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

SHIRLEY E. RUEDY

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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Mrs. Ruedy.]

Q: When and where were you born?

RUEDY: I was born in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1947 on the 11th of June.

Q: What was your father's name?

RUEDY: My father's name was Clyde Henry Wallace.

Q: Where did the Wallaces come from?

RUEDY: That's very interesting since I've recently gotten into genealogy in a big way. I am descended on my father's side from the brother of Braveheart, in other words not William Wallace himself but from John. It turns out that he was also executed in a horrendous way for treason but for some reason he did not make the history books like his big brother Braveheart. Anyway, I take pride in that and was very fascinated to find out how that was true. My father had often sort of talked about that but I always just assumed it was family mythology. That family, the Wallaces, were in Ayrshire, Scotland. Then they, like so many other of the Scots of that time, went to Northern Ireland where they spread out, multiplied and for various reasons, troubles, persecutions they came to the United States. They went first of all to Pennsylvania, Lancaster County. They farmed there and were always on the move for better prospects. They then went down the Shenandoah Valley. They settled around Lexington, Virginia, in Washington County and Stanton. Some of them, including my father's grandfather, moved to Monroe County, West Virginia. My dad was born in Union.

Q: Were they all basically farmers?

RUEDY: They were basically farmers, some of them quite prosperous. I've looked at some of their tax records and found out that they had so many cows, so many sheep. Sadly, some of them had slaves, not the ones in West Virginia. The ones in West Virginia continued to farm, but I think their spreads was smaller.

Q: Your grandfather was in West Virginia?

RUEDY: He was also born in Union. And he was a farmer.

Q: What did your father do? He moved where?

RUEDY: He moved. With the Depression, things got tough in West Virginia and they all started working in coal mines. I think that was not everyone's cup of tea. My dad was not real happy to be working in the coal mines. It was dangerous, dirty work and there were a lot of explosions. And with the arrival of the unions, there was a lot of violence. My dad and his brother and my grandmother all moved to Washington, DC. My grandmother got a job with National Geographic, doing I'm not sure what. My uncle and my dad had a series of jobs. My dad studied the history of Washington, DC and at one point was a tour guide; they did all sorts of things. Neither of them was drafted because of health reasons. My dad met my mother who had grown up in Ohio; she had come to join the Navy. In fact, she was the first woman to join the Navy from her little county in Ohio. She was

sent out to Washington to work in personnel. She and my dad met accidentally, they got married and later I came along.

Q: Did either your mother or father go to college?

RUEDY: No, I was the first one in my family.

Q: This is so much the pattern of the generation we are working on. I'm sure the next generation of people coming out of the Foreign Service will be much more; I mean World War II really changed and broke the mold. I am the first in my family. My brothers also went. My parents didn't.

RUEDY: My dad wasn't allowed to finish high school. He had to go to work. My mother had a scholarship to go to college but had to give it up because she had to go to work to support her younger siblings. Times were tough.

Q: That was very much the pattern. You were born in 1947. Where?

RUEDY: Roanoke, Virginia.

Q: Why Roanoke?

RUEDY: I think my parents were on vacation. I've never quite figured that out. They had moved to a small town in Maryland called Riverdale. And that's where I went to first grade. They decided that they did not like city life, and my mother wanted to be closer to her family so we moved with my newborn brother back to Ohio, to a little town called Philo where my mother grew up.

Q: How long did you live in Philo?

RUEDY: I lived in Philo until I went to college.

Q: That means love or something, doesn't it?

RUEDY: Yes. The town was originally called Taylorsville, Ohio. Then they found out there was a second Taylorsville, Ohio. There's something strange called the period of Greek Revival. A lot of towns took Greek names. This little town way out in the middle of the boonies decided to call itself Philo as part of the Greek Revival of the time.

Q: Yes. There are towns called like Utica, Homer and that sort of thing. What was Philo like?

RUEDY: We had a great school system to which I attribute whatever success I have had in my life, because I had some really tremendous teachers. The town was a river town originally. There was a lot of Indian history around there. Indians camped there because there was a place where you could cross the river on rocks. So a lot of Indians would

gather there. There were really twin towns, Philo on one side and a town called Beckon Falls on the other. It was quite an old town, but industrialized in the twentieth century. Ohio Power built a power plant and something called Ohio Ferro Alloy also set up business there. That considerably increased the tax base, and that's why we such great schools.

