much support to the Soviet Union beyond our exhibits, but I wanted to look over Moscow and decide whether I wanted to study Russian next and have an assignment in Moscow. So I took a flight from Vienna to Kiev, saw Kiev, and then went

up to Moscow and saw the USIS operation there and got hooked on Russian studies.

Q: Did you get to Romania?

RICHMOND: Yes, I got there several times.

Q: How did we treat Romania? Ceausescu was in control at that time.

RICHMOND: And for many years after that. Romania was a very interesting case. It was a member of the Warsaw Pact but they were the mavericks. You could always depend on the Romanians doing something differently and that's part of their history and culture. The marvel of the Romanians is that they survived surrounded by Slavs and Hungarians. Really it's a classic example of playing one off against the other in order to survive as Romanians speaking a Latin based language. It's easy to learn if you have studied Latin in high school or college and have some Slavic to add to it. So the Romanians had a rather independent policy. They did not participate in the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. They allowed almost all of their Jews to emigrate to Israel. They were interlocutors. They were messengers passing messages from various countries to the United States. They were used as intermediaries between China and the United States, China and the Soviet Union when things were bad. Romanians are experts at this.

Q: Were you doing much in Austria itself?

RICHMOND: I did not, but USIS did. We had an Amerika Haus. We had a large American studies program. We had a Fulbright program there, an international visitor program. But I was not concerned with Austria except in my dealings with the Austrian press.

Q: Did you ever get involved with the CIA operation?

RICHMOND: Only once, twice. Once, when a Pole that I had worked with in Warsaw on the distribution of our magazine, Amerika, defected. He turned up in Vienna and the CIA station people asked me to have him to lunch and see whether he wanted to talk to them. In other words, I was used as an intermediary. I took the guy to lunch. We had a very pleasant lunch. But he said, no, thank you, he did not want to talk to the CIA. The other occasion was when the chief Polish local employee of the "New York Times" in Warsaw was smuggled out of Poland and into Vienna. I got a call the next morning from somebody in the CIA operation asking me if I would go to the "New York Times" office in Vienna, talked to the bureau chief there, whose name was Clyde Farnsworth, a wonderful old experienced journalist, one of the best guys I ever worked with, and asked where this fellow was. His name was Tommy Atkins, which was an acquired name. He was really a Polish Jew who had spent the war years in England, fought with the British army during the war, and took the name Tommy Atkins. He had been working for the "New York Times" for years and somebody smuggled him out of Poland. I called on Clyde Farnsworth and said, "Clyde, was Tommy Atkins here?" He said, "You missed him

by a couple of hours. He's already out of Austria." This was all set up in advance and the guy ended up in Israel and then the United States.

Q: Was there any movement in those days in Austria of Jews coming out of the Soviet Union or anywhere else using Austria and moving on either to the United States or to-

RICHMOND: No, that came later in the late '60s.

Q: Did you get involved in people getting out of Eastern Europe into Austria and then wanting to go somewhere else in the West?

RICHMOND: It was not a part of my job, but in Austria, you inevitably came up against some people. We had an American employee of the embassy in Bucharest who was a German, a Volksdeutch, an ethnic German who had lived all her life in Romania. You found these people throughout all of Eastern Europe. And she was bought out. The Romanians let a lot of those people go at so many thousand dollars a head. The German government, I suppose the Austrians, too, were paying to get these people out, those who wanted to leave. I had a long talk with her. I took her to lunch. It was very interesting.

Q: What intrigued you about the Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: It was the only other superpower and it was the big adversary and it was the most important of the communist countries in those years and even later and I thought it was going to be an exciting place.

Q: So did you put in? What happened?

RICHMOND: Well, I already had Polish, which is a Slavic language, which I thought was going to help me but actually Polish hurts you because Polish is so Western and has so many Latin, French, German, English words in it and grammar. It really screws you up when you start to study Russian. But I took lessons. USIA paid for it. I had a guy in Vienna come in a couple of times a week.

Q: This was while you were in Vienna?

RICHMOND: Yes, and he would give me one hour lessons. So I had a start on Russian. And a few years later when I got to the Russian program at FSI, they didn't know what to do with me because I already had quite a bit of Russian, so they gave me a separate instructor and I sat there in a room with this Russian from 9 till 1, 5 days a week, just the 2 of us talking.

Q: Oh, boy.

RICHMOND: He was Ray Garthoff's father-in-law.

Q: You finished up in '63 in Vienna. What did you do, come back here?

RICHMOND: Yes. The DCM in Warsaw, Frank Siscoe, was appointed head of the new Soviet and East European Exchanges Staff at the Department, which was an office created to manage exchanges with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Frank Siscoe had been appointed director of that office and he knew me from Warsaw and he wanted somebody who knew Polish and Eastern Europe and he asked me if I would come work for him. So, you never say "No" to an invitation like that.

Q: You were working on exchanges then.

RICHMOND: For 2 years, I worked on exchanges at State. I was in charge of a little section they had in that office of exchanges with Eastern Europe.

Q: This would be '63 to '65.

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: The exchange program with the Soviet Union was a major program, but what about these ones with the Eastern European countries?

RICHMOND: They were larger. Yugoslavia was separate. We didn't handle Yugoslavia. But our exchanges with Poland and later with Hungary and Romania were as large, if not larger, than our exchanges with the Soviet Union and we did it all without an agreement, although in the case of Romania, they insisted on having an exchange agreement, so we reluctantly negotiated and signed one. But with Poland, which was very open to the West in those years, there was never an exchange agreement. The Poles wanted it. They asked us and we said, "No, things are going very well. You don't need an exchange agreement." They bought that argument.

Q: Why not an exchange agreement?

RICHMOND: We didn't want it because, first of all, the pattern with the Soviets was not to establish a floor from which you would build larger numbers but to establish a ceiling in the number of people exchanged in each category above which you could not go. We thought that might follow the Soviet pattern. We didn't want that at all. Secondly, it would have created a huge bureaucracy. We saw no need for that. Thirdly, the Poles might have asked for reciprocity on certain things we were doing in Warsaw, which we could have done, but it would have been another big expense for us to allow them to have certain privileges. It would have formalized what was a very informal and workable relationship.

Q: Let's take the Polish students.

RICHMOND: Most of them were established scholars in their field – scientists,

sociologists, political scientists, humanists of all kinds – who would come to the United States either to lecture or to do research. There was a lot of research money floating around in those years, government money and foundation money. Universities were flush with cash, so universities looking for people to add to their staff for one year with no tenure problems, no additional cost, would hire East Europeans to come in and lecture or do research for a year. Similarly, there was a lot of government money for research in various fields. People would invite in Poles and Hungarians and even Czechs to do research on government sponsored projects.

Q: Was there an attempt on the part of the Poles to get their people into science areas where we didn't want them to go?

