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

GEORGIA A. ROGERS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the 6th of May 2003. This is an interview with Georgia A. Rogers. What does the "A" stand for?

ROGERS: It's a middle initial.

Q: Just a middle initial.

ROGERS: Just a middle initial.

Q: Okay. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Well, Georgia, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

ROGERS: Okay. I was born in Denver, Colorado in 1944 and I stayed there for a couple of decades before I left. So I was born and raised in Denver.

Q: Tell me something about your parents. Let's go to the father's side. Mr. Rogers. Where did the Rogers come from eventually?

ROGERS: They came from Ireland primarily. There was some French in the family on one side or another, further back. But primarily from Ireland.

Q: What did your grandfather do on your father's side?

ROGERS: My grandfather was a teamster, and that was back in the days when a teamster meant they drove a team of mules or horses. So he basically was a freight person, or freighter person, I guess you'd call it these days. Hauling things in a buckwagon and a team. And that was in Colorado.

Q: Did your family go way back in Colorado. I mean as far as those things go.

ROGERS: Right. Back to mid-1850s.

Q: What about on your father's side, your grandmother and all. Do you know much about her?

ROGERS: As far as I know, she was a stay-at-home kind of woman and raised about four or five kids, and they were all - they stayed in Denver. I think her family came from Ireland. I mean, I know hers did, and I think his did.

Q: Did you know either of your grandparents?

ROGERS: I knew both of them. My grandfather died when I was probably four, five, six years old. You know, so small that they kind of didn't let little kids go to the funeral. Then my grandmother died when I was probably twelve or thirteen. So, yes, I knew them both pretty well.

Q: Your father, what did he do?

ROGERS: He was a rancher and a farmer outside of Denver at a little place called

Morrison, about 30 miles west of Denver. He basically sharecropped. My aunt had a spread out in that area, and so he would farm and take care of some of the crops and some of the cattle, and then we would get a cut of that as payment, let's say. You know, a salary. So that's what he did.

Q. *Did your father go to college or anything?*

ROGERS: No. My father went to the 8th grade. And his father went to the 4th grade. So, you know, we're kind of making progress.

Q: Did he get caught up in World War II?

ROGERS: He was. He was a merchant marine and traveled around the world on a ship and loved it, and I think that's probably part of the reason I came to the State Department, because he was always talking about overseas.

Q: What about on your mother's side? What was their name?

ROGERS: Her name was May, and her family came from Germany and, early on, from France. And she was a stay-at-home mother, and her father was a salesperson, worked for International Harvester, a tractor company, whatever it is. And her mother died when my mother was very young. Her mother was killed in a parade, of all things, in Denver. She fell off one of the floats.

Q: Oh, my God!

ROGERS: And it did something horrendous, and she died. So I didn't know her, but I did know my grandfather for just a little bit. He died when I was quite young.

Q: And your mother, did she go to college or did she go to -

ROGERS: Well, being a girl, she did go to secretarial college for a year or so out of high school. She was born down in Oklahoma and went to school down there a little bit and then came to Denver as a teenager. She finished high school and then went to a secretarial school in Denver for about a year.

Q: And how did your parents meet?

ROGERS: Through, as I recall, it was through a high school dance. Where my mother went to high school, they were having dances. And my dad went with a bunch of his buddies, and they met and that was it.

Q: Was your family working on this sort of ranch ? So you lived on a ranch. Is that it?

ROGERS: When I was first born, my dad actually worked for the railroad. He came home from the military and went to work for the railroad for three or four years, so we

lived in town. And then when I was four years old, my aunt's husband was killed in a tractor accident out on the farm, and so she needed somebody to come and help. And so my dad and the entire family went out to help. That's when I was four, and we stayed to this day.

Q: As a kid, you basically grew up on a ranch.

ROGERS: That's right.

Q: Did you do all the ranching things?

ROGERS: We did all the ranching things. Had my own horse, and my own little cow and my own little sheep, and active in 4-H and all that kind of thing.

Q: You were in 4-H?

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: What did you raise?

ROGERS: I raised a Holstein and I raised a Hereford and I raised a couple of little Southdown sheep. Those were the main things.

Q: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

ROGERS: I have an older brother and a younger sister. My brother and I were together when we lived on the farm. My sister is many years younger than I, and by the time she was born, my brother had left and I was getting ready to leave and my father decided to quit farming, so my sister didn't really grow up on the farm. She grew up elsewhere.

Q: Where'd you go to school?

ROGERS: I went to school for twelve years in Jefferson County, Colorado at a place called Bear Creek. There's Bear Creek Elementary, Junior High and High School.

Q: Was this a large, small or -

ROGERS: No. It's small. It's your basic two-room schoolhouse to start with. When I first started, it really was like a two-room. And then Denver County expanded and came out west. So by the time I was, I guess, in junior high, they had built another building and it was full of little kids. By the time I was in high school, it was really quite large. Although my class was small. My graduating class was about 30. But the other end of the pipeline, kids coming in, it was in the hundreds.

Q: Was the two-room schoolhouse one of those things where you had about three classes going on at the same time?

ROGERS: That's right. We had two classes together. Two in each of our rooms, and then they had like a trailer or something for the other two grades. And then middle school was, that was down - that wasn't in the same area. That was in another building somewhere.

Q: Well, how did you find the two-room schoolhouse and the education there?

ROGERS: Apparently the education in Jefferson County is quite good. I mean, when you're a kid, you know nothing about that. But apparently it gave you a good, solid background. The teachers were fine. It was fine.

Q: Well, this curse is that often, you discount the fact that many of the teachers are terribly dedicated and they weren't as loaded with administrative work as they are today.

ROGERS: I think you're right. And being small classroom size, we certainly got a lot of attention. You know, if you had a problem in math, they would walk you through it until you finally got it, as opposed to just sort of ignoring you because they had 30 other kids to worry about.

Q: Did you do much reading? Were you a reader?

ROGERS: You know, I was. I did a lot, and I guess that was maybe 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th grade on. Something like that. You know, living on a farm out in the middle of nowhere, you didn't do a lot things with your friends from school, because there weren't any. So, yes. Like in the summertime, I would read a fair amount. My aunt had this library, I guess you'd call it, in her house. Because she didn't graduate from high school either, and she was taking the GED and she was educating herself for many years. So she had Reader's Digest books and some of these other ones. And she had a whole section that was appropriate for kids, and so I'd go over there and she'd give me a book, and another one, and another one. It was good.

Q: Were you attracted to farm work or -

ROGERS: I was attracted to being outdoors. Yes. I always like being outdoors, and I guess I liked animals. So that was part of it. Being outdoors and - that was the main thing. You know, working in the fields because you got to drive a tractor. And, hey. When you're eight years old and you're driving -

Q: You're driving a tractor -

ROGERS: Oh, it's hot stuff. So, that's pretty neat. Yes, I liked it.

Q. *Being in Colorado right in the middle of the country, did the outside world intrude much? Newspapers, I mean, when you were a kid -*

ROGERS: No. No. And of course this was the '50s, let's say. And the entire country was

kind of re-grouping, I guess. And there wasn't a lot of big news, thank God. So, no. It didn't. But I don't know if that's because of being in the middle of the country in the middle of nowhere, or just because things were in general kind of quiet.

Q: How about the people? Were they pretty much sort of Anglo-Saxons, or -

ROGERS: Totally. Yes, totally.

Q: Migrant labor hadn't -

ROGERS: No. Our place was small enough that, in general, we handled it with ourselves and our neighbors. Every now and then, like at the end of the crop year, maybe in August, September, you'd need a bunch of people to come in and help. And every now and then, we'd hire some folks. But in general, we didn't. When we did hire, though, you're right. They were Hispanics, because Denver had a, still has a large Hispanic community. So that would be the folks.

Q: How about in high school? Your high school was larger then?

ROGERS: It was a little bit larger.

Q: But not -

ROGERS: But my class was real small. My class and the one ahead of me, definitely they were small. You had three or four years of high school, and we probably didn't have more than 200 kids in those four grades.

Q: Well, did you get involved in high school things?

ROGERS: I did a little bit. I was really involved in music, in band. And that was the only thing, actually.

Q: What did you play?

ROGERS: Alto saxophone. Yes. It was great fun.

Q: Marching band?

ROGERS: Oh, yes. We marched all over the place. All 35 of us. I'm sure it sounded horrible. There just weren't enough kids. Yes, I did that. And then I was in Pep Club for a little bit. But again, you know, living on a farm - by the time I was in high school, the rest of the kids in the school were starting to be suburban kids and lived wherever they lived. And there wasn't a lot of interaction.

Q: Did you feel sort of a gap between the sort of suburban kids and the farm kids?

ROGERS: Oh, definitely. You bet. Yes, night and day. The city kids all had cars and they were going to the A&W Root Beer stand after school and stuff, and we all hopped on the bus and went home.

Q: When you were getting ready, leaving high school, what were you pointing yourself towards?

ROGERS: The main thing was a job. I got burned out on school, plus, of course, we didn't have any money, so going on to school, especially for a girl, was like, forget that. So, it was to get a job and see what happens. You know, go forth. And that's kind of what I did. I worked several jobs, secretarial clerk kind of things. And I normally had to work two or three jobs at the same time, because these were totally minimum wage jobs. So I was doing that. And then, in the back of my head, though, coming from Denver. Denver is the largest federal community outside of Washington. So when you're born and raised in Denver, you think federal government. And then there's Lowry Air Force Base and the Air Force Academy had been built not too long before. Rocky Flats Arsenal was there. So all of that - so in the back of my head, it was kind of like, maybe I should do the federal government. And meeting some people at work who had been around, they said, yes. Federal government's good. So I guess I kind of knew, relatively early on, after getting out of school that I wanted to work for the Government. And that worked out.