Q: You had one brother?

RUEDY: I had a brother and a sister. I'm the oldest.

Q: What was home life like?

RUEDY: We were pretty poor. Things were not easy. My dad had a series of jobs and without a high school education he had a tough time finding work. Mostly it was in factories; he worked at the Ferro Alloy for a while. Then for health reasons he had to quit. It was not a very healthy place to live. I remember the air was full of black particles that landed on the laundry and in homes and on the laundry that was hanging on the line. So it was not a very healthy place. My dad moved around from place to place trying to find work. There was a very serious recession during the Eisenhower years and there just wasn't any work. He did things like gather metal. We would go out and glean the fields after the farmers had harvested their corn. I remember going out and helping my dad pick up corn in the fields after the frost. He could sell that. By hook or by crook, my dad was kind of a hustler, we made it through. Some times were very, very tough. It became very tough when my mother became seriously ill. It was hard times.

Q: Did you find that this affected your getting out and around as a kid?

RUEDY: Looking back on it, my life was very focused on that town and the small area around it. My world was small except for the reading I did. I was a voracious reader, ever since I can remember. I always had a stash of books and as I got older I really got into Russian novels. And I would just escape with these Russian novels. We had an apple tree in the back and I would sit under that tree and read. If there were 800 pages long, that was fine with me, because I had lots of time on my hands.

Q: Was there a friendly town librarian? Did you have a Carnegie Library there?

RUEDY: No. We had a bookmobile, and there was the High School library that was pretty good. Looking back on it I was very, very fortunate to be in that school district.

Q: In your reading do you recall some of your early reading? Did you go through the normal series of Nancy Drew?

RUEDY: All, yes. I love Nancy Drew. Let's see, what else did I read? I read everything I could get my hands on, including some things I probably shouldn't have. There was also a library in Zanesville the county seat, and occasionally I would get a ride there. I always loved libraries.

Q: How about in elementary school? How did you cotton to school?

RUEDY: I loved school. I was a nerd I guess.

Q: You were one of those nasty little girls who knew how to spell things that the guys didn't. I know the type.

RUEDY: In fact, I have to brag a little bit and say I was the eighth grade Muskingum County spelling champion. It doesn't impress too many people, but... I was one of those students who got A's and sometimes my friends got a little disgusted with me. Sometimes I pretended not to know things. It got to the point where when the teacher asked a question I would not answer it on purpose. I wanted to keep my friends.

Q: What was it about Russian novels that grabbed you?

RUEDY: I think I have been romantic all my life. There is nothing more romantic than Russian novels at least in my view. Our English teacher Mrs. Litner was a wonderful woman. Back in those days when women didn't have so many career options, a lot of talented women went into teaching.

Q: I think we're better for it too. I'm dubious about furthering the generations by putting more women into law rather than teaching. Generation after generation benefited from these wonderful women who taught.

RUEDY: I had a series of tremendous women teachers and I can remember their names. Mrs. Simon, my first grade teacher in Riverdale Maryland was marvelous. She just let me do whatever I wanted. I could read as fast as I wanted. I learned to read quickly. Each classroom had its own little library. I went through first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, and sixth grade libraries. I was reading books from the sixth grade library while I was still in first grade, and she let me do that. She encouraged me. She was a wonderful inspiration.

And second grade Miss Lingo, third grade – I remember what she looked like but I can't remember her name, fourth grade was Mrs. Tolbert, fifth grade was McCutcheon, six grade Miss Cushmal, seventh grade was Miss Ruble, eighth grade was Mr. Hutrow and then in high school I had a series of teachers. I had an excellent Latin teacher, my English teacher, my band teacher Mr. Cass.

Q: What did you play?

RUEDY: I played the flute in Concert Band and I played saxophone in Marching Band. All those teachers made such an impression on me. They were so dedicated and just let me go. There was not the kind of thing that I think my kids experienced in high school which was very lock step. Classes were smaller, and I could go and do what I wanted to do.