RICHMOND: We had a system of running all these applications for visas from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union by the U.S. intelligence community. Anybody coming for any kind of an exchange visit was called SPLX, "special exchange." The visa was stamped "SPLX." That put them in a special category. In all those visa applications that came across our desk, I saw all the ones from Eastern Europe. The U.S. intelligence community would also get copies- (end of tape)

Then a special category of special exchange, all visa applications of scientists and other people who might be of interest, were run by the intelligence community – the CIA, the army, navy, air force intelligence, DIA, NAS, FBI… There was something called a Committee on Exchanges that was chaired by the CIA. They would meet periodically to discuss these applications and to see whether there was any objection to this person getting a visa. The criterion was usually, will this visitor get more out of the visit than we will get out of him? In other words, could we learn something from him? He's going to learn something from us. What's the tradeoff here? Based on that analysis, they would make a recommendation to us, "Yes, no objection to the visa" or "objection." If there was no objection, then the State Department could request that the Department of Justice grant a waiver of visa ineligibility under the McCarran Walter Act, Immigration and Naturalization Act, which almost automatically excluded anybody from a communist country. If we recommended that the waiver of ineligibility be granted them, then we could issue the visa. If there was an objection from the intelligence community, we did our very best to get around that. Our policy was to encourage exchanges. What we usually did was to try to place the person in another site. In other words, if anybody objected to Dr. Kozlowski from Poland coming into a certain laboratory in which there was DOD research, you could bet that DIA would automatically object to that visit. But if we were to move that Polish scientist to another laboratory where there was no DOD research, there was no problem. The only real hard cases we had was somebody who was clearly on an intelligence mission or had KGB or secret police connections. Sometimes we turned them down. Most of the time, we let them in because the FBI wanted to see what they were doing here.

Q: This raises a question. Was there any sort of agreement with the CIA and the FBI not to recruit these people? This could really screw things up if as soon as they got in you

had heavy recruitment.

RICHMOND: Well, there was no objection on those so-called "private" visits in which the State Department was not involved. But on the Fulbright Program and the IREX program, which were official programs, IREX had an understanding with the CIA up to the top that there would be no attempts at recruitment or debriefing while they were in the United States. That was honored every year.

Q: Did you get involved… The usual problems of somebody coming from a rather poor economy ending up in one of our better department stores and does a little shoplifting. Did you get involved in trying to straighten matters out?

RICHMOND: Sure did. That was a frequent occurrence, some Soviet ballet dancers or athletes would go into a department store or sports store and just couldn't resist trying to put on a jacket and walk out with it. They were often caught. Several times, I would get a call from the department store police – some of them had the good sense to call the State Department first – they'd say, "We have this guy here. What do you want us to do with him?" I would say, "Look, we don't want to create an international incident. The Soviets will think this is a provocation. The best thing is just to chew them out and give them a lecture not to do this again and turn them loose." Most of the time, that happened.

Q: How about defections? Did this happen? I've talked to some people like Don McHenry having to sit for hours in La Guardia Airport or something with a Soviet ballerina trying to figure out what to do with her.

RICHMOND: We did quite a bit. I have to jump ahead to the 1970s when I was back in that same office. After my tour in Moscow, I was deputy director of that office. We would have a lot of East European as well as Soviets – the East European were not a problem. If a handful defected, their governments didn't care. But the Soviets were very uptight about defections. I remember once case where a Georgian student on the IREX exchange… This was the organization that was created by the ACLS, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Social Science Research Council to run the academic exchanges with the Soviet Union under our cultural agreement. So that was an official program. Well, this Soviet student who was in California started a relationship with an American girl. The Soviets immediately found out about it. They always had their people in pairs so one could watch the other. They brought him back to Washington and interrogated him in the Soviet embassy and put him in a Soviet embassy car and drove him right up to Kennedy Airport and were getting ready to put him on a plane back to Moscow. On the way to the airport, as they pulled into the airport, the guy slashed his wrists, tried to commit suicide. He was immediately rushed to a hospital. Shortly after he was admitted, the KGB people from the UN mission of the Soviet Union rushed in and tried to get him out of the hospital. It ended up with one of these confrontations at the airport that you just referred to. We had a meeting… In those cases, there was usually a meeting with somebody from the Department who would go up to New York and somebody from the Soviet embassy or mission would sit there and we would ask the guy,

"Do you really want to stay or do you want to go back?" That would establish the facts of what he wanted to do – to defect or not. And if we were satisfied that he did not want to defect, then we let him go. When that case broke, we had a Foreign Service officer in the State Department whose wife was a Georgian, spoke fluent Georgian, and they sent her up with our embassy officer. While the Soviet guys, who were all Russians, were sitting there, she asked him in Georgian if he wanted to defect or not. They were furious.

Q: What happened?

RICHMOND: He decided to go back, and he was not harmed because he came from a very influential family. His family had good connections. As far as we were able to find out, he was not affected by this.

Q: Did you get involved at the other end, the Americans going to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: Only to the extent that we reviewed their applications, the ones who were nominated, and ran name checks on them, which was a very sensitive matter. A lot of the academic people objected to running name checks on these people. But we would run name checks on them… You ran the name by all the intelligence agencies and they'd tell you whether there was anything negative in the file or not. There was a procedure that if something negative did turn up on an American applicant under the official programs, then we would pass it to the chairman of IREX and he would consult with one or 2 independent professors in academia who had the approval of the Department to see the material, and IREX would make the final decision. We would not make it.

Q: How did you see the balance of this program? I've heard that the Soviets were sending people very heavy on science and we were ending up with having people who wanted to study 12th century Slavic studies and that sort of thing.

RICHMOND: Yes, it was usually "Ukrainian 16th century poetry." That was always a problem. Opponents of the program… I'm not sure they really were opponents. This program had broad acceptance throughout the Congress and the U.S. public. But there were complaints that it was tilted in favor of the Soviets in science and technology and that was true up to the 1970s. But in the 1970s when Nixon and Kissinger began their policy of detente, we signed 11 agreements for cooperation with the Soviet Union in various fields of science and technology (S&T). We had an agreement in space in science and technology, in public health, in transportation, in housing, in agriculture, in communication, you name it. Under that agreement, thousands of Soviets came to the U.S. in those years and the imbalance was corrected. But I just published a book which evaluates all this. It's called Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain, published in May [2003] of this year by Penn State University Press. I go over all this stuff – the procedure for evaluating the exchanges and determining whether someone gets a visa or not. My thesis is that 30 years of exchanges with the West – and not just the United States because the Soviet Union had exchanges with all of the Western European

powers – changed the Soviet Union. They had been really isolated under Stalin and when Stalin died in 1953 the Soviets gradually started opening up and that opening up enabled some 50,000 Soviets to come to the United States over the next 30 years. That is a conservative estimate.

Q: And these represented the educated elite.

RICHMOND: Except for the athletes and the dancers. But most of the others were all prominent people in their fields. Once they got out of the Soviet Union and realized how things were in the West, how they had been lied to by their own media which had always told them that they were better off than anybody else in the world, the Soviet Union couldn't maintain their fiction anymore. That brought about changes. It brought about the human rights movement in the Soviet Union and many other changes that gradually led to the demise of communism and the end of the Cold War.

Q: Was there the feeling in your office and people working around you that, okay, this is the drip technique, but we're going to change communist society by doing this?

RICHMOND: We all felt that these were beneficial in the long run. What we did not anticipate was that the change would come so fast.