Q: Well, how did that work out?

ROGERS: Well, the old Civil Service Commission which is OPM now, they used to give tests, and kids could take these tests and, if you passed the test, then they would be able to offer you jobs. So I took the test in Denver and, since it was a secretarial kind of thing, and that, I guess, has been a shortage category forever, they said, okay. You can have a job. Oh, by the way, it's in Washington. And so I came - fine, I don't care. Yes, that's cool. So I came here and I actually had three or four offers. You know, State Department, Department of Agriculture, I think even Civil Service Commission. You know, they're all looking for little clerk/typists. So I went ahead, and I really didn't know much about the State Department then. But I said okay.

Q: Was the money you were offered enough to move you and to move to the city? I mean, could you live?

ROGERS: Well, sure. I mean, you make do. I got $1000 a year raise by taking the federal job from what I was doing in Denver. And that's when you're making $3000, so that 33% increase overnight. It's like, all right. And sure. Like everybody coming out of school, you get a room somewhere. In fact, it was over here in Arlington Forest. These folks rented out two of their bedrooms and their entire basement. So I got one of the bedrooms, got to share the basement room. It worked. That was a GS-3.

Q: But you started in the State Department?

ROGERS: Started in the State Department. That's right.

Q: What were you doing?

ROGERS: I was a clerk/typist in the Bureau of Public Affairs. The Vietnam War was kind of going on then, of course. This was in '66.

Q: '66.

ROGERS: Yes. And so people would be writing in, public inquiries section, they called it. And someone else would write the letter, or - it was a form letter, but they'd tell you what the letter was supposed to say, and we would sit there and type it up and put in whatever enclosures, and mail them out. And that was pretty much it.

Q: What was Washington like in those days? Or did you really have much social life or getting around?

ROGERS: Yes. A lot. There were a number of young people coming in at the same time. And a lot of us were not from this area. And I would say Washington was kind of a home base and a point of departure for us. It was like, we would study maps and, it's like, okay. Next month, let's take a trip to X. You know, we were always going out on the weekends. Spending two or three days out. Going up to Niagara Falls, coming back in one weekend. Things like going to the beach, coming back. So it was really an exploring kind of thing. And Washington was a nice solid base, and it was home. So we would do that. And, like I said, there were a number of us who did that. So it was fun.

Q: How did you find the State Department? Did you feel the State Department was just a job, or did you get any feel for State Department and foreign affairs and all that?

ROGERS: Well, I had an inkling of State Department Foreign Affairs because, when you told people you work with the State Department, they were all quite impressed. I'm going, oh, okay. Great. So, you had that, plus people you met, your supervisors and other sort of, I guess it would be mid-level people, actually, that you met and worked with were really quite good and very supportive and sort of an informal mentor kind of thing. So that was quite nice. And it helped you become part of it.

Q: In the public affairs thing, do you remember who was running that at the time?

ROGERS: Yes. A fellow by the name of Donnelly. I can't remember his first name. He was a political appointee as I recall.

Q: Well, how long did you do that?

ROGERS: Oh, not very long. I stayed there in that little office for, I don't know, three or four months, and then I went to another one and, went from like basic clerk/typist to a bigger clerk/typist and then to a secretary and then to a steno. So probably like three or four years. Yes, it was four years.

Q: Were you taking courses as you went?

ROGERS: Yes, I was. Because I hadn't gone to college yet. And I would say, within a year of coming back here, I found out about Northern Virginia Community College, and I found out that I could go there and the Department would help cover the tuition.

Q: Oh.

ROGERS: I was like ooh, this is good. Tuition at that point was $4 a credit hour, so they would give me a check for 12 bucks, and I would go take, basic English or whatever it was. I was like, God. I can't believe that 12 bucks went so far back then, you know?

Q: Yes.

ROGERS: But yes. I did that and, of course, I took some secretarial courses on my own to do that kind of thing, but I did start at Northern Virginia in just general liberal arts.

Q: Well, Northern Virginia, how was it at that time? Because one of the great things about it is it's got a community around it with more Ph.D.s than any other place in the country, I think. So, it can get an awful lot of temporary high-class labor.

ROGERS: Right you are. Well, it was the same then. When I first started, it wasn't accredited yet. But you had people coming who were moonlighting from their positions throughout the Government. So you take an economics course and you get some guy who is an absolute expert in economics teaching you. And yet he was in the real world as well as being a professor, and so he could explain it to you in layman's terms, let's say. And I think it was really, really good. They were part of the community but not like they are now. I mean, you're right. Now, they really are the community, wherever they are. I mean, they do so much to help out and to contribute. They were just trying to get their legs under them when I was there. And they did.

Q: Well, how long did it take you to get a degree?

ROGERS: Well, it took me five years. Actually, four and a half. I started here, and then, three or four years after I started here, or a couple of years, actually, I transferred from this job and I went to the Passport Office. And I was in the Passport Office about a year here, and then I transferred out to Hawaii. So I went out there to work in the Passport Office, and one of the main reasons I went there, besides it was Hawaii and quite nice, they had a night school. And so I finished my degree there. This was in 1970. And in the late '60s, early '70s, it was hard to find a four-year college that had night classes where you could get a degree.

Q: When you went to the Passport Office, was it Frances Knight?

ROGERS: Frances Knight was there. Exactly.

Q: Talk about the Passport Office in those days.

ROGERS: The Passport Office in those days. There were many layers in it. It's a huge outfit. It is still a very large organization. It was then. They have offices throughout the United States. Headquarters back here is where I first started, and I worked in what was called Foreign Operations. And we worked with the posts overseas. And we would adjudicate their difficult citizenship cases. Post would send them in. We would adjudicate. Go back to post. Say, they are American, they aren't. Issue the passport or not. I handled the Far East area. Always been interested in the Far East. So, I did that for - I guess it was only about a year, actually. And this job opened up in Hawaii as the number two out there. And, I don't know, Hawaii, Far East, a lot of oriental kind of atmosphere. This sounds good. Plus, like I said, I could go to school. So I went ahead and went on that job and went out there. And once you're out in the field, you are pretty much separate from Headquarters Passport. So while you're here in Washington, there was the chance Frances Knight or her head people would be coming to see you about one thing or another. In the field, that never happened.

Q: Was Frances Knight a presence of sort of fear or awe or not?

ROGERS: Well, I think for junior people, it was someone you always heard about and you wanted to be on your p's and q's if she were around. And if you ever got called to her office, you would no doubt be quite nervous. I was never called to her office until, only once or twice. When I was in Hawaii after about two and a half, three years, I thought, okay. I have to come back to the mainland and get re-integrated into the real side of the United States, let's say. Because it was quite different at that time. So I applied for a job down in New Orleans, and she called me back for an interview. And this was kind of unusual. She did not normally interview folks, I don't think, for jobs. But somehow she took an interest in the New Orleans office and called me back. And I was a little nervous. But the interview was fine.

Q: When you were in Washington, dealing with the far eastern problems, how did this work? I mean, these things can get terribly complicated. Did you have sort of legal back-up?

ROGERS: Yes. We did have legal back-up. For one thing, that's all we did. We spent day in and day out adjudicating complicated cases. So after a while, you do kind of get into it. And the posts had a lot of guidance about the kind of documents and the kind of affidavits and the kind of things we would need. So Post would do an outstanding job gathering all this together, and the package would come in, and it might have 20 pieces of paper. And it might be related to another case we did five years ago that had 30 pieces of paper. So you'd pull all those cases, and you'd sit and evaluate them, adjudicate them. And if there was a problem, yes. We had a division that had lawyers who were accredited to Washington, D.C. and Arlington and wherever. And they were, again, experts on citizenship law. So if we had that kind of problem, we would go to them. Needless to say, when we first started in that office, we would do our little thing and write it up and give it

to a supervisor to approve. So, that worked.

Q: Did you get any feel for the division between the Passport Office and the rest of the State Department? Frances Knight certainly made this clear, but I was wondering whether your level

ROGERS: You know, it's funny. No. Not at all. I mean, when you're a GS-7 and you're adjudicating cases and all of this and your attention is to the Far East, no. Not at all. We were in a separate building. I didn't even know what that meant. We were there because there was no space in main State. So we were over on 17th Street. It's like, fine. I mean, maybe it's because there was no space. Maybe it was because she wanted us out of the way.

Q: She made it very clear that she only took orders, really, from maybe the President.

ROGERS: The President would work, I'm sure. Yes, yes. But she was not going to be part of the Bureau, thank you very much.

Q: Hawaii. Out there, what was it like working out there?

ROGERS: Oh, it was intriguing and fascinating and terrific. People in Hawaii are like, of course, most Americans. But they're really hard-working. And there's also the I want to help you or do everything I can for you. That was back in the days when people had to come physically to the Passport Agency to get their passports. And they would come in. I mean, it wasn't like sitting down here across the table, but it was pretty close. They would come in. They'd have their documents. And you'd chat for a bit. And some of the people in the office would have gone to school with these people, would have known them. And, how's the family and all that kind of thing. So it was rather low-key. Very professional. And at the same time, we got the job done. And everybody worked very, very hard to make sure that we got the passport book to the person so they could take their trip.

Q: In part, the passport business is a manufacturing process. Did you find as being off the continent, was that a problem. Getting supplies and getting support and all that?