Q: With all this reading and the fact that you came from a family that was really struggling, could you take what you were picking out of your novels and all and discuss them with the family? Or was it pretty much an internal thing?

RUEDY: This was internal, unfortunately. When I look back on it, I really shared much more with my teachers than I did with my family. My family had no time for reading.

Q: They were struggling to survive.

RUEDY: At times I felt guilty for taking the time to read because we were expected to pitch in. We were expected to help a lot.

Q: What did you do? Did you have jobs and things like that?

RUEDY: We had gardens; we grew vegetables. I sold the vegetables door-to-door. I sold greeting cards. I did a lot of babysitting. I had many, many yards that I mowed in the summertime.

Q: This, of course, was before the era of the gasoline motor, or did you have one?

RUEDY: No, my dad was very good mechanically, and so we had an old mower. He kept it running.

Q: What about the outside world? Did it intrude much?

RUEDY: My parents were always very interested in politics.

Q: Where did they stand in the political spectrum?

RUEDY: They were Republicans with a capital R. I don't understand that because from what I understand of my genealogy my dad's family from West Virginia were all staunch Democrats.

Q: Well, coming out of West Virginia where Roosevelt was God and then working in Washington, you would've thought they would have been hooked into the New Deal.

RUEDY: No. Unlike many of my colleagues, I didn't hear anything positive about either President Roosevelt or Mrs. Roosevelt. My parents just did not like him, and they were very, very Republican. I can remember the election between Stevenson and Eisenhower. Various people came to visit my parents to talk to them about how they were going to vote. I remember overhearing this and being very intrigued because my parents told the Republican visitors they were going to vote Republican, but then in their own private conversations, I remember hearing them say, "You know I'm not real sure about world security. Maybe, just maybe we should vote for Stephenson." I'm not sure how they actually voted in the end, but I remember this very serious conversation.

Q: It was probably the second go-around between Stephenson and Eisenhower in 1956. I'm guessing because you would have been in third grade. In view of your later career, was the Cold War around or not?

RUEDY: Very much so. I am the proud possessor of a certificate which says that I am trained to deal with certain aspects of a nuclear disaster. This was done in our high school. We actually had a series of classes on what to do if there was nuclear war. I can remember all kinds of things such as being sure to wash the tops of any cans that you open with soap and water, taping all the windows, making sure that people who come in take a shower to wash off all the radiation. Looking back on it, it was astounding to have this level of detail and this level of concern. On the backs of all our paper book covers there were instructions on all the different kinds of alarm signals and what they meant. There were instructions on what we were supposed to do. We, of course, had to practice getting under the table; we had to do all those things. And, of course, there was also the Cuban Missile Crisis. I was a member of something called the Gilbert Science Seminar which again was one of these extracurricular activities for kids who took school seriously. I was a freshman in high school. We always met on Monday nights in Zanesville with scientists and other people who were trying to get us interested in the sciences. We went one Monday night to the Gilbert seminar and spent the whole night talking about the Cuban missile crisis. Usually we were concerned about getting home in time to do homework for the next day. He said you don't have to worry; we don't have to do our homework. It was very real.

Q: Did you do anything up through high school about foreign policy or about what was happening?

RUEDY: We did not have a very good newspaper. We got only a local newspaper which had very little news of the outside world. Our TV coverage was also very limited. We got only the local station. Occasionally in class I would pick up something, but we didn't get Newsweek and we didn't get Time. I've thought about that a lot. I think what I learned I learned from school and from reading books. I was a major fan of Boris Pasternak. I read Dr. Zhivago I don't know how many times. This opened up to me that whole history.

Q: Did you find reading something like Pasternak led you to reading history books on the Russian revolution?

RUEDY: No, it was more literature. I would ask questions of the history teacher. We had some current events. It wasn't very seriously done, I'm afraid. No, I've thought a lot about that; I didn't rush off to find out what was happening in the Soviet Union. But I did dream about becoming an international correspondent. I did have an international interest, but not a lot of the information to feed it. I was in church choir. I can remember in high school sitting in the church choir and my mind was a million miles away literally. I wasn't paying any attention to the sermon or to anything else. I was sitting there fantasizing about being an international correspondent.