Q: With these exchanges, were we looking around to make this a tool? Were we going out and trying to get more Georgians or Ukrainians? Were we playing on the ethnic card of creating divisions within the Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: I wish we could have. But the Soviets did it for us. When the program first started, the major participants on the Soviet side were the Slavs, the Russians, the Ukrainians, and Belorussians. Plus each year a few from the Baltic states and Georgia and Armenia. Those were the favored ethnic groups and they were always represented. Only as the Soviets had more confidence in these exchanges and as the Central Asian republics began to demand a larger share of the pie, the Soviets started sending more people from Central Asia. They did it for us. When the program went on into these 30 years, you saw more and more of the non-Russian, non-Slavic people coming over.

Q: Did you find that the party elite were sending their kids over?

RICHMOND: Oh, definitely. In the Soviet Union, still a traditional society in that respect, family is very important and you take care of your family and your friends first. Knowing someone is more important than knowing something. Most of the people who came under the scholarly programs were designated to come. They did not apply. They didn't have an open selection system. They didn't have interviews with committees. The Soviets would look at their plan for the next 5 years and say, "Well, we're going to need so many people in this field," and they would select people for their needs for the Soviet economy. Some people were just told sometimes at the last minute they were going to the United States and were never asked whether they wanted to go. That's why they all

traveled on official passports.

Q: Did that cause problems?

RICHMOND: No. Because they traveled on official passports meant that they were automatically ineligible for a visa and had to be run through our clearance process.

Q: Was there a difference between that and the other countries we're talking about: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary?

RICHMOND: Initially, we subjected their scholars and scientists and artists and writers to the same procedures but as the years went on we relaxed it considerably for the East Europeans. By the time of the 1980s there was practically no limitation on East Europe at all.

Q: You had been in Poland. Did you find they headed towards Chicago and other places like that with a large Polish community?

RICHMOND: Any Pole you meet in Warsaw is likely to tell you he's got a cousin in Chicago. That's how it used to be. Today the cousins are going to be out in the suburbs. They aren't so much in the city of Chicago. But they didn't go after that. Some did and some didn't. They came over. They did what they were supposed to do.

Q: Would you be monitoring them when they came back to see what they did with what they had learned?

RICHMOND: Unfortunately, no. We had very small staffs in those countries. To the extent that someone was well known and had a contact in the embassy, we would usually look them up afterwards. There was no problem in doing that – taking them to lunch or dinner and asking them about their experiences. But they would do it for us. They would write articles to the extent they could do it in their countries about their visits. They would give lectures to their colleagues.

Q: Was there any alumni program, "all exchange people on the Fourth of July come and have a hot dog with us?"

RICHMOND: We would invite the ones that we had contacts with but there was no attempt in those years to establish an alumni association. There is now. There is now an IREX alumni association in Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union. But I don't know to what extent that's happened in Eastern Europe.

Q: What about high school students?

RICHMOND: We had a large high school exchange with Germany after the war, but we did not have that with the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe for a number of reasons. The

East Europeans would not have wanted it. They would have felt that these kids were too immature to be sent abroad for a year. Secondly, we did not want it. When you have a limited amount of money to spend, you have to decide where to put it. Where are you going to get the biggest bang for the buck? When you select high school students, it's much more difficult to determine who is going to be something someday. When you get to graduates it's easier. When you get to graduate students it's relatively easy. So we always preferred graduate students for that very reason. It was better to pick the people who were going to come back and do something important.

Q: Did marrying present a problem?

RICHMOND: I can't recall any cases. Of course, there is the famous case – it was not in the exchanges – with the Olympics where an American shot-putter had an affair with a Czech woman athlete and they wanted to get married and there was a big to do whether the United States was going to give this guy a passport or give her the visa to come join him. John Foster Dulles when pushed to the wall made his famous statement saying that "The State Department is in favor of love" and she was given a visa. But that was in the Olympics.

Q: I remember the guy. He was in a seminar I had at Boston University.

RICHMOND: His name was Harry Connelly. He came from Boston College.

Q: Yes, but he was in a seminar at Boston University when I was there.

RICHMOND: Another thing: most of the Soviets who came here were married. That was part of the deal they had with the KGB. They preferred to send married people for that very reason. And not to send women, who were considered vulnerable.

Q: You were saying that during this '63 to '66 period… Congress didn't give you a rough time on this?

RICHMOND: No, never.

Q: By this time what were you doing, working on your Russian?

RICHMOND: At the end of '66, I went to FSI for a year of Russian language studies, and then to Moscow in the summer of '67.

Q: How long were you in Moscow?

RICHMOND: Two years.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

RICHMOND: It was initially Tommy Thompson and then Jake Beam, for whom I had worked in Warsaw.

Q: How did you find the embassy?

RICHMOND: There was no USIS post. We were integrated into the embassy. We had a press and cultural section which in any other place would have been a USIS post. We were a part of the embassy. We attended all the staff meetings. I had the rank of counselor for press and culture.

Q: This is equivalent to what, the top USIS job?

RICHMOND: Yes, it was the PAO.

Q: Looking at that time, how were relations when you arrived there in '67?

RICHMOND: Bad. Vietnam was heating up. Vietnam was a constant problem during those years.

Q: This was the last part of the Johnson administration.

RICHMOND: Yes. Vietnam was really creating problems. Then there was a meeting of the Communist Party organization which took a very hard line against the United States. It was very difficult for us to do anything. Then came August 20, 1968: the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which further set back U.S.-Soviet relations and they did not recover until Nixon was elected and came into office in January '69 and turned over a new leaf. The Soviets turned over a new leaf, too. That was the beginnings of detente.

Q: Let's talk about this. How did you find dealing with the Soviet press or did one deal with the Soviet press?

RICHMOND: I didn't. We had very little contact with them. They had nothing to do with us. By agreement between the 2 governments, they limited the number of correspondents in each other's country to 26. They were the ones who were trying to report on what was going on in Moscow. But we were often a source of their information. The ambassador would hold a Friday afternoon session with the American correspondents in his office. I attended that. He would discuss what was going on in the Soviet Union that he thought they should know.

Q: I would have thought that in many ways the correspondents would get out more than our officers could.

RICHMOND: They had difficulties, as we did, with travel. Most of the Soviet Union was closed to travel by foreigners. Anyone who wanted to travel whether he was an embassy officer or an American correspondent or a British correspondent or a French

correspondent had to file a travel plan 48 hours in advance. 48 hours in advance you had to tell them where you were going to go, what you were going to do, where you were going to be, whom you were going to see. They would run that by the KGB and they would approve the travel or not approve it. Even areas that had been previously open would suddenly be closed for "reasons of a temporary nature," which means they didn't want any Westerners in that town at that point. The job was very difficult. Our correspondents were often harassed. Embassy officers less likely, but correspondents were often harassed by the KGB if they were poking around too much.

Q: What about your operations there?

RICHMOND: One thing, we were managing the exchanges program. There were all kinds of little problems that had to be attended to. Housing. The main problem for American scholars and students was access to archives in which Russian lethargy and inefficiency was as much a reason as the KGB. Housing was very bad, particularly in Leningrad, and still is today for students and for other people if you read the "New York Times." The third was travel. During semester breaks or at the end of their studies, most of the Americans wanted to travel in the Soviet Union and see what things were like outside of Moscow or Leningrad. The Soviets would deny that in most cases. Whereas the Soviets in the United States could go anywhere. We had closed zones, but for official people in the embassy and UN mission but not for students. Anybody on the exchange program was not subject to our closed zones. They could go anywhere provided we knew in advance where they were going.