ROGERS: Yes, it certainly could be. Getting supplies. It's a long ways away. And some of the equipment we had, of course, was special equipment. We normally had back-up. We used to do the passports, used to type them by hand. So, just like at a small post overseas, you'd have an extra one in the closet, just in case. So we'd have that. It was all totally mechanical when I was there. I mean, hand seal and legend machine and all of that. Not like now with computers and if they go down, you're up the creek. I mean, this was a little different, and we could do it. But just getting the blank books over there, that kind of thing. They were delayed more than once. And, you have to do a lot of advance planning to get around that. And that's sort of what we did. We'd stockpile stuff.

Q: Who were your main clients? Were they military or were they -

ROGERS: You know, it was half and half. It was general public, but there were a lot of military people, and we did handle their passport needs. It was the only agency outside Washington that issued official passports because there were so many. Again, at that time, you had the Vietnam war kind of winding down. So you had a lot of folks coming and going. You know, families and whatnot also. So, yes. We handled the military.

Q: You were in Hawaii from when to when?

ROGERS: '70 to '74.

Q: How about the cost of living in Hawaii and all that?

ROGERS: You know, it's funny. It's a little bit more, but you get a cost of living allowance when you're a federal employee. And that is not taxed on the federal side. So, when I was there, it was like 15%. And that was enough to bump my salary up to cover the extra costs. So I think it was about 15% more. But housing is the one thing that was outrageous. I mean really, really expensive. Because obviously there's not a lot of land. But I was lucky. I had an apartment that cost - I don't know what it was. But, you know, X amount of money. And the rent never went up for the four years I was there. So I really lucked out on that. As soon as I left, they converted the building to condo and, of course, I could never have afforded to have stayed.

Q: Did you get involved or see anything of Hawaiian-type politics or not.

ROGERS: Only on the fringes. And it was pretty quiet at that time. More recently, it's become more vocal. You know, they want local Hawaiians to be more involved and whatnot. When I was there, it wasn't quite that way. I mean, it had only been a state for 10 or 11 years when I had come, because it became a state in '59. So there was a lot of the old stuff still hanging around. I think it was just sort of starting to be an issue a little bit, where people who were born and raised there wanted and felt there should be more local politicians, and starting to go down that road. There wasn't a negative problem, though, at all.

Q: In your office, the people you were working with, were they from all different racial groups or not? One thinks of large Japanese and large Chinese community and Korean and others and all that.

ROGERS: Yes, it was a mix. Totally. I mean, it reflected the community. No doubt about it. So there was a mix of people and there still is. When I was there, there were no black Americans. I don't know if there are now or not. But, otherwise, it definitely reflected -

Q: Where'd you go to school?

ROGERS: At the University of Hawaii. Right there in Honolulu. Manila campus.

Q: And you could go to night courses?

ROGERS: I took night courses. Got out of work, hopped on the bus, dashed up. It was great. Worked out perfect.

Q: So, you got a degree in what?

ROGERS: Well, history.

Q: History.

ROGERS: That is the problem with going to night school. You didn't have a lot of options. It was like, okay. I'll take history. But I liked history.

Q: How about social life? How did you find Hawaii?

ROGERS: I found it great. I had no problems. There could be problems back then. A little bit of discrimination. But I didn't have that problem. But, for instance, when I first got there, I stayed at the Y, because I didn't - you could stay at the Y then. It was safe and sound and all that. So I got to know some of the other women there. And we'd go out. And one instance, for instance, there was this woman who was blonde, blue eyes. She and I are standing on a bus. The bus driver - I hop on, fine. He leaves her standing. I'm going, wait a second. You know, what's going - you know, he wouldn't let her on the bus. It was like, wait. So there was some discrimination, but, like I said, I never felt it personally. And going to school and getting acclimated in the community probably helped. Some of my best friends are still out there. I think it's great.

Q: Well, was it hard coming back? Why did you feel you had to get back?

ROGERS: Well, because it's a different culture, a different atmosphere. They say that if you go out there, most people who are from the mainland, you only stay a year or two, and then you want to come back. Or else you'll stay your entire life. You know, it's one or the other. I was very much assimilated, doing all kinds of things. Go to the beach every weekend and all of that with friends. But it was really strange. After about two and a half years, it's like a little light bulb went off. You're sitting on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. You are not that connected to the United States mainland. And I started feeling that discomfort. I don't know what it was. But I would take a trip to LA for a weekend, just to go to the mainland. It was like, aww. I've got to do something about this. So, I don't know. I mean, I guess if you're born and raised on the mainland, you know, there's something about coming back. But I absolutely loved Hawaii and I still - that's where I go for a vacation. I still love it. It's a gorgeous place.

Q: So you applied for this New Orleans job? Did you go there?

ROGERS: I did go there. Because, okay. I want to leave Hawaii, and there weren't a lot of jobs, and it was like, fine, great. I didn't know a lot about New Orleans, but it sounded

intriguing. So, yes. I got the job and went down there in ‘74. Late ‘74.

Q: How long were you there?

ROGERS: I was there about two years. When I went from Hawaii to New Orleans, it was the same job at the same grade, but that was fine. It was a bigger office, but it was the same pay grade, so fine. But I only stayed a couple of years.

Q: How did you find New Orleans? What did you think about New Orleans?

ROGERS: Oh, I loved it. It was great. It’s a different kind of place. All these places are. But it was different. You know Mardi Gras takes in like two or three months almost. If you live down there, you really get into it. It’s a quite sort of segregated city. Or at least it was then. There are different areas. And that was different for me. I’d never quite seen that before. So, I had to get used to that. It’s a big tourist town, just like Honolulu is, so a lot of people coming and going. It’s a small big town, you know. That’s kind of the way to describe it, I think. But I thought it was great.

Q: How about the passport operation? Anything sort of special about it there?

ROGERS: Well, for one thing it has a huge what we call territory. A geographic area of responsibility. So you’re sitting way down South here and you’re responsibility goes all the way up North here. And it’s kind of hard to just physically get around. To do your job sometimes. But after being there a little while, you really are sitting way down here. But planes don’t go down there that often. Trains don’t come in too often.: You’re really cut off.

Q: Both Houston and Atlanta have kind of taken up what used to be New Orleans as the center of operation.

ROGERS: I think you’re right. I think that’s it, exactly.

Q: Were there any innovations coming in at this time?

ROGERS: Not yet. We still did things by hand, you know. We were still like really busy, but nothing like compared to today. I mean, they were doing less than a million passports a year probably in the whole system. Whereas now, we do seven million. So, we were busy with the 10-12 agencies we had, but it wasn’t quite like this. Same thing, though. I mean, people have to establish citizenship and bring us some documents and we adjudicate and then we issue the passport.

Q: Well, have you seen any problem of fake documents. I mean, was this a significant concern anyway?

ROGERS: Well, it’s always in the back of your head, but I don’t remember that we had any big instances of it. No. There weren’t any trends or any groups doing it, that kind of

thing, down there. We had good relations with the state and the county and the city and all those. So if you had a question on a document, you could call them up or send it over or something, and check it out.

Q: How about relations with the FBI and all that? Did they come in?

ROGERS: You know, we didn't use them much. We used DS (Diplomatic Security), even back then, and they would do the liaison. If there was a problem, they would be the ones. I guess they were called - what were they called? DS? Whatever they were called then.

Q: I'm not sure.

ROGERS: Whatever they were.

Q: Well, then, you went up to what, '78?

ROGERS: That's '76. I only stayed a couple of years, '74 to '76. And then another job opened up. Because it's like, okay, like I said, that was a lateral transfer. So why don't I go someplace where I can make more money, too. So Philadelphia opened up. It was a bigger agency and it was a higher grade, so I bid on that. And it happened to also be the Bicentennial, so I went to Philadelphia for the Bicentennial.

Q: Great.

ROGERS: Yes. It worked out quite nice.

Q: You were there for how long?

ROGERS: Two years.

Q: Two years. You sort of had this two year - well, you have a four year, two year, two year.

ROGERS: Right. Yes. It was kind of like foreign service. It was like, okay, move, move, move, move.

Q: How did this work in the Civil Service? Is this a problem, moving like this?

ROGERS: Well, back in the old days, we had two or three different sizes of agencies. You had little dinky agencies like Hawaii. We had eight people. Then you had a mid-sized agency like New Orleans, I suppose Boston, Miami, some other ones. Then you had the larger agencies. Philadelphia, LA, New York. So you had different grade structures because you had different sizes. We don't have that any more. They now are all the same, so moving around now is, in a way, more difficult because you can't go into a small agency and learn, go up to middle and learn, and then go to the big one. Now, you have

to kind of go to an agency and work your way up.

Q: And I would think it would be a problem if you bounced around, you wouldn't have the connections of people knowing you and all that.

ROGERS: I suppose they're pro and con on that. You know, the people at headquarters who are watching or looking will see you bouncing around and talk to senior management at the agencies and find out why you're bouncing around. And hopefully, it's good. You're learning things and you want to grow. So from that point of view, you would still have it. The agencies - people in general stay at the agency. I mean there is not a lot of movement in the Civil Service. And that's by choice. People don't want to move. They're born and raised in Houston, they have a good job with the federal government, they're going to keep it. So that there's not a lot. I was sort of unusual in that.

Q: Well, did you find that this was a problem for you? Is this when people look at you - she likes to travel or something?

ROGERS: No. I didn't find that as a problem. Some of these jobs I applied for, there were like two or three or four candidates. It's not like they had hordes of people trying to get the jobs. There was not a problem at all.

Q: Philadelphia. What were you doing there?

ROGERS: I was the Assistant Regional Director which is the number two, which is the same job I had in Hawaii and the same job I had in New Orleans. But, again, it was bigger and different and all that. It's like a post. Every post is the same, yet every post is different.