Q: What church did you go to?

RUEDY: The Methodist church.

Q: How important was church in your family?

RUEDY: To my family not very, to me very. In fact, I think that explains what I'm doing today which is pursuing this degree in pastoral care. Church has always been important to me.

Q: When you were getting ready to graduate from high school in 1965 was college in the offing?

RUEDY: For as long as I knew that if I was going to go to college I knew I would have to have help; I would have to get a scholarship. It was this great motivator. I did get a scholarship; I got a full scholarship to Ohio Wesleyan University partly, I think, because of my minister and my work with the Methodist church. I was active in Methodist fellowship and also was elected to a district-wide office so I had that Methodist experience which helped me. But also I got good grades; I was my high school valedictorian. And I did very well on SATs. For all these reasons I got a full scholarship to Ohio Wesleyan in Delaware, Ohio.

Q: So you went to Ohio Wesleyan for how long?

RUEDY: For two years, from 1965 to 1967.

Q: What was Ohio Wesleyan like?

RUEDY: I thought it was Heaven on earth. There were these wonderful old buildings. It was a small campus plunked in the middle of the small Ohio town of Delaware, Ohio, but again I have to say I had wonderful professors. I was given the opportunity to participate in an experimental program for freshmen. This was something called Conflict and the Human Condition. It ran for three trimesters. The first trimester looked at the conflict and the human condition in the biological sphere, the second in the social sciences, and the third in the humanities. It was team taught and for each trimester we had to do a special project. This was fascinating to me and there I really began to get interested in history, politics and economics because all were covered within this theme which tied it all together. In fact my second trimester I pronounced myself a political science major. Then, however, literature always kept coming back. The third trimester was humanities and we looked at the affects of World War II on Germany.

Q: I've always maintained that Hitler's persecution of the Jews was beyond belief and horrible, but also a fact that isn't well known is that he took the salt out of the German soul. The Germans and the Jews worked so well together. So much of what you consider the great flowering of German culture had that Jewish attribution.

RUEDY: It was taught by a woman who also taught Russian literature so we had some perspective of the Russian culture but it was mostly focused on Germany. We read books like The Spire, Billiards at Half-Past Nine, Children of the Kibbutz, and I was just enthralled. I just really felt that I could read these books and this whole world opened up to me. I still have the notes from these classes.

Q: What about dating? Did people go steady? Or were you pretty busy doing other things?

RUEDY: Well I dated a fair amount. Yes, it was all pretty strict. My parents were very strict. At that time and in that place, the standards were different. There were the proms, there were the Valentine dances, that kind of thing. As far as just getting in the car with somebody and driving around or hanging out like they do today, no, we didn't do so much as that. It was pretty much structured.

Q: Had you any exposure to Foreign Service people or to foreign policy?

RUEDY: In my poli-sci courses, yes. I was very aware of the United Nations. In fact, another of my dreams was to be an interpreter at the United Nations. I always had this kind of international interest, and I am not entirely sure where it came from. I can remember very vividly an economics professor. We were reading books by Galbraith at the time. The economics professor came in and drew a checkerboard on the blackboard. He noted that some of the squares were filled by countries like the United States, England and countries that were what relatively well off. Some of the other countries were countries in Africa, what we now call the Third World, who were not so well off. He predicted at some point that they would cover the board; they would invade. Somehow they would enter our cozy lives, and this was something we really needed to think about and be prepared for. That left a great impression on me.

Q: You came from a family of strong Republicans. The Kennedy phenomenon, the election of 1960, and the appeal to youth, did that hit you at all?

RUEDY: All of them, yes. I was a Democrat. I had terrible arguments with my parents about the whole race issue and all of those things. I was a liberal with a capital L. I very quickly moved out of the Republican sphere that I had grown up in. I loved Kennedy. I remember I was in a physics class when we got the news over the school system that he had been shot, and we all wept. I remember that I went to church and sat in the quiet church trying to make sense of it. I watched, I guess like everyone else, the shooting on TV when Oswald was shot. This was all very traumatic.