Q: Was there any movement in the U.S. to say, "Hell, if they're going to do this to us, we're going to do that to them?"

RICHMOND: Yes. There was. That came up all the time. However, when Kennedy was elected President, he offered to do away with this closed zone business if the Soviets did it also. They turned him down. That offer was made several times in different administrations and every time, the Soviets turned it down. Their military and their intelligence services did not want foreigners poking around in various places.

Q: Were you able to get out and around a bit?

RICHMOND: Yes, I got out as much as I could. I went to Leningrad several times, to Georgia, to Kiev, I traveled with some of the American performing arts groups in Siberia… A visiting American organization or institution was always an excuse to tag along and go with them.

Q: How were these American performers received?

RICHMOND: Anything American was always a box office attraction no matter what it was. The Soviets had a great curiosity about the world beyond their borders because it was taboo, because it was closed to them. So anything foreign was attractive. You

couldn't judge the audience reaction by the press reviews because the press reviews were always very guarded. In our country, we're used to seeing a press review in the morning after. In the Soviet Union, it might be as long as a week later because they had to be cleared by people all the way up in the political hierarchy before they could print it.

Q: Did you have any problem with these traveling groups?

RICHMOND: No, never.

Q: I would think something like jazz groups would be very popular.

RICHMOND: Jazz was popular, but the Soviets even had a problem with jazz. We sent all the major established jazz groups under the exchange program. We sent Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Dave Brubeck, New York Jazz Repertory, Preservation Hall from New Orleans, but the Soviets turned down jazz groups that they thought were too avant garde. They also turned down American ballet groups that they thought were too avant garde. If something was traditional and established, okay. If it was something new, they saw it as dangerous.

Q: Did you get any chance to talk to the cultural movers and shakers in the Soviet world?

RICHMOND: When I was there, it was a difficult period and it was very difficult and dangerous for Russians to have close relations with Americans. But some of my predecessors and people who followed me did have very good contacts with Soviets. I recall I met a lot of important people at diplomatic receptions. Moscow had a large diplomatic community. You were always getting invitations to cocktails 6-8 and you went to the extent your time permitted because that's where you could meet Russians. We would invite people to our diplomatic parties and they would come if they had a written invitation which they could show to the Soviet guard outside our residences or outside the embassy.

Q: Was there much free flow or talk when you got in there within a reception?

RICHMOND: It's often been said that anybody who served in that part of the world automatically looked behind him before he opened his mouth. It's quite true. I found myself doing that years after I had left Moscow. You looked around to see who was listening. You were very careful what you said. In Eastern Europe, there was no problem. In Czechoslovakia, there was a problem. Less in Hungary. And no problem in Poland. Poles didn't give a damn. The Poles would tell you whatever they wanted.

Q: Was there a buildup to the Soviet clampdown on Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring? Was everybody wondering how far this would go?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes, this was a real test for Ambassador Thompson. Washington kept asking him, "Are the Soviets going to move or not?" It's all been written up. This was the

kind of cable that didn't get broad distribution in the embassy, but I think Thompson comes out looking rather good on this.

Incidentally, a little sidebar on this. I was in Finland the night the Soviets invaded. I had taken my summer leave with my family, a wife and 3 little children, for 2 weeks. We were on our way back with a station wagon loaded with goodies for the next year or so. We drove up to a town on the Finnish side of the border and stayed overnight in a hotel planning to drive non-stop to Moscow the next day. I woke up Sunday morning, August 20, and went out of the hotel to check my car and it was deathly still on the street. There wasn't a person in sight. I knew something had happened. I ran back to the hotel and asked the clerk what had happened. He said, "The Russians have invaded Czechoslovakia and we Finns are wondering if we are next." It was a very tight situation. There I was in neutral Finland with a wife and 3 kids. Should I stay there? Should I go back to Moscow? I had a shortwave radio in my car. We listened to all the newscasts from all the radio stations we could. My wife and I decided we could go back. So we went across the border and they let us back in again and we drove back to Moscow listening to all the radios, wondering if World War III was about to start.

Q: How was the drive from Leningrad to Moscow?

RICHMOND: Terrible. A 2 lane road. Bumps in the road. Few gas stations. I remember stopping at one place to get gas and I asked if they had any water. They said, "Yes, around the back." They went around the back and there was a well with a bucket. So I had to pick up a bucket of water to put in my radiator.

Q: Did you spend overnight there?

RICHMOND: You could spend overnight in Leningrad if you made reservations in advance.

Q: How about when you were in the Soviet Union, were you followed most of the time?

RICHMOND: A lot of embassy officers were followed. I'm not aware that I was followed. They knew who I was. They knew I was not CIA or intelligence service. I tried to do everything just as I would in any other country. I was not paranoid. I made a decision early on that I was going to treat the Soviets just as I treated people in any other country and I was not going to be harassed by this. It worked. They knew everything I did because phones were monitored – perhaps our offices, too. I had nothing to hide.

Q: How did you treat the 3 Baltic states – Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania?

RICHMOND: That's an interesting story. In the beginning, there was strong opposition in the United States to our including the 3 Baltic states in our exchange agreement because we did not consider them part of the Soviet Union. They had embassies or legations here in Washington with which we maintained the fiction of reciprocity. But I changed that.

I'm very proud of this. Until I got to Moscow, we would not allow American students to study in the Baltic states. When I was in Moscow, we got a cable from the State Department that IREX, who was going to nominate an American of Lithuanian origin who spoke Lithuanian and wanted to study in Vilnius, and did the embassy have any objection? I went to Ambassador Thompson and said, "Look, it's time to end this. It's in our interest to have that American go to Lithuania and study." We changed the policy.

Q: Did you get any feedback or kickback?

RICHMOND: Not at all. Years later when I was on the exchanges staff in Washington, we wanted to send American exhibits to the Baltic states. I called in the representatives of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian communities. The three of them sat around my desk and I said, "We have this big exchange program with the Soviet Union. We want to send our orchestras, our dancers, our jazz groups, and our exhibits to the 3 Baltic states. Do you have any objection?" They said, "No, but don't quote us on this." This is how a mid-level official can often change policy. He can push it in one way or another.

Q: How did your family like the Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: My wife at that time – we're now divorced – was one of these native born Americans who can learn any language in 6 months. She was fluent in Russian, Polish, German, French, Italian, Spanish. She loved it. She was out all the time. We had a Finnish nanny living with us who took care of the kids. My wife was out all over the place.

Q: How big was your American staff?

RICHMOND: When I arrived, we had 4, including myself, 5 with a secretary. Then we lost one. Somebody was PNGed and didn't come back. Then we had an operation called BALPA, Balance of Payments, where all missions abroad were asked to analyze their staffs and see if they could give up a position or 2. I, to the consternation of Washington, USIA, gave up a position. I said, "There is not a hell of a lot we can do right now. We're doing it very well with the staff… We're one man short." I gave up a position. My colleagues in Washington were furious.