Q: I'm so used to the Foreign Service, but in the Civil Service, I would think you would always wind up with the problem. Whoever say is number one at a post or a place has probably been there a long time, haven't they?

ROGERS: Yes, that's true.

Q: How do they view somebody coming from out of town, or something like that?

ROGERS: I think at the senior levels, it's not a problem. I mean, they're the one selecting you, for one thing. So, they had a choice and, for whatever reason, they would select me, and maybe it was because they wanted new blood or maybe it was because I had all this experience, or maybe, who knows. But it wasn't a problem.

Q: What was happening in Philadelphia during the Bicentennial?

ROGERS: Oh, wild. Everything was happening. I mean, there were positive demonstrations. People putting on a demonstration about how they did things in 1776. There were plays, there were parades, there were community gatherings, one thing and

another. It was a very interesting time. You had big ships come in. So much going on. And, again, many of the people in the agency were from the area, and they knew about all this stuff going on and would tell you. It was really good fun. A very exciting time to be there.

Q: By this time, was the passport business changing at all? Or were you beginning to feel the impact of increased tourism and all?

ROGERS: Perhaps a little, but not too much. Not yet. Not yet. It's coming, but not yet.

Q: People still had to come in to the Passport Office?

ROGERS: Well, yes. They could go to the Clerk of Court. It wasn't nearly the same. They could go to the Clerk of Court or many post offices around the country and apply. And that saved us a huge amount of staff time, as you can imagine. They could go in an apply. And actually do that down in New Orleans. Hawaii's about the only place where people wanted to come in.

Q: I've gotten on a bus and for 50¢, you can take the bus all around the island of Oahu.

ROGERS: Exactly. They wanted to come downtown. And half the time they brought their whole family. It was great. It was great.

Q: Let's see, so you left there in '78.

ROGERS: Right.

Q: Then where?

ROGERS: '77, '78 is when I went to Detroit. And that's the time frame where indeed the volume and the anticipated volume in passport was expanding greatly. So in '78, the Department opened three new passport agencies. The one in Houston, the one in Stamford, Connecticut and the one in Detroit. So you had three brand new agencies, all of them capable of issuing - or would be capable of issuing like 250,000, which was average size agency. So that opened up, and it was like, okay. I get a chance to be in charge. So I bid on it and went up to Detroit. And a fascinating time. Starting an office from scratch. Total scratch. Nothing there.

Q: All right, starting an agency. What were sort of your major issues that you had to deal with?

ROGERS: Well, the first was find space. And this was Detroit, and toward the late '70s. And Detroit had gone through some tough, tough times like a lot of big cities in the United States. Downtown area was pretty grungy and trying to find spots. You went through the GSA to get help to find a place.

Q: General Services Administration.

ROGERS: Right. General Services Administration. So I worked with them. And Detroit built a federal building right on the edge of the part of downtown that had been sort of wiped out and was really bad. But there was this new federal building there. And they dearly wanted us in there. And it's like, okay. You know, there's no other space in town anyway. That's where we're going to go. So we went in to that building. The first tenant on the floor. I mean, the building was not occupied yet, so we went in and had wonderful space, because they want us. Here. Take the whole floor. It's like, okay. We'll take it. Finding space was huge. Then number two was find employees. There are no employees. So you're going to run an office. What're you going to do? So you put an ad in the paper and people come in and you test them and you evaluate them and all that, and then you hire them. So those were the two main things. I had a lot of help from Washington, obviously. I mean, people from headquarters came up. A lot of HR (Human Resources, personnel) people came up for this recruitment thing.

Q: Now, I recall going through Detroit with a senior seminar and it was like going through a bombed-out area. I mean there were whole areas about that time. They'd built this thing called a Renaissance Center. You'd kind of scurry inside and you felt fine. But the place was going through terrible problems.

ROGERS: Terrible, terrible problems. And you're right. The Renaissance Center was built along about that time to help draw people back down to downtown. So you had that. And you had a couple of other things going on. And, we all worked at trying to make the city better. All of us who were there. That's for sure. And, the Passport Agency was part of that.

Q: How long were you there? Let's see. It was '78.

ROGERS: Three years.

Q: Did you have any relationship with our consular posts in Windsor or other places?

ROGERS: Yes, we did. Sort of informal, but yes, we did. Especially, just setting up an office, you want to reach out to everybody who might be involved or you might have something in common with, so, yes. Did that. Toronto, even.

Q: Was passport fraud, I mean, documents, at all a problem?

ROGERS: We were concerned, sure. Because many of our applicants had Canadian documents. And it's like, okay. We need to double check. Because we were not that familiar with the documents, so we went up to the Board of Health and places to confirm them. And we would have adoption cases, and they said they were born in Michigan or Minnesota and found out that, well, gosh, they really weren't. They were born in Canada, but they were adopted when they were infants. And they didn't even know that. And, of course, under the laws of those states, they did not become an American when they were

adopted. So we had that. Now, blatant fraud for evil purposes and what not. It probably was about the same as it would have been in any other agency. Something, again, that's always in the back of your head. But it was not the major concern.

Q: Did the automobile industry cause any particular type of demand or not for you all, or was it just an industry?

ROGERS: No. It was just another industry. I got involved in a fair number of local things. Again, because we were new. I thought this was important. Council on Foreign Relations and Detroit economic clubs and things like that. And the auto industry was certainly the big player on most of these things, because they are the big guys. But, yes. They were always supportive of whatever community activity is going on and government, and they were fine. And they all had their own little travel sections in their organizations. We worked with them just fine.

Q: Did you feel like settling in Detroit?

ROGERS: I certainly did. That's an interesting question. Yes, I did. Because, okay. I've got my own office and I'm building this up and I hire all these kids. This is great. But what happened in Detroit on the other end of it was, in three years, we abolished the office. So, there goes that idea, right?

Q: Yes.

ROGERS: It's like, okay. Excuse me. Yes. We abolished the office. A budget-cutting measure, and all of these kids I hired, and some of them were kids. They were like 18, 19 years old. I hire them and it's like, you can come work for the State Department. It's great, and build a career. You can start here and go elsewhere. They all lost their jobs. And it was like the worst time of my life. Really bad. I hire these guys and now it's like, let's see what can we do about finding you another job. Some of them went back home. I had people coming in from Wisconsin to take these jobs. So they left. Some of the other ones in town, I worked through the Federal Executive Board, which most big cities have a Federal Executive Board where all the agencies get together once a month and talk about federal employment. So I went through them, and I was able to help some people get jobs at other agencies. But some of them didn't.

Q: So, where did you go after that?

ROGERS: Well, I transferred back to Philadelphia. Just by chance, the Regional Director left about that time, so there was a vacancy. And since I was a displaced employee, I guess is what you call it. I've forgotten the real term. I went back there. I transferred back as the Director of that - Regional Director of that office.

Q: And you did that from '78 to -

ROGERS: Well, in Detroit it was '78 to '81. And then I went back to Philly until '81,

‘82. And then I thought it’s time to go somewhere and settle down. It’s time to go to Washington. So that’s what I did. I mean Philly was fine, but at that point, I’d done passport. So that’s when I bid on the job in the Citizens Emergency Center, OCS.

Q: I would think that some of the passport business. I mean, having put as much time as you did. As you say, you’ve sort of been there, done that, hadn’t you?

ROGERS. Yes. Yes. Exactly.

Q: There isn’t any great room for expansion or something. I mean, it’s again a manufacturing, quality control job.

ROGERS: Quality control. Especially when you’re out in the field. Absolutely. That’s what it is. And I went out as the number two, as my first time. So for many long years, I was senior management at an agency. No, I was young. I was senior management. So, you’re right. You kind of do the same things which is good on the one hand because you do have a routine and you know what you’re doing. You’re learning all that. For personal growth, it’s like you said. Been there, done that. It’s time to move on.

Q: Well, you came back in -

ROGERS: It would have been ‘82. Late ‘82, early ‘83.

Q: Late ‘82. And what was the job that you -

ROGERS: I was Deputy Director of the Citizens Emergency Center.

Q: Could you explain what that service did?

ROGERS: Wild and wonderful. Okay. Citizens Emergency Center was - is now ACS. American Citizens Services. We handle - in the Emergency Center, working with posts overseas to assist Americans when they have a problem traveling overseas. You had your death cases, your arrest cases, your welfare and whereabouts. People who were destitute and people who end up in medical conditions. So we would hear, get the information from post, and that was normally by cable in those days, and we would contact the families of these people and explain the situation and find out how the family could help. What do you want to do? And it’s 24/7, as they say. And we had task forces when big events happened. We issued travel warnings.

Q: That’s some pretty rough work, isn’t it? I mean, emotionally?

ROGERS: Yes. It can be. When you talk about jobs that are 24/7, I mean this one truly was.

Q: When you say 24/7, you mean 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

ROGERS: Seven days a week, because you're covering the world. In the Passport Office, you're covering three or four states and you think that's a big deal. Which it is, but in the overseas citizens world, you're covering the world. And you can have - an event could happen 6,000 miles away or just up in Canada. Things happen all the time. And people didn't have the resources then that they have now, 20 years later. Now you have American Express and other companies who have a lot of help for people. Plus people are more aware when they travel, that they have to help take care of themselves. They have their charge cards and they have their cell phones. They can call home and all of this. Back then, they didn't have that.

Q: Was there a head above you? What was the next level?

ROGERS: When I came in, actually Jim Ward recruited me, but he was going out and Ann Swift was there. So Ann was there for my boss for a couple of years. And Joan Clark was the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs then.

Q: Did Ann Swift - she'd been a hostage.

ROGERS: Ann had been a hostage, right.

Q: In Tehran.