Q: Were you taking any languages?

RUEDY: In high school I took French and Latin. In college I continued the French and I also did Russian.

Q: How did you find languages?

RUEDY: I enjoyed them. I was good at them.

Q: Did the race issue hit Ohio Wesleyan?

RUEDY: You know, I don't remember. I should explain that I went two years to Ohio Wesleyan, and then I transferred to another small liberal arts school, Wittenberg University in Springfield. That was in 1967, and there I did run into the race issue. I don't remember it so much at Ohio Wesleyan, maybe because I was so into my classes. But at Wittenberg definitely all the stories about the freedom marchers and Martin Luther King and the Black Panthers, all that sort of thing was very much in the air. I can remember the first hippie type I saw. She was a very bright woman from New York, I think, and she was coming through our dorm rooms. She was collecting money because she wanted to go to march on Washington. She wanted us all to contribute so she could take a bus and march in Washington at one of the anti-war demonstrations. That was my very first encounter with this kind of thing which to me was very radical and exciting but also kind of disorienting.

Q: Then in 1967 you transferred to Wittenberg?

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: Why?

RUEDY: I'd rather not say. It involved a love interest. Wittenberg offered me an equally good scholarship. There was also a program at Wittenberg which I wanted to participate in, and that was study abroad.

Q: What was Wittenberg?

RUEDY: Wittenberg is a Lutheran school. They have a chapel that is built to look like the original church in Wittenberg. All of these things, looking back on them, were preparing me for things later in life, because we ended up spending three years in East Germany and going to Wittenberg and all. Those two years at Wittenberg were really focused on two things – theology and Russian language, culture and history. In fact, my Russian history teacher was a wonderful woman named Margaret Ermarth whose son was chairman of the National Intelligence Council a few years back. I'm not sure if he worked at the CIA, I believe he did. I had the opportunity to talk to him about going to his mother's classes. It was a very nice experience for me. He came through Bonn when I was working for Ambassador Walters. I pulled him aside and said I just want to thank you, because she had died by that time. Your mother was instrumental in guiding and developing my interest in things Russian.

Q: What was the community around there? This was '67 to '69?

RUEDY: I graduated in 1969.

Q: This was the height of the Vietnam protests. Did that resonate in the middle of Ohio?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We had our sit-ins. Various of my friends were experimenting with drugs. I was a little Goody Two Shoes. I had read what drugs did to the brain. My brain was what was getting me to where I wanted to go so I didn't want to experiment with those things. I did have friends who were taking marijuana, heroin. Also there was a school near Wittenberg called Antioch which had a reputation, rightfully so, of being very liberal, very radical, and we would often go up there for concerts and things. We thought that we were right in the middle of it. It was very real.

Q: How did the Vietnam War resonate with you?

RUEDY: My boyfriend at the time and my brother were both part of the first draft lottery. That is a night I will never forget. Luckily, they both drew high numbers. But people who drew low numbers – those who would be drafted sooner rather than later – just fell apart. There was so much emotion on campus and so much tension, so much soul searching. It is indescribable. Both my boyfriend and my brother drew numbers in the 300's so I was much relieved. I was also beginning to feel guilty about being a woman and not being subject to all of this. That's something that stayed with me for several years, the fact that this burden fell on men only.

Q: Did you feel that being a woman made a difference on where you wanted to go? Did you feel handicapped or frustrated or did you see things really opening up? How did you feel about this?

RUEDY: The limitations came more from my family. They didn't understand or appreciate what I was trying to do. There was a real generation gap there. I wanted both things; I wanted marriage and I also wanted to go to graduate school. I wanted to be something more. I got a three-year NDEA (National Defense Education Act) fellowship from Duke. It was the result of Sputnik. The government decided it needed to put more money into graduate education, and I benefited from that. I was really surprised to get this offer from Duke. I was absolutely delighted. My relationship with the man for whom I had transferred had fallen apart, and when I got a telegram saying that I had won this fellowship to Duke, I was just bowled over. Interestingly enough, I felt that Wittenberg was more liberal about women's aspirations. My professors really encouraged me to apply to Duke and to think about being a college professor. Of course, Professor Ermarth was a model for me. She didn't let it bother her. Duke was a little more conservative. When I got to Duke as long as I stayed single, things were OK. But at Duke I met a wonderful man, who is now my husband, and got married. They didn't like that very much. I remember my dissertation adviser calling me out of the room a few days after I got married saying. "Now, I want to know. Are you going to continue to go by Ms. Wallace or are you going to be Mrs. Ruedy? I said, well I'd like to go by Wallace if that's OK. He said I really don't think that's a good idea. He said you really are Mrs. Ruedy now. The way it was said was a tone of disapproval.