Q: Did they get out and around?

RICHMOND: Yes, the ones who spoke Russian, and everybody had to speak some degree of Russian to get assigned to Moscow. They did get out. It's awfully difficult on a small staff. In a place like Moscow, you're deluged with telegrams from all over the world. There's a temptation to sit at your desk and read those telegrams. I made it a practice to get out of my office every day to do something, no matter what it was. Every time I got out, there was something worth seeing. I stumbled across something that was very interesting.

Q: This is the thing of fighting the tendency to end up reading the newspapers and sitting at your desk, which you can do back in Washington. How about the local staff?

RICHMOND: The local staff in Moscow was presumed to be working for the KGB and they were, we knew it. So there was not much you could do with them. We had in the American embassy what we called "cult up" and "cult down." A cultural section up on the 8th floor which was behind the Marine guard security. A cultural section down which was open to the Soviet public. People could walk in, if they dared to go by the guards. We had a little library there and a lot of the American students would come in, and the African students came in, too, because that was the only Western library… No, the French had a library. And we were the only other one.

Q: Any problems with people trying to defect to the embassy while you were there?

RICHMOND: No, not while I was there. There was a case of a famous Pentecostal family who defected and snuck into the embassy and had to be put up there for several months until it could be arranged for them to immigrate. But that happened after me.

Q: By the time you left, were you there when Nixon came in?

RICHMOND: Yes, I was there. Nixon was inaugurated in January 1969. I left in June 1969. Over those 6 months, everything opened up. Everything changed. We were able to do things we couldn't do before. Because of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the State Department had suspended all high level contacts with the Soviets, which in retrospect was a very stupid thing to have done. We weren't allowed to see any high level Russians. They couldn't see us. We didn't send any orchestras, have any exhibits. All that changed when Nixon was inaugurated.

Q: Did you get any feel for the hand of Henry Kissinger while you were there?

RICHMOND: No, but he came to Moscow once as a Harvard professor. We would often get telegrams to "meet and assist," which meant a trip to the airport and it usually took 3 or 4 hours out of your day. Once we got a telegram that a professor from Harvard named Henry Kissinger was coming to Moscow. "Please meet and assist and provide appropriate assistance." I used to tell my staff Harvard professors were a dime a dozen coming to Moscow in those years. I sent my press officer instead, so I missed a chance to meet Henry Kissinger in Moscow.

Q: You left there in '69. Did you really feel that there had been a change?

RICHMOND: Oh, yes. That was the early stirrings of detente. That was followed by these high level visits – Brezhnev to Washington and Nixon to Moscow – and these 11 cooperative agreements that I talked about. It was the start of the joint space missions that we had with the Soviets.

Q: Did you ever find yourself acting as embassy spokesman?

RICHMOND: I was the embassy spokesman, which was very tricky because your TV and radio and press correspondents, when there's a story they're reporting on from Moscow would always try to get the embassy to say something. You still see it today: "The embassy spokesman said…" I was the embassy spokesman. You had to be very careful because what you were saying was for the record. Lyndon Johnson had in his office 3 televisions tuned to CBS, NBC, and ABC, and anything you said was on one of those televisions. If Johnson didn't like it, you heard about it.

Q: Did you have any problems?

RICHMOND: Not a problem, but a humorous story. (end of tape)

There was a Scandinavian Airlines flight that flew from Kabul to Stockholm with a stopover in Moscow and it was a drug route. The Soviets were aware of this. They would often find some Westerner, including Americans, and they'd arrest them for possession of drugs, which was a very serious offense in the Soviet Union. We would do our best to keep it quiet and negotiate, get them out of the country as fast as possible because these things often escalated up to a very high level and created a problem in bilateral relations. Once we had such an American arrested and we managed to get him out. After we got him out of the country, the Soviets broke the story. The Associated Press guy called me and said, "Yale, you didn't tell me that you had an American in the Soviet Union in prison." I said, "You didn't ask me." He said, "Every time I call you from now on, I'm going to end my conversation and ask, 'Do we have any Americans imprisoned in the Soviet Union?'" He did that for several months and then he stopped doing it – and again one was in prison.

Q: How did we work it? Was it more a matter of letting things quiet down and then quietly shipping them out of the country?

RICHMOND: Yes, it was a question of the state of relations. What else was in play? Whether the Soviets wanted to create an incident or whether they did not want to create an incident. Very often you could work this out.

Q: Did you have any counterparts in the Soviet system?

RICHMOND: There was an office of cultural relations with foreign countries in the ministry of foreign affairs. I had a contact there whom I regularly dealt with. I asked him once for his home telephone number. I said, "We have a lot of problems that come up over the weekend, so I may have to call you. Can I have your home phone number?" He refused to give it to me. Later on, I found that he lived in the building right next door to the embassy and he wouldn't tell me that either. He was strictly business. He was KGB, by the way.

Q: Most of the people you had to deal with were probably KGB?

RICHMOND: In exchanges, yes. Not all of them, but most of them. But I must say that some of them were pretty straight guys. They were smarter than the rest of them. They were more outspoken. They would tell you things, particularly in the Soviet embassy in Washington, that no Russian would ever tell you in Moscow. We had a very nice working relationship with the Soviet embassy people here. They would help us out on things we wanted to do - certain limits – and we would help them out in exchange. I visited one of them after the Soviet Union collapsed and the poor guy was broke. He was going to the ministry of foreign affairs every day to eat lunch in their canteen because it was subsidized.

Q: You were dealing with a very difficult society. During this whole time that you were working in the Soviet Union, was there the feeling that - this still had 20 years to go – the clock may be ticking on the system?

RICHMOND: No, I had no feeling at all. The military and the KGB and the Communist Party were securely in charge. In fact, many American scholars will tell you that the Gorbachev reforms did not have to happen, that the anti-Gorbachev coup that the army and the KGB staged could have been successful if the people who led it had had more guts, if they had had more courage. They backed down. But the Soviet Union, the KGB and the army and the Party, they could have clamped down on it. They could have continued for another decade perhaps. The economy was falling apart. Everybody knew that. Anybody who served in Moscow knew that the Soviets were not 10 feet tall, that we had overestimated their strength year after year. But what was holding it together was this police force.

Q: Did you get any feel for the divisions within the Soviet Union? It broke up into Belarus and Ukraine and the Stans and the Baltic states.

RICHMOND: Very little. Anybody who stuck his neck out would have it chopped off. There were dissidents. We knew that. This happened after the Helsinki Accords, another chapter in U.S.-Soviet relations. But after the Helsinki Accords were signed by the Soviet Union, all of these dissidents started speaking up, especially the Soviet Jews who wanted to emigrate to Israel and other countries, and became more emboldened because they were given freedoms under the Helsinki Accords, and the Soviet Union was obliged to respect those agreements.

Q: Did you get any feel during the time you were there about the Soviet Jews? Was this a defined group more or less? Did it have aspirations or anything that we were interested in?