ROGERS: Yes. Right.

Q: How did you deal with the problem of dealing with people you were having to give bad, very bad news to?

ROGERS: Well, you have to remove yourself from the personal a bit. And at the same time, be empathetic and sympathetic. I think it helps, obviously, to talk to other people in the office who have done it a fair amount. FSI had a great course, and they still have a great course that gives you some guidelines and some background on all of this. And then, also, you know internally that you are there to help them, and that you are helping them. Because they can't call God knows where, Morocco in the middle of the night and talk to people, let's say. They need a go-between and we fill that role. So I think that's the positive side of it. You're filling that role and you're being helpful. And so that helps you remove yourself just a bit from the emotional side of it. And you can do that on an individual case pretty well. When you have a mass event, it makes it harder because things move so quickly. You have an airplane crash with 45 Americans on it, and you're getting all this information and, within three days, you've talked to three, four, five, seven, eight, ten families. That's real tough.

Q: Well, also, too, I'd think you'd find yourself in the capacity of being a family counselor. I mean, they wouldn't have anybody else to talk to.

ROGERS: Well, that's true, too. You are the contact, and that's especially true when the event overseas was, let's say, man-made. A terrorist incident, for instance. Sometimes the

families are so angry at what happened. I mean, naturally they are. And you are the person they can get ahold of. And it makes it tough. Because you're trying to help them and tell them all the details and get them through to the next stage, the next side. And we do recommend that they talk to their family, they talk to counselors, they do that kind of thing. Talk to their pastors. To get some other support. Because, frankly, we really are there only in the beginning stages of this thing. We're just there to get the event taken care of overseas and get the family member back home. And then it's a family issue here and we bow out. So they do need that support locally.

Q: Were you there during PanAm 103?

ROGERS: I was there during PanAm 103.

Q: If you could explain what PanAm 103 was and then how this developed from your perspective.

ROGERS: Well, PanAm 103 was the terrorist explosion of a PanAm 747 over Lockerbie, Scotland. And the plane was at 30,000 feet or whatever it was and a bomb went off and the plane crashed. Everybody on board was killed and several people on the ground were killed. Happened around the holiday, Christmas holidays. The plane was full - well, full of kids going to Syracuse University up in New York. And you have all these things happening together. This horrible event. And there were allegations that the federal government, State Department, federal government knew that there was a chance that a terrorist would put a bomb on a plane out of London coming back to the States, and the families, of course, said that the State Department knew there was going to be a bomb on this plane, and the State Department told their employees not to get on that plane. And if the families had known that same information, they would not have let their kids get on the plane.

So that's what PanAm 103 means to a lot of people in the State Department, is this kind of thing. There were like 250 people on board that plane. And most of them were Americans. So, initially, we had huge activity trying to get people to work the task force. It was during the holidays. People weren't around. And we got the task force going as fast as we could and made contact with these families as fast as we could. And started telling them everything we could. Obviously, identification of remains was a big problem. It was sort of a long, drawn-out event because of that. The families went through a terrible ordeal. And we tried to help them go through this. The families had nobody else to talk to. Every time we called - we called them at least once a day. Early on, we called them three times a day on every shift we would call to tell them what we knew, or didn't know, and just to see if there was anything we could do to help them. Some of the families just could not absorb the information. Some of the families didn't know who we were. They would say later, the State Department never called them. There was a lot of anger and frustration in this entire event.

The thing that happened later, after it was all over with, and the remains were returned and whatnot, Congress did a review of what happened and came up with the Aviation

Security Improvement Act of 1990. I think that's the right date. I think it's 1990. Which said that in the future in this kind of event, some things would change. Number one, there should be an 800 number for the families to call, because of course we didn't have an 800 number for them. We had just a regular number. Also, they said that a senior State Department person from Washington will go out to the scene and be available, because that had not happened. That was another thing that would happen. They said that we would maintain liaison with the family on a routine basis, through the event, which we had done; but again, some of the families didn't know that. So there were several changes that transpired that in the long run of course, they have made the office better. We do a better job now dealing with the families than we did during Lockerbie. So it all developed that some changes were made, but I think most of us who'd been around then and now see it as yes, it was a positive change.

Q: I had the feeling that they turned into a rather cohesive group of people, or at least they had in a way. The State Department was sort of the focus of their anger, wasn't it?

ROGERS: Oh, totally. Absolutely. I mean, you didn't know who blew up the plane, so they blamed the State Department. They blamed us. They blamed the State Department.

Q: What about the charge that the State Department knew and told its people to stay off, or the government knew.

ROGERS: That is not true. There was a notice apparently posted in one of the embassies in a Scandinavian country. I've forgotten which one. That there was some information that something might happen. But it was not specific and it wasn't out of London, as I recall. It wasn't specific that I know. But we did come up after, again the Aviation Security Improvement Act, came up with this thing that's now called the no double standard, and that is that if a post puts up any kind of notice to tell their employees of an event that could have a negative effect on them like that, that we will also tell the American public. So that, again, is a positive. You can't, you won't have an event like this. There'll be no doubts about it in the future. So, again, if the post puts out a notice warning the employees of something that could have an impact on private Americans, then CA (Consular Affairs) will put out a notice as well. So, that's a positive.

Q: Did you feel any heat personally on this thing?

ROGERS: You know, I don't think heat's the right word. I don't know what the right word is. We all felt responsible and sort of, I don't know, beat up is the wrong word, too. But, yes. We all felt something. At the same time, we knew what we had done and we know that we worked 20 hour days for a week or two between Christmas and New Year's and all of that and canceled all other plans, and we helped these people. And yet when you work with these people, the families, over that time period and whatnot, you do become part of it. As hard as you try not to, you do become part of it. So we were really saddened by the whole thing and disappointed and there were many challenges with the investigation or the look into the situation that we had to come up with lots of papers and do all of that, so then that - lots of analysis. But I don't know. We tried to look at it as a

positive, I think. How to learn.

Q: How did you feel that you were supported by our embassy in London?

ROGERS: They could have done a couple of things better as well. Their handling of the families early on was not as, let's say, warm and fuzzy as we would have liked it to have been. But again, it was a new event. Since it happened in England, it happened mid-afternoon, late afternoon, families back here in the United States got on planes that night and went over there, and the embassy wasn't prepared for that. They didn't have the staff either. So, they tried early on and then they were inundated with all kinds of people and all kinds of things to do and, frankly, they could have used more help and they could've done a little more as well.

Q: How did you find taking officers who were unaccustomed to this sort of thing and putting them into the job of talking? Were there psychology tests or training or what have you?

ROGERS: Well, there's training. And most people apply for these jobs because they want the jobs and they have an inkling of what's going to happen. So yes. They kind of know. They're the kind of people who want to help people and yes, we send them through training. At the same time, when we have a major event, like a Lockerbie, PanAm 103, or any other kind of major event like that, we do have medical people, psychologists, psychiatrists, available to the staff to answer questions and just to observe and see how things are going. In addition, after all these task forces, we have hot washes where we get everybody together and say, okay. Off the record. Everybody says what you want. We're here to talk about what happened. How we feel about it. And if there are changes we can make. And oftentimes we would invite one of the medical people to join us. In fact, most of the time we would invite them, and they would get a feel for what we had been through and give us ideas about how to work it in the future.

Q: Did you get involved in arrest cases at all?

ROGERS: Right. We sure do.

Q: How did you find this? Was this a matter of dealing with families more than with the people who were arrested themselves?

ROGERS: Oh, yes. The post would deal with the person arrested and we would deal with the families. So we'd be calling up to say, I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but your son has been arrested for drugs. This is where he is and he needs money to do whatever, to buy food and this how the cases generally go in that country. Normally, the family, of course, total denial. Their kid would never do anything like this. And oftentimes, indeed, they hadn't, but sometimes they had. So we would be that conduit. Try to explain what happened to their person and also a little bit about the laws of the country where it happened. And then what our role is. They're difficult cases because they go on for year after year after year sometimes. When the person's convicted, they can of course be in jail for 10, 12, 15

years and far, far away from home.

Q: Were you seeing changes in the way we tried to get people not to get themselves arrested?

ROGERS: Well, yes. I think we tried to put out more information and tried to get spots on radio or TV and brochures and all about work through travel agencies, the airlines. We tried over and over and over again.

Q: It's like parents telling their kids, don't drive too fast -

ROGERS: Exactly.

Q: Or something. You know, you can try and try and try, but you - particularly at that age -

ROGERS: No. They're not - you know, people do dumb things sometimes. And they don't remember. They go to another country and they do something that, would be illegal here and it's illegal there. So why do you think it wouldn't be illegal in a foreign country?

Q: This was a growth industry, wasn't it?

ROGERS: It certainly was a growth industry. More and more people were traveling at this time. It grew lots, lots and lots. Posts were busier and busier. Because on an arrest case, post was the one that takes the brunt of it. They visit the prisoner once a month, find out what the situation is and how they're doing. Make sure the person has an attorney and all that. So yes, the posts were becoming busier and busier.

Q: Had you started these prisoner exchange programs yet?

ROGERS: Yes. Prisoner and Transfer Treaties, we had several of those around the world. We had prisoner transfer treaties with numerous countries, some bilateral and some multi-lateral where once a person's convicted, they can apply to transfer back to their home country prison system. So the foreign country, the U.S. and the prisoner have to all agree to let this happen. It's good for those people who want to do it, but you're still going to have Americans overseas in prisons, because many Americans, when they're arrested overseas, they say, guess what. The prison here is better than the prison in the United States. I hear the prisons in the United States are - people get killed, you know. There are horrible, awful things. I'll stay here in prison wherever, and it's better. So they stay. Families don't understand that because they want the person closer to home. Can't force them. Can't force them.