There was also a financial aspect because I had a fellowship for three years, and then I got a tutorship which meant that I taught composition. My husband had come on the GI Bill. He had been in the Navy during Vietnam. He did not have a fellowship, but when it came time to get tutorships when we were single we both got tutorships. When we got married I was hauled in and asked if I would be willing to give mine up, because they didn't think they should give two tutorships to the same family. Very conservative.

Q: You were a graduate student. Did you find this a different world?

RUEDY: Yes. Again it was an absolutely beautiful place, a beautiful gothic campus. We had a wonderful President, Terry Sanford. We idolized him. He had receptions for graduate students, and I thought he was a water-walker.

Q: He was a presidential candidate and governor of North Carolina.

RUEDY: Yes. He was also responsible for a lot of the liberalization of North Carolina politics, central support systems and all this kind of thing. He was just a fantastic man. He just had real charisma. He is buried in the crypt of the chapel which I think is very appropriate. Duke was also torn apart by politics. I was a very serious student; I had papers to write and all these undergraduates were blocking our way into the library. I was saying, "OK, I agree with you, but I have to get this paper done." In fact, I did my dissertation on Edmund Spencer's Fairie Queen, which is a sixteenth century epic, the longest poem in the language.

Q: This was pointing you to be a professor, is that right?

RUEDY: Yes. I loved teaching; I just thought it was great.

Q: What was your impression of the Duke students that you were teaching?

RUEDY: They were very bright, very motivated. It was a pleasure to work with them. Of course, Duke has a very excellent medical school. I always had a certain number of students who came in at the beginning of the semester and say, "Mrs. Ruedy, I have to get an A in this class or I won't get into medical school." They were very focused, and as I say just very bright, excellent students and they are the same today. They attract very good people.

Q: What's the background of your husband?

RUEDY: He grew up in the Amana Colonies in Iowa. He went to a very small high school; he was also valedictorian of his class. He grew up speaking German.

Q: Was he Mennonite?

RUEDY: Well, they are part of the Pietist Movement, but they're called the Church of the True Inspiration. There are seven colonies, and they come from different parts of

German-speaking Europe. Each colony retained the accents of the different areas from which they came. Studies have been done to show this. My husband's mother's family came from Saxony and his father's family came from southern Switzerland. When we went to Europe, to Germany, people would listen to him for a while – he's a fluent German speaker – and some people picked up both those accents in his German which always bowled me over. I couldn't believe they can hear that, but they did.

Q: As you got married, what was he going after?

RUEDY: He wanted to be a teacher too. His dad had wanted him to be a lawyer. After the Navy he thought about going to law school, but he decided he'd really wanted to do English literature because when he was stationed in Italy he took English courses from the University of Maryland. He was so entranced with this that he switched from his interest in law to wanting to become an English professor, he thought. He had applied to Boston College and thought that he would be enrolling there, but then the Navy extended him several months and Boston would not take him mid-year and Duke would. So he ended up at Duke, and I'm glad.

Q: What happened with Duke? How did this work out?

RUEDY: Well, I got my degree in '75.

Q: This was a Ph.D.?

RUEDY: A Ph.D..

Q: Your dissertation was on Spencer?

RUEDY: Spencer. When I took the oral exam for the Foreign Service one of the folks asked me how I thought my graduate work would help prepare me to be a Foreign Service Officer, and I said, well, do you know anything about the court of Queen Elizabeth the First? All of the diplomat poets, and so on. We realized that there were no academic jobs. This was in the seventies, the early seventies, and there just weren't any jobs. A dear friend of ours took a dictionary that had a list of colleges in the back and literally sent his resume to every single one of them and then papered his office with the rejections, with the letters saying we have no openings.