RICHMOND: There are so many ramifications to that. There were a lot of Jews in very high ranking positions, but never in the top spot. Very often you would visit an institution of some Soviet office and the number one person in charge would be a Russian and his

deputy would be a Jew who really ran the operation. But you knew enough not to cultivate those people. You could only get them into trouble by seeking them out. But here and there, you would meet people at diplomatic receptions, but they were always very careful what they said.

Q: But we had no equivalent to a program or targeted thing?

RICHMOND: No.

Q: To any of the ethnic groups?

RICHMOND: No, except in our Voice of America and Radio Liberty broadcast and in our magazine, "America." We distributed under the terms of the cultural agreement a "Life" sized photojournalistic magazine, a very pretty magazine and highly prized by its recipients. I have a chapter on this in my book. We were allowed to distribute 50,000 copies plus 2,000 distributed gratis by the embassy. Every time we published an issue – it was a monthly – we would check to see whether it was distributed. Very little was distributed through the kiosks in newsstands. Most of it was by subscription, which was very good because only the important people were allowed to buy subscriptions, so we were reaching the important people that way.

Q: Did the Voice of America, was it running a policy somewhat different from what you were doing?

RICHMOND: I worked at the Voice one year. I was in charge of broadcasts to Vietnam. We took our guidance from the State Department in those days. It was the voice of the U.S. government and there was no difference in policy. Radio Liberty was somewhat different. It had much more of a free hand. It was funded by the CIA, but the CIA gave them a relatively free hand in what they could do and say.

Q: Did that cause any problems for you?

RICHMOND: No. They were both heavily jammed. I saved Radio Liberty once, possibly from extinction. We were asked in September of '68 to monitor Radio Liberty for a week and give us a report on whether it could be heard above the jamming. I volunteered to do it because I have a degree in electrical engineering and I had a shortwave radio in my car. I drove around the city of Moscow at night 7 days in a row and wrote down where I was, what frequency, and the headlines of the news over the jamming. Then I'd go back to the embassy and send a cable out right away to Washington and Munich. I proved that you could hear Radio Liberty above the jamming. When I came back, I went through New York and saw Howland Sargeant, who was the head of the Radio Liberty Committee, a former Assistant Secretary of State. He told me I saved the radio station and my cables showed that you could hear it above the jamming.

Q: When you left there in '69, was it with some reluctance? Things were beginning to

open up.

RICHMOND: After the Nixon administration came in, Frank Shakespeare, a former official in radio, was appointed director of the U.S. Information Agency. On his first trip abroad, he came to the Soviet Union to open an American exhibit called "Education USA" about the American educational system. I took him up to Leningrad. Before the exhibit opened, he made a preview tour of the exhibit and he focused on the books. The exhibit had a library of books on that subject. This was a library of books on education. He went through it and pulled out a couple of books that he didn't like. He put them on a table and said, "I don't want those books in here." Well, we had this problem with previous USIA directors and we figured this was another one we'd have to educate. So, we were in a room that was used by our exhibit guides – we had about 20 American guides there who spoke Russian, most of them college students, and they were on the floor of the exhibit interpreting, engaging with the Russians and answering questions. They had a room where they would retreat for a smoke or a cup of coffee. We were in that room. There were these books on the table and Frank Shakespeare was there. His assistant, Teddy Weintal, was there. I was there. Pic Littell, the assistant director for Eastern Europe. And Jerry Verner, press officer. I said to Littell, "What do we do about this?" He said, "Look, we've had this problem with every USIA director. We might as well face this one now." So, I said to Shakespeare, "What's wrong with these books?" He started going through them. There were 2 textbooks that teachers were to use with classes and there were photos. One book was of the city, and one was of the country. The one of the city showed various photos of life in a large American city – New York, Boston. And the teacher was supposed to ask the class, "What does this mean to you" and stimulate a discussion. Shakespeare didn't like several photos in there. One photo showed a kid in a slum in a backyard sitting in a bathtub that had been discarded. We started discussing this. Shakespeare said, "I don't want anything that shows badly on the United States." Jerry Verner said, "Look, this represents the prosperity of the United States. The Soviets would be amazed to see that someone would discard a bathtub in an alley. You don't see that anywhere in the Soviet Union. This shows how rich the United States is that people throw away used bathtubs." Shakespeare kept getting hotter and hotter under the collar and finally he stuck his finger in my chest and said, "Look, our mission is to overthrow the Soviet Union. Anyone who doesn't understand that doesn't belong in USIA." He looked me right in the eye. This room had to be bugged. It was where the American staff rested and talked. I said, "Oh, no, Mr. Shakespeare, that's not the policy of the State Department. We want to live with these people in peace." He got apoplectic and he blew up. They had to get him outside, walk him up and down the street to cool him off. I did not go back to Moscow for a third year. I was an FSO-2 at the time. I was held up for promotion to class one until Shakespeare resigned. After Shakespeare resigned, the next promotion panel promoted me to class one. He resigned because of differences in policy with the State Department. This is going in my memoirs after I consult a libel lawyer.

Q: My understanding is that you can't really libel a public figure if it's not done for malicious purposes.

RICHMOND: Shakespeare's differences were well documented.

Q: You came back. Did you feel that you were put into the USIA ghetto?

RICHMOND: No, there was a big debate on what to do at USIA because Shakespeare was in charge. He was the director of the agency. There was another movement... Because I didn't go back to Moscow, somebody else had to replace me and that caused a vacancy here and a vacancy there. They gave me the Senior Seminar, which was very nice.

Q: So you were in the Senior Seminar from '69 to '70?

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: How did you find that?

RICHMOND: I thought it was a great experience. The idea in those days - we had a lot of money in those days - was to reacquaint FS officers with the domestic scene and what was going on in the United States while they were abroad. We had a lot of money for travel and every month we had one trip for a week to a different part of the United States. We went to San Francisco, LA, Detroit, Chicago, Boston, New York, New Orleans, Puerto Rico.

Q: I was there in '74-'75. We went to Puerto Rico.

RICHMOND: We had speakers come in and speak to us on all kinds of things. It was a sabbatical.

Q: So in 1970, whither?

RICHMOND: They sent me back to USIA as policy officer for Europe. I had that for a year. As policy officer, you go to meetings at the State Department with the policy people. There's a meeting at the State Department every morning, or there used to be, before the spokesman goes on the air. Then you'll discuss what the issues of the day are and how you want to handle it. I would go to those meetings and I would go to a corresponding meeting in Europe earlier that morning and then bring the policy back. "Here's the party line." After a year of doing that, Dick Davies, ambassador to Poland - he should have been ambassador to the Soviet Union, but he got bumped by somebody - Davies was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, called me up and asked if I wanted to come back to the State Department and work on the Soviet exchanges. I said, "I sure do, if you can get me out from under Frank Shakespeare." So, I went to the State Department and was there 2 years as Deputy Director of the Office of Soviet Exchanges. Then when somebody else moved out of the CU office of Soviet Exchanges, I went into that for 4 years. I ran exchanges with the Soviet Union for 4 years.

Q: So this was in the State Department?

RICHMOND: Yes.

Q: Wasn't this because Senator Fulbright didn't want USIA to have exchanges?

RICHMOND: I don't know about that.

Q: When you came back, what were you picking up about Frank Shakespeare? Was he having...