Q: And during this time, when you came on board in '82, who was the head of Consular Affairs?

ROGERS: That would have been Joan Clark, Ambassador Clark.

Q: And did you have sort of Congress breathing down your neck on your -

ROGERS: I don't think so. No. No. They oftentimes would get involved in a case, a particular case, but that was the extent of it. It wasn't sort of across the board on the American Services side. No.

Q: How about adoption cases? Did you get involved in those?

ROGERS: No. When I did this job it was strictly the emergency side of the house. Things that need to be taken care of right now. And normally it wouldn't last more than a week, two weeks, whatever.

Q: How about the type of cases that are incredibly prevalent in the Middle East of American mothers marrying Saudi men and having kids over there and then can't bring them home and that separation problem. Was this something that you had to handle?

ROGERS: We didn't - no. We didn't get involved in that, either. Occasionally, we would. But it wasn't that big of an issue then. No. Don't know why it wasn't a bigger thing, but it really wasn't.

Q: Did you find was there a sort of a corps of American criminals getting in trouble overseas. I'm not getting away from the kids. Sort of professional, older people who were -

ROGERS: Kind of our constant clients?

Q: Yes.

ROGERS: Not in general. I mean, we're talking about, 10,000 cases, let's say. So you might have a few names that popped up, because I was in that office quite a long time and things did change over the years. And you might have, let's say, a destitute case. A medical destitute kind of case that they keep getting repatriated. They're repatriated back from England and we bring them back, stamp their passport they can't travel until they pay off their loan or whatever. And they end up in India in a year, hadn't paid off anything. And we say, okay. We've got to repatriate them back again. So you might have just a handful of cases like that. Or an arrest case where the person is arrested here and goes over there and gets arrested. Very infrequent, though.

Q: You know, I go back to the good old days in Consular Affairs where if you had somebody who arrived in your consular district and obviously mentally disturbed, you could usually talk a doctor into maybe sending somebody along with them and give them a shot of something which would put them to sleep until all of a sudden they wake up in Boston or something like that. And that was delightful. They were - I don't know about the people in Boston -

ROGERS: Boston, yes.

Q: But we'd gotten rid of our problem. But were you seeing the law clamp down on inability of consular officers to do much as far as -

ROGERS: Oh, yes. We started being a little more careful on that kind of thing because of the personal liability, I suppose. And if a person, a traveler needed an escort like that, they - we would start recommending professional escort. In other words, a nurse, a doctor, somebody locally. To come back with them. But I know what you're saying. They're handling cases where the consular officer is the one who - is the only one available and gets on that plane and good luck, you know. Try to hold them down. Yes. That can happen.

Q: Did you get involved in sort of political cases where newsmen would be seized in the Soviet Union or that sort of thing. Did that fall in your -

ROGERS: Yes. That kind of thing would. We had some incredibly high profile things. We had the Beirut hostages for three or four years. Those were very high profile. Newsmen being arrested and harassed, whatever, around the world. You bet. We would be involved. And those cases, our primary concern and responsibility is to the family. And when you have an organization who's responsible for sending the person over there, of course, they feel that they should also be in the loop. And normally, we tried to work with them and get a single point of contact in the organization, and that would be with the approval of the family, and the person involved overseas that we could contact.

Q: I was interviewing somebody the other day who said that they had - I'm not sure if I've got the name right - Peggy Sales, who's -

ROGERS: Peggy Say. Peggy Say.

Q: Peggy Say who was the sister of Terry Anderson.

ROGERS: Right.

Q: Who was the longest Beirut prisoner -

ROGERS: Right.

Q: Associated Press or something.

ROGERS: AP. That's right.

Q: Who was considered some of the greatest cross that anybody had to bear, and people assigned to her on a daily basis. Did you get involved in that?

ROGERS: Oh, yes, yes, yes. That was our office. Peggy was of the opinion that the more

she could keep her brother's name in the press, the higher visibility she could make him, the faster the bad guys would let him go. So she did everything she could to let that happen. And we would talk to her once a day, twice a day, whatever. And for a time, we did have different people as her contact, and then I think we eventually just had one or two people. Because having too many people as a contact, you kind of lose the train of thought, let's say. And that's not good, so we eventually just had a couple of people.

Q: I understand that when he was released, Terry Anderson did not immediately bond with his sister.

ROGERS: Well, not the way she probably envisioned. She thought he'd come out and, you know, gee, we'd be brother and sister, rubbing shoulders together for the rest of their life and all that. And of course, he had other things in mind. You know? He had his own life to go on to. He didn't want to go down and live on the homestead with her any longer. So, yes.

Q: It's difficult.

ROGERS: Yes. Yes.

Q: How did find that in some of these high profile cases that the bureaus, the geographic bureaus. Were they sort of either push you to one side and say this is too political, and we'll take care of it. Or were they saying, here. It's all yours. We wash our hands of it.

ROGERS: Well, it changes, depending on who's the boss of the geographic area. But in general they would let Consular Affairs handle the case. In general. We always want to work with them because we want their input. And they need to know what's going on, what's happening. But in general, it wasn't too bad. But there were other bureaus involved, too. Like the hostage cases. You have counter terrorism. You might have INR (Intelligence and Research), you might have DS. You might have other bureaus. So it would be a group thing. With CA always taking the lead, because it involved an American citizen.

Q: While you were doing this, did you run across the problem of declaring a country unsafe for travel. Because this gets very, very political. Right now, we're dealing with China on a medical emergency there. You give an advisory, don't recommend you go to China. This really hits the tourism thing and all that. Did you get involved in those things?

ROGERS: Yes, we did. We did the travel advisory program. Issued travel warnings, issued these things. They indeed could become problematic working with the geographic bureau or the post, because you're right. Their interests were separate from ours. The consular side. We're strictly welfare and whereabouts. Welfare and safety, rather. Welfare and safety of Americans. Nothing at all to do with politics or the economics or anything else. If it's safe to go, fine. We'll say so. If it's not, fine. We want to say that as well. And that always was a bit of a challenge. And I think it's gotten worse, frankly.

Q: To use a very diplomatic term, one has the feeling that the government's gotten more and more sensitive and doing everything it can to cover one's ass. CA, to doing this, we're going through a terrorism thing, since the events of 2001. And the government is continually announcing something may happen. The sky may fall or something like this, which is absolutely unhelpful. But it seems to be designed to say, well, we warned you. At a certain point, it just doesn't prove a damn thing.

ROGERS: You're right. I think, if you do that too often, of course, people start ignoring it. And that's really sad. You don't want to do that. You want to have enough credibility so that if you say this, people will listen and hopefully take action. And we tried real hard to have that happen. Absolutely.

Q: What about a place like Mexico. You have a lot of problems, at least. I don't know if it's still true, but of people who drive through Mexico coming down from Texas or New Mexico or Arizona or something, and driving down. Because there are the equivalent of bandits on the road and venal police and all this sort of stuff, and yet, what you're doing is you're casting aspersions on the whole government if you say, don't drive in Mexico. Did you run across this?

ROGERS: We sure did. And what we want, of course, is for post to come in and tell us what's going on and then we can frame it in language for the average American public to tell them what is going on. And if we can't get agreement within the building to say don't go, do go to a certain place, we can at least say, these are the ten incidents that have happened in the last three months. You should know period. So that was one way we kind of got around it a little bit. And I'm sure they're still doing the same kind of thing. Get post to report on what is going on, and then we can cover it on this end. It's kind of cheating, I'm sure, but sometimes you just have to do that.

Q: Did you get yourself out much to see how posts were doing and all that?

ROGERS: A fair amount. Not enough, that's for sure. Because, of course, in the '80s and even part of the '90s, there were not a lot of funds around for that kind of thing. But, we tried to hold conferences. Geographic, regional conferences. Stop in and see a couple of posts on the way. And if we had our case officers go out, or desk officers, equivalent, that was really infrequently. But again, we tried to get folks out every now and then. The posts - we would bring people in every now and then, too. And, of course, if they ever came to FSI for training, we'd say, come see us, come see us. And we'd touch base that way. So, yes. I've personally been out a number of times. That was fascinating. And I cannot believe how hard poor consular officers have to work out in the field. It's really a hectic area.

Q: It's very, very difficult. Did you sense a difference in how consular work was viewed within the State Department over the years?

ROGERS: I guess I have noticed a slight change. I think early on, consular people were

kind of just ignored, pushed on the side. Fine. Go do your thing and let us alone. And then we started getting a little more, let's say, respect. Part of it was that we started getting some funding and, therefore, we had money and we could do a lot with our money to make us better and people saw that and they wanted some of that money to make their operation better. So there for a while, they kind of liked us. Now I think it's probably back to status quo, and they don't - especially with, I don't know, maybe with 9-11, we consular have kind of gotten pushed aside again because of the issues surrounding that.

Q: How about the breed of consular officer? Were they changing as we brought in older officers as well as young officers? Does this make a difference?

ROGERS: I think, in general, they have a more realistic idea of what they're going to be doing. I think previously they came in as a foreign service person and they were going to be ambassador in ten years and in charge. Now, I think they know that that's not how everyone's going to end up. And they're coming in to contribute, I think. And that's how they see themselves. They want to contribute and help people, and if their career goes down this other path and they become ambassador, fine. But that's not what their goal is, and it's more just to help people out.

Q: Where'd you see the problem? Were there any particular places where there were problem areas? Africa? Latin America? Asia?