RICHMOND: He was having problems with the State Department continually. He was a far right winger.

Q: On the exchange program, what were we doing? You were doing this from when to when?

RICHMOND: From '71 to '78 until CU came into USIA and then I went back with it to USIA. They created a special position for me. When CU was transferred back to USIA, the whole Soviet program came with it. Charlie Bray had a meeting with Bill Hitchcock, the first deputy assistant in CU, as to how to handle the exchange program. Hitchcock told him, "You can't run it without Yale Richmond." So, I went back to USIA and they created a special position for me as Deputy Assistant Director.

Q: So you continued this until when?

RICHMOND: Until I retired in January of 1980.

Q: Let's talk about this 9 years with the exchange programs. In '71, where did things stand?

RICHMOND: In '71, Kissinger was National Security Advisor. Kissinger was formulating his opening to China policy, his opening to the Soviet Union. The idea was cooperation instead of confrontation. Exchanges boomed. Not only did we have the official exchange, the cultural exchange program, the numbers were increasing, the numbers in all categories, but we had these 11 cooperative agreements that I spoke about which moved thousands of Russians and Americans back and forth. Also the private sector got very much involved. Most exchanges have traditionally been the prerogative of the private sector in this country. Now that the White House was giving its go-ahead and having all kinds of exchanges with the Soviet Union, the private sector got involved. We had all kinds of organizations calling up. I spent a lot of time on the phone with people calling up, "How do I invite a Soviet to my conference next month?" What I remember best was from the Texas Bar Association. Someone called up and said, "We want to invite a Soviet lawyer to our annual meeting?" I said, "Whom do you want to invite?" He said, "Anyone. We don't care. Just as long as he's a Russian." I told him how to do it.

Q: This must have been quite a strain. Somebody had to identify people. It would end up being the embassy or your office.

RICHMOND: Well, the more people who traveled, the more names they brought back. The more Americans who went, the more they suddenly became overnight experts on the Soviet Union. They had been there and traveled around and met people. So the word of mouth was very important.

Q: Did you have a feeling that the KGB was beginning to lose control of the system?

RICHMOND: They were very much in control, but they were relaxed because the official policy from Brezhnev on down was that exchanges are good and should be encouraged. So, the KGB screening of people was not as thorough as it formerly had been. Nobody came without KGB clearance.

Q: Were families coming with them?

RICHMOND: Yes. Families started... The Atomic Energy Commission had an exchange agreement with the corresponding Soviet agency for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that was annexed to the cultural agreement. Under that agreement, we started to get Soviets coming with their wives for the first time because they were considered in work so highly sensitive that the Russians did not want them to come without their wives, thinking they would be entrapped. The first Soviet came with his wife to Chicago to the nuclear laboratory there at the University of Chicago, Argonne National Laboratory, and that opened it up to others.

Q: Was your slice of the pie strictly Eastern Europe/Soviet Union?

RICHMOND: Yes. The China program was separate. A program developed with China in those years... I had gotten tired of working in Soviet exchange. I went over to see Pickering, who was Assistant Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary. I heard they were building up a big exchange program and I went over and asked him if he would take me into his office to run the China program. He listened. I knew him because he was a neighbor of mine out in Virginia. He didn't want me there. He wanted to make a clean break with the Soviet controlled system. That's how the Chinese program developed without the system of controls that we had over the Soviets.

Q: It turned out to be a huge program. It had significant repercussions within China.

RICHMOND: It did. You had a lot of Chinese professors who had studied in the United States before the war and already had the contacts with their American colleagues. We didn't have that with Russia. With China you had it and they could recommend students to people they had gone to school with in the United States who were now professors.

Q: We used to have Yale in China and others. There is still a lot.

Did things change within Eastern Europe? How were these exchanges run during this time?

RICHMOND: Things relaxed considerably. Exchanges with Hungary expanded greatly, even with Czechoslovakia, which was still under Party leaders. Bulgaria expanded. They took their cue from Moscow. If the Soviets were having exchanges with the United States, the Eastern Europeans wanted them to. The only country that was never brought in was Albania. That was a class by itself.

Q: Sort of like North Korea.

RICHMOND: Right. IREX started into East Germany, too. IREX, which was running programs with the Soviet Union, also was running programs with East Germany.

Q: This was a time when we recognized East Germany in the '70s. We established an embassy. It became part of Eastern Europe.

RICHMOND: Yes. I made a visit to Berlin in those years. Sol Polansky was our man in Berlin. He gave a lunch and he invited the East German guy who was responsible for cultural exchanges. I made my pitch that we should have cultural exchanges with East Germany. He was non-committal. I pointed out that we had it with the Soviet Union. We had it with all the other East European countries. Why not with East Germany? I told him what we were doing in each of these countries and he listened very carefully but he didn't bite. They were still cautious.

Q: By the time you left, had they moved into it?

RICHMOND: IREX, but not any of the other official programs.

Q: Were we still running cultural teams going in?

RICHMOND: Exchanges with the Soviet Union under the cultural agreement continued until the late 1980s. At the Reagan-Gorbachev summit meeting in '85, a new cultural agreement was signed considerably relaxing the controls on both sides and opening it up. The cultural agreement gradually faded away. By about 1988, we were no longer doing things strictly under the cultural agreement. We were just going ahead and doing them.

Q: Were there any real cultural exchanges that you particularly enjoyed or felt made an impact?

RICHMOND: The biggest effect was in places like Poland and Hungary. Soviets had difficulty getting out to visit the United States or Western Europe, but it was very easy for a Soviet scholar or scientist to go to Warsaw or Budapest. That was within the Soviet

Bloc. So, all of the exchanges we had with Poland and Hungary and later with Romania and Bulgaria had a ripple effect in the Soviet Union. Soviets could then go to Poland and Hungary and find out what people in their field were doing in the West. Poland has traditionally been Russia's window on the West. That was true in the czarist era and it was true under the communists also.

Q: What about things like publications? Every field has a series of publications where they pass on information. Was that part of the cultural exchange?

RICHMOND: No, it was not, but the Soviet think tanks like their USA Institute and another one whose initials were IMEMO, they subscribed to all the Western publications. Also, in those years, the 1970s, there was a big exchange between Soviet and American university libraries. The Library of Congress has had an exchange with the Soviet Union for many years going way back to the 1920s. That expanded. But universities which had Russian study programs like Indiana, Illinois, Harvard, Columbia, often had a counterpart library in the Soviet Union with which they exchanged publications. That was not part of the cultural agreement. Those books were put on the shelves. They were not just read by the cognicenti.

Q: Did you see a change in the society in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe?