ROGERS: Well, the Middle East has always been - has always given us a lot of work. I mean, you have Americans go there. They don't understand the culture. They don't understand what's going on. And they get into problems, they get into trouble. In addition, you've had a lot of terrorism in that area, and the Beirut hostages were with us for years. You've had hijackings of airplanes and a lot of it's been connected to the Middle East. At the same time, we've handled an awful lot of evacuations out of Africa. I mean, I've evacuated Liberia three, four times. So you have the political instability kind of concept, let's say, in some other areas. Europe, we haven't had anything too - It's just routine stuff, yes.

Q: Routine means people going to jail, and -

ROGERS: Yes, right.

Q: Automobile accidents -

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: Getting killed.

ROGERS: Yes. Individual things as opposed to mass events, I guess. So I guess those two areas are the big ones. We also sort of in the back of our head, we for decades have been seeing Korea out there. It's like, okay. North Korea. South Korea. How stable's

this? Is it okay? So, you have that, but it hasn't caused any issues.

Q: I know. I was Consul General in Seoul for three years, and I kept looking 30 miles north and, you had to figure if you're going to be around to take care of a problem.

ROGERS: Right.

Q: Because it was always rather problematic.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: What a mess.

ROGERS: Oh, it's unbelievable.

Q: And it's even worse today.

ROGERS: Right you are.

Q: What about on the hostages in Beirut? Did this sort of get taken out of your hands, or how did this work? Because this got very political and then, of course, you've got the Iran Contra thing which was connected to the hostages. Did you get into the politics of the thing?

ROGERS: You know, we didn't really, in our office. Maybe, I'm sure other people did, higher up. But no. We just did our job, our thing, our liaison. I mean, yes. There were politics involved and you knew it and every now and then something would pop up. But in general, we kept those cases. We handled them. I think, once in a while, the geographic bureau maybe wanted like to take them over, but it's like, these are consular cases. Bottom line, they're strictly consular cases. You know, terrorism is involved. Politics is involved. Other things are involved. But it's still consular at the end of the day.

Q: Something I've noticed in the field as chief of a consular section, you have somebody arrested or something would happen, and it really would be a damned good idea, at a certain point - you try to avoid it - but for the ambassador, if somebody's getting a rotten deal, for the ambassador to weigh in.

ROGERS: Um-hmm.

Q: Ambassadors have a tendency to say, oh. I've got this treaty to worry about. There was always something, a reason not to do it. It'll upset relations. And yet we're pounding on tables saying, relations be damned. They've got a prisoner and they shouldn't have our prisoner, or something like that. Did you find that sometimes we were having to go back to the post and saying get on with it and do something more?

ROGERS: Once in a while, sure.

Q: Would you have to go back to the post?

ROGERS: Every now and then we would go back to post and ask that the situation be raised at a higher level in the local government. To get their attention. And to lay out all of the facts, let's say. We would want to almost do a demarche once in a while on a case. And so we'd go to post and ask them to do this. And they would normally go ahead and go in, and that's very helpful, not only for the person involved overseas, but also for the family. The family would know that, indeed, the highest levels of the post had been involved in doing everything they can. So that's good.

Q: How about communications? Things have changed now. We're talking about with the Internet and e-mail and faxes and all. The time we're talking about, it just wasn't available, was it?

ROGERS: You're absolutely right. Things have changed so much. No, we were talking cables before. Obviously, no e-mails, no computer kind of thing. So it was cables. And you could try telephone, depending on the post. Phones would work, sometimes. But some of these posts, it was really difficult to get ahold of. Or you could get ahold of them and then the line is so bad that you couldn't understand what was being said. But we made cables work. And you could send cables and they'd get there overnight and you'd get an answer the next morning.

Q: What about the people who just arrive? They've run out of money and then they'd been in Paris and had a great time and they said, well, okay. Here I am. This is now your responsibility?

ROGERS: Is that right? Right. We would have people come into post with that kind of a situation, and our first thing is, sorry about this. Do you have a place to stay? And the post would make sure at least, they're taken care of physically. And then we would say, now who can we contact for you back in the States to get you some money? And what we want them to do is give us the name of their family, or their business. And we, here in Washington, would contact the family or the business and tell them the situation and that, you need money, and this is how they can use our office to transfer it. And in the past, it would be through Western Union, and we had a Western Union check printer machine in OCS and they'd go in to Kansas City, give the money, and it would come to our desk. We would do the cable, sent it out to post saying, we got the 5,000. Give it to him. Nowadays, so often, people have their charge card, debit card that they can do this themselves, or the family can put more money in. Or the family can call the hotel and charge it. So that part of the business has dropped off dramatically. People could take care of it.

Q: Now you would be almost professional people who would come around and they would have fun until the last moment and then they'd say, well, I can always go to the consulate or the embassy and they'll take care of me.

ROGERS: There were some cases like that. You're absolutely right. And we have to help explain to them what our role is which is not to give them money to go shopping. It's to take care of their welfare.

Q: How about mental problems? You'd have people who would show up who often would essentially be something that I call paranoia, or something like that. People pursuing - anyway, they would get overseas and all of a sudden really, they were unable to take care of themselves.

ROGERS: There certainly were some cases like that. Not a great many, but there were. And what we want the consular people to do is work with local authorities. Medical authorities to help stabilize the person. Make sure they're taken care of, of course, and stabilize them. At the same time, we'll try to get information from the person about their family or friends. Oftentimes, they have no - you can't communicate. They have no information. So what we do is pull the passport record and see if they've listed someone as next-of-kin. Oftentimes, they don't. But hopefully, they have. And then we can contact the person. Otherwise, the consular officer's going through the wallet or whatever, just trying to get some information that we can go back and contact family. But it's really - in cases like that, you want the medical people involved to help take care of it.

Q: What about evacuations and problems. During this period, I guess it wasn't too dangerous, but were you having any problems say in Israel? Because Americans would go there and they would go there as Jews, but all of a sudden, if something went wrong, all of a sudden they'd become red-hot Americans rather than Israelis. Did you get involved in any of those?

ROGERS: There would, again, be some of those. A handful of cases like that. But that's fine. I mean, if you're an American, we're going to help you. Give us your passport, show us you're an American, and we're there. We will help you. And if they had spent the last ten years representing themselves only as an Israeli locally, it doesn't really matter to us. If you're an American and you can establish that, we're going to help you.

Q: This is still during the period we're talking about, part of it, up to the Cold War and the Soviet Union was in existence. Were there people with claim to American citizenship who couldn't get out?

ROGERS: You know, there probably were some people like that. But they would not have come to our attention, probably. Because they couldn't even reach the embassy or the consulates to put in a claim. And we would have no way of knowing who they were. It really wouldn't have happened. I know we did uncover one American in a psychiatric hospital who was an American and had been there for a couple decades, and we didn't know about it until toward the end, and we could help him. But the families never registered these people when they were born, or they went back as teenagers from the United States. They were never registered. So we just couldn't help them.

Q: Did the Cold War intrude much in your work?

ROGERS: Americans weren't traveling over there so much during the Cold War, so we didn't have as much workload probably. But if there was a problem, it was more of a challenge. No doubt about it.

Q: Well, China was opening. But Chinese are pretty cooperative in getting people out, weren't they? Or not? Or did you have much of a problem?

ROGERS: No. They're pretty cooperative. If they knew the person was an American, they knew we had an interest, and they would be helpful. In general. Where sometimes we have a problem with not only China but other countries as well, if the person is dual national. And they've broken a law, they're going to be prosecuted as a national of that country, and we have to just insist that this person is also an American and we have a right and the authority to be involved. So, we'll do that.

Q: Were there any countries that were a real pain in the neck?

ROGERS: You know, I can't think of any off hand. Every post has its challenges. No doubt. So much of it is people, you know. Who's running the local police office? Or the local hospital? Who are they and do you know them? I don't think I could say any country was a particular issue?

Q: A real problem that every consular officer faces in many countries is that if they want to get somebody out of jail, you really have to pay off somebody. Otherwise, they aren't going to do it. And of course, we're forbidden for even recommending this and all. But did you find yourself up against the thing of parents say what should I do about my son. He's saying I should pay off. And what would you tell them?

ROGERS: You know, that really didn't come up except maybe a handful of times, again. And what we'd have to tell them is that, we don't recommend this. Because you obviously, if you pay off, then you're setting a precedent for the next person and all of that. It's just like for hostages. Same event. Same kind of thing. But it really didn't come up that much, because we would be explaining what was going to transpire and what we could do to help versus what somebody else might be telling them. In most countries, it's really not going to work anyway.

Q: It's always very tricky.

ROGERS: I'm sure. You're in some little bitty prison out in the middle of nowhere, and the guy says give me 500 bucks and I'll make it go away. You give him 500 bucks and nothing happens.

Q: Nothing happens. But I remember being in Greece and a couple of guys had a whole plane full of marijuana. Whole plane. It was hashish, I think. A whole plane full. Small two-engine plane. And they got nabbed and they were given long sentences, and the next thing I knew, within six or seven months, they were released.

ROGERS: Whoa. Whoa.

Q: Something happened.

ROGERS: Something happened. And you didn't ask. It was, okay. Good-bye. Wow. I'm sure things like that have happened.

Q: How long were you with Emergency Services?

ROGERS: Oh, way long time. I was like 'til '96. '96.

Q: So it was really from what -

ROGERS: '82 to '96. Yes. Long time. And we went through several things. I mean, we re-organized the office and whatnot during that time. And children's' issues became a huge activity during that time. We had a whole little office by the time I left. Until about '96.

Q: Talk about children's' issues. What did this mean?

ROGERS: Children's' issues is abduction and adoption of children. Those are the two things. The abduction of children used to be handled as a straight welfare whereabouts case, and it became a special unit because the cases went on, of course. A kid would be abducted by one of the parents, taken back to the foreign country, and the kid could be two years old, three years old. The case is going to go on until the kid's 18. So, in the emergency center, it's more rapid than that. We have cases, we resolve them, and we go to the next one. So we needed a special unit.

Adoption became part of that office because the adoption cases, again, turned - many of them turned out to be very long term for the families trying to adopt. And there were problems overseas oftentimes with adopting a child where the American family would be paying money, $10,000 to a go-between to adopt and then it all fell apart. And the families were coming to the embassy or the consulate saying, I got ripped off. I don't have a child, or I was promised a child with no medical problems. This kid has problems. Anyway, there were problems. And the embassy was getting more and more of these cases. They'd be getting those. So it was like, okay. We need to have an office to help monitor this and to help Americans. So it became a separate unit and now has scores of people in it. It used to have one or two, and then it went to five, and it went to 10.

Q: One thinks about those cases that have been going on, I guess, forever in Germany, isn't there?

ROGERS: Yes. There is.

Q: Where both parents have sort of disappeared from the scene, but they -

ROGERS: The grandparent has the kid? Is that the one?

Q: I think it's a grandparent or something like that. It's gone to the presidential level and nothing has happened. Of course, with the Arab countries particularly.

ROGERS: Right. The kid goes back to - I mean, the kid's a dual national, so the kid goes back to Saudi Arabia or wherever. Iraq. Iran. And the American side of the family back here thinks that the U.S. government can go in and snatch and bring it back, and of course, it can't.

Q: If you got up through '96, with the speed of communications, did this help or hinder -

ROGERS: Oh, it helped dramatically. Absolutely fantastic. E-mail. Telephone service that actually works around the world. It's fantastic. It's really good.

Q: In what way did it help?

ROGERS: On these kind of cases, the family is sitting on pins and needles. So embassy, consulate could do whatever during the daytime. Find out the situation. Send us an e-mail. Give us a phone call. It was there when we came in. We could then pick up the phone here in Washington and call the family. Or we could call post. Or send post an e-mail. Like, we - what is it? 4 o'clock? Whenever we send London an e-mail right now, they're going to have it and have an answer back to us tomorrow morning when we come in at 8. So the speed of communication. Plus, not feeling under pressure like on a cable, you had to be short, sweet, explicit. You know? On an e-mail, or on a phone call, of course, you can go into a little more details. And that's very nice. That's very helpful.

Q: Did you find yourself having to kind of watch your staff? One of the things that used to be a joy in the consular thing was that we would have airgrams, but people would send things and be quite frank and say, this person's parents are a pain in the neck. Or don't do anything over this person because they're absolutely untrustworthy and dishonest. In other words, we would spell it out as we saw it.

ROGERS: Right.

Q: This became very much a no-no. And people were demanding freedom of seeing what was written about them, so you found yourself writing extremely bland things, trying to - but e-mail, I think, there would be a tendency to let stuff sort of creep in that shouldn't creep in.

ROGERS: You're absolutely right. A lot of guidance has gone out to posts saying be careful on your e-mails. Anything you say in an e-mail is subject to being released and being on the front page of the paper. Treat it just the same way as they used to in the old days. Absolutely. The Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act make us all a little more concerned about what is being said. Every now and then you've got to go back

and remind somebody, don't ever do that again. And by then it's been done. But, yes. Be careful.

Q: In '96, what did you do?

ROGERS: Well, that's when I was fortunate enough, like you were, and went to the senior seminar. So '96-'97, I went to the senior seminar.

Q: And then what?

ROGERS: And then I went back to OCS for just a few months. And then I went to M (Management) as a special assistant for a year, about. And that was absolutely fascinating.

Q: What were you dealing with there?

ROGERS: Oh, man. I had HR. Well, in M you have like four special assistants and each of them, each of us had a part of the building. So I had HR. I had SCT.

Q: HR is the new term for personnel, isn't it?

ROGERS: And SCT is counter-terrorism. I think I had - I had a couple of other things, too. But it was so fascinating because it's the 7th floor and you really got to watch 7th floor principles sort of in action. And I don't care what you thought of these people. This has got to be not - we'll scratch this. What you thought of people, the political appointees and all that. It was fascinating. It was like, oh, man. It was really neat. And plus I got a more in-depth look at the bureaus I was working with. So that was kind of fun. It was fun. It was fun.

Q: And then, so this gets you up to around '98 or so?

ROGERS: '98. And then I went to Passport.

Q: Back to Passport?

ROGERS: Back to Passport. As Managing Director. Here at headquarters.

Q: Was it a whole new world?

ROGERS: It was a whole new world. Whole new world. I had to start from scratch almost. It was amazing. Anything in Passport that was done previously was done differently. Automation was totally different. The staff was different. Hordes of people out there now. It's a huge outfit. Huge. Different concept.

Q: At one time back when Frances Knight was there and before that Ruth Yes. Shipley. It had been basically a personal fief almost. These were ladies who had tremendous power

within their field and somewhat beyond within the government.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: But I take it, that was a thing way of the past.

ROGERS: It's a thing of the past. I think Passport still feels separate. And I'm not sure that they don't like that. You know? Most of us in senior management don't feel that way. You've got the Bureau of Consular Affairs, and that's who you work for. But I think there are a number of people who still kind of feel like we're Passport. Or we're whatever. And sense some of these guys are long-term civil service employees, they sort of keep that. And it is a bit of a -

Q: Did you have problems coming back after that time, or were you one of the fellows or something?

ROGERS: No. I was an outsider. I was a total outsider. Most - not most - well, yes. Most of the people who were in Passport certainly weren't around when I was around before. But since I am affiliated, or was affiliated with OCS for so many years, and that really was my thing, let's say. Before I came back to Passports, that's what people saw me as. An OCS. One of those other people. So it was a different world and it had changed dramatically. Huge.

Q: You sort of had to fight your way? I mean - it's sort of bureaucratic establishing yourself and all that.

ROGERS: Totally. Yes. That's right. The people who were in Passport are extremely good doing their thing, whatever their job. They do it and they work hard and a tremendous amount of work gets done. But since they know their job and they do it so well, they don't realize coming in from somewhere else that everybody doesn't know what's going on. And when they did find out that I - or remembered that I had been with Passport before, it was like, oh, yes. Fine. It's the same. It's like, no. It's not the same. The law is the same in terms of establishing citizenship. That technical thing is the same. But the operations are totally different. So, it was interesting.

Q: Well, it's also been a place that foreign service officers who move in and out of consular affairs all the time, a regular thing. The Passport Agency's always been sort of off to one side. And every once in a while, you find somebody who did it for a while, who felt very much, that'll be the new boy or the new girl on the block, but they're never going to be anything but that.

ROGER: But, yes. I can appreciate that even more now. Because that's true.

Q: It's the most civil service or type of job that you'd find in the State Department, which is such a mixture of all kind of different things - and you don't have people doing a rather limited but very, extremely important job. But dedicating their lives to doing that.

ROGERS: They are and they want to and we're grateful that that's the way it is because we desperately need people like that to handle these jobs. And also they have the contacts in the local community, and the outreach with the state. It's very, very good. But it is different from the rest of the State Department. You're actually right. We have a lot of civil service people in the Bureau.

Q: Well, then, you did that until you retired?

ROGERS: I did that until I retired.

Q: And you retired when?

ROGERS: In November last year. 2002.

Q: 2002. Did you have fun?

ROGERS: I had a marvelous time while I was with the Department, and I'm having even more fun now.

Q: Well, that's the way it should be.

ROGERS: That's the way it should be. You're right. And if you're not, then something's wrong, you know.

Q: Well, a lot of people have jobs that they do because they - that's how you earn a living, but I think we've been fortunate.

ROGERS: I think you're right. And coming back to Passport, we were just starting this new what they call photo-dig process where we're putting the photo - we're digitizing it on the passport which makes it more secure and all that. So for the last three years that I was there, that was the main big project, and that was interesting.

Q: Tell me something. Back in '81, '82 or so, I was, I think, the only liaison officer with the Immigration Service.

ROGERS: Wow.

Q: And then they stopped it, but there was a try-on, and it didn't work. But one of the things we were trying to do with INS was to get them to have a compatibility between visas and passports and all. And they kind of went their own way. Did you get involved in working with INS on passport matters and all that?

ROGERS: In the last three years, yes. Early on I didn't. Here at headquarters, you've got - we did work with them a lot. And we also worked with foreign governments a lot for compatibility. INS, yes, we did work with them. We're still working with them. The kind

of document that we should be issuing, the kind of machines we should have to read it and all that kind of thing. We have pretty good contact with them now.

Q: All these things evolve. What about the sophistication of passports? Do you feel that they're really hard to have fraudulent passports these days?

ROGERS: Knock on wood. Yes. Really, this new photo-dig passport. By the time I left, there had still not been a successful use of a fraudulent one. As far as we know. Been a couple attempts, but because of the way they're produced and made, you really couldn't tamper with it without it being noticed. So that was very good. And I know that we feel real comfortable with that book. At the same time, we're looking at the next one. Because some day they will crack it. So we have to be ready to move on to the next one, and to the next one, and to the next one. But all of the stages in between have made it better. And it takes a lot of money and a lot of time, but this one, this one's really good. It was - we used the old book from like when I left, I when they started issuing a new book. When I left in '82. They were just starting this new process then. So from '82 until like '98, they used that book. And it took about five years to get this new thing, the photo-dig book, in place.

Q: Okay. Well, Georgia I think we might stop at this point.

ROGERS: Okay. Great.

Q: And have a great time and I had a great time.

End of interview