RICHMOND: Oh, sure, you saw all kinds of changes. You saw the globalization of American culture. You saw it with the Soviets starting to wear jeans and leisure clothes. You saw it with the opening of McDonald's in Russia. You saw it with the sale of Western publications, with family reunification moves, immigration to Israel. The Soviet Union was opening up. All this was happening in the 1980s under Gorbachev, who himself was in a way of product of these exchanges. Gorbachev's father of glasnost was Alexander Yakovlev. Alexander Yakovlev was in the first group of Soviet students to come to the United States under the exchange agreement. He studied a year at Columbia University and then went back and became rather high up in various organizations and then was ambassador to Canada for 10 years. He has told someone that the one year he spent at Columbia University was more important to him than the years he spent in Canada because he read all kinds of books that he couldn't read in the Soviet Union. It was due to Alexander Yakovlev that Gorbachev pushed through his perestroika restructuring and glasnost (openness), but there is another twist to this. Gorbachev when he was a law student in Moscow was in the same class with a young Czech law student. They were in the same class for 5 years. They lived in the same dormitory. They got married on the same day. And this Czech was Gorbachev's first contact with the West because he was a communist and he rose up to a very high position in the Czech Party, became involved in the Prague Spring, and was booted out but maintained his friendship with Gorbachev through all of those years. This guy was a very sophisticated westerner, as the Czechs are, and Gorbachev was undoubtedly influenced by this guy.

Q: I'm still talking about the '71-'80 period. Did you find that the tenets of communism, the teaching of Marxism, were you getting that this had pretty well run its course and it

really didn't have much bite within the Soviet empire anymore?

RICHMOND: Yes, very few people believed in it anymore. They realized it wasn't working for them, that there had to be changes. And the KGB was a leader in the movement for change because the KGB, its foreign part of it, had been exposed to the West and they saw how the West was progressing economically and socially and the Soviet Union was lagging behind. So, there were very few diehard ideologists by the end of the 1980s.

Q: Did that change what we were doing at all?

RICHMOND: It made it easier to do things, send groups that we could not send before.

Q: What type of groups... What were the groups that you enjoyed sending most?

RICHMOND: This may sound strange, but the university bands because the State Department had a very small budget for cultural exchanges - I think it was 5 million for the whole world and half of that went to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe - we were always looking for things that didn't cost us much money. One thing was the university symphonic band. The idea of a symphonic band was new to Russia. It was just inconceivable that a symphonic band of brass and woodwinds could play symphony music, but they did. So, we sent the University of Michigan band, the Minnesota band, the Eastman Philharmonic, some jazz groups, and all we had to do was buy them a blazer with a university emblem and pay their per diem and travel and they didn't require an honorarium, whereas if we sent a major symphony orchestra, that was several hundred thousand dollars out of our budget. And the Soviets at first didn't like this. They said, "You're equating your student groups with our professionals." But then they learned that many of these academic units were really professional, on a par with professionals.

Q: You retired in 1980?

RICHMOND: January 1980.

Q: At the very end, were you able to see the repercussions of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan? That must have shut everything down.

RICHMOND: It did. I was in Moscow negotiating a new cultural agreement in December when the Soviets invaded. FSO Ed Hurwitz was the head of our delegation. I was his deputy. We already sensed that there was some difficulty and we couldn't figure out what was going on. We could not reach agreement, so we adjourned. We said we would renew the negotiations in January. Of course, the Soviets invaded just around Christmastime and we cut off exchanges for a number of years. The academic exchanges continued, but we cut off the high visibility exchanges and we did not participate in the Moscow Olympics for that reason.

Q: Exchange-wise, it was a difficult time.

RICHMOND: Yes. That's why I went to work for the Helsinki Commission on the Hill.

Q: Were you getting any feel for the deterioration of the leadership of the Soviet Union? Brezhnev was getting older and once he went they kept putting Andropov and Chernenko, who didn't last very long because they died.

RICHMOND: That all happened after I had retired, but in the late '80s everybody knew that Brezhnev was getting senile. That was obvious.

Q: When you retired in January of 1980, what did you do?

RICHMOND: I wanted a half-time job. I didn't want a full-time job anymore. So, I was a staffer with the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in the US Congress, which was really pushed through by Representative Dante Fascell. He had a staffer named Spencer Oliver who had been running a big exchange program of young political leaders. Spencer Oliver was a great organizer. He formed the American Council of Young Political Leaders, which was young Republicans and young Democrats. They came to the State Department with a proposal that they would run exchanges starting off with NATO countries and exchange delegations for 2 weeks. One week would be a seminar, a debate. Then they would travel around the country. Then they came to us with a proposal to expand that to the Soviet Union and we jumped on it. They did all the negotiating with the Komsomol, the Soviet youth organization. That program is still running today. The State Department supports it. It was Spencer who was then executive director of this Helsinki Commission in the Congress and he asked me to come over and work with him because exchanges were a part of their work. I said, "I'll do it if I can do it on a half-time basis. I'll give you a whole day's work in 5 hours." So, I went in from 9 to 1 every day and worked there. I was there for 3 years. At the end, I went to the Madrid Review Conference, where Max Kampelman was the head of our delegation. Toward the end of the conference, I was his press officer. He was a great guy. Then after 3 years there, John Richardson, who had been appointed president of the newly established National Endowment for Democracy, which was also a work of Dante Fascell, called me up. He had been Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs. I had worked for him at the State Department all those years. He called me up and said, "Yale, we're having trouble writing grants. We have an appropriation of $15 million. We are halfway through the fiscal year. We haven't written a single grant. No one here knows how to write grants. Would you want to come over for 30 days?" I said, "Sure. I know how to write grants." So, I went over for 30 days, and the 30 days became 9 years, also half-time.

Q: The exchange program started out as a post-World War II thing, first the leaders in Germany and Japan. It kept evolving. Where does it stand today? Then it became a Cold War weapon as well as with emerging democracies.

RICHMOND: This is all in the memoirs that I'm writing. I start off with Germany and

show how the exchange program was the main thrust of the democratization program. We called it the reorientation, but it was a democratization program to democratize Germany. And we did it. Thousands and thousands of Germans came to the US from high school up to the top levels of government. They came, they saw, they were conquered. When the Soviet program started, that was the model except the German program was largely Germans to the United States, whereas the Soviets insisted on reciprocity. We liked the reciprocity angle, too, because it enabled us to get our people into the Soviet Union. But the programs that we ran in the Soviet Union were essentially the same ones we ran in Germany, except they were reciprocal.

Q: Where do exchanges stand today? It has to have a different cast.

RICHMOND: The programs have continued, but cut back largely because Congress cut back the funding. With the end of the Cold War, the funding was slashed for many of these programs, especially in Western Europe and the Middle East. Now with the "war on terrorism" and the goings on in the Middle East, we are realizing that these programs are very good if considered on a long-term basis. You're starting to see an increase in exchanges with the Middle East. I think it'll have an effect, but it'll take longer there because it's not part of the Western world. Germany was a part of Western civilization for centuries, and Russia was, too, to a lesser extent. But in dealing with the Islamic countries, you're dealing with an entirely different culture and it may take longer.

Q: On the other side of the China thing, there is such a thirst for education in the Asiatic world it makes exchanges highly desirable.

RICHMOND: And the Chinese have a great work ethic. I remember my first visit to Bangkok going out on the streets at night, you'd see little craftsmen doing all kinds of work on the sidewalks with kerosene lamps. They were Chinese. They weren't Thai. The businesspeople in Thailand were mostly Chinese, and all through Southeast Asia. And you'd see these Chinese repairing shoes and weaving and doing all kinds of craftwork which was their work on the sidewalks all night long.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop.

End of interview