Q: What was your impression of the Ph.D. process? I have the feeling that it gets you off into such esoteric areas at a very creative time when it would be better to turn the people loose writing or teaching. How did you feel about that?

RUEDY: I have to say, at that time, the Duke English Department was very ... there are, of course, different schools even in English literature and ways of approaching it. At that time, literary historians dominated the department. I really believe that the kind of very careful research and pursuit of the elusive fact is extremely good training. I'm not so sure about some of the other approaches to English literature at Duke. During the great

cultural wars years later in which Mrs. Cheney got involved with Duke, there were a lot of new Marxists. I had just come back from East Germany and I'd had it with Marxism. So I was extremely disappointed that the Duke English Department was so behind the times that they at that point were looking at Marxist criticism of literature. I'm not so sure that would've suited me as well as the literary historic approach.

Q: Many English departments have gotten into this deconstruction, and they go off on fads which you know aren't going to last. They just happen to be the particular prejudices of the professors at the time. They're probably hurting the people going through their hands until a new group takes control.

RUEDY: Right. I'm just very grateful that I had the literary history approach and it stood me in good stead. The research techniques that I learned helped me even when I worked in research and analysis in INR (Intelligence And Research).

Q: You were the beneficiary, as you say, of the historical approach which is what we're supposed to be able to do in our business. While you were there did things such as foreign affairs, what was happening in the world or diplomacy, intrude much on your life?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We had Jewish friends, and I can remember long heated arguments about what justifies war. People who were against the war in Vietnam were nevertheless in favor of military action to protect Israel. I was struck by this kind of double standard. We had a lot of controversial figures come to campus. There was the tradition of having them speak out on the quad, out in the open, and the students would all come. So, even though we were in our ivory towers, we were aware of what was going on.

Q: You graduated when?

RUEDY: To go back a bit, one of the things that attracted me to my husband and vice versa was that we were both very interested in working overseas. In fact, during one of our times at the Modern Languages Association conference where people like us would look for jobs, one was held in New York. We both went to New York to attend this conference. It was huge. We skipped some of the sessions and instead went to visit the German Consulate to see how hard it would be to get teaching jobs in Germany. The usual seeds were being planted all along. He was a wonderful man, I don't know his name, but he spent some time with us.

Q: This was the German consul?

RUEDY: Yes, the German consul. He basically told us it would be very difficult, but he encouraged us to pursue various international kinds of jobs. So when it became clear that we were not going to get jobs in academia, especially together – that was going to be nearly impossible – I sent off for the Foreign Service exam materials. I thought, hmmm, maybe this is something. I believe I saw the information for that on one of the bulletin boards at Duke. I sent for the information and I got it. I thought hmmm, this looks pretty

interesting; this is something I might really like to do. I'd rather teach, but if I can't teach maybe I can do this. My husband and I were married in 1970, and I think I'd sent off for this information in '72 or '73, something like that. This is where the woman's situation kind of hit home. I started thinking, if I do this when was I going to have children? What's going to happen? And I really want to have a family. My husband and I talked about it, and he got interested in it too, especially since he'd been in service – he'd been in Vietnam, he'd been in Italy. He was kind of missing being overseas. My time abroad in my junior year in high school, which I forgot to mention, I studied at the University of Exeter in England. Then that summer – I can't believe I did this as a small town kid with no money – I wrote a letter to the bank in Philo and asked them if they would loan me money to take a trip to the Soviet Union at the end of my time at Exeter. They agreed to loan the money. My parents had to countersign, but I borrowed $300. I signed up for a student tour that left from London. I think I was one of the few Americans; they were mostly British and Canadian students. We did a tour of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Q: What did you come back with?

RUEDY: Oh, those were amazing times, absolutely amazing. The tour was led by this ethnic Russian who loved his vodka and carried extra bottles with him on the trip to get us through any tough spots. And one time I was very grateful he had the vodka along because it turned out that my visa number didn't match. There was some discrepancy, I forget now, involving numbers. Every time we went through some kind of border crossing I had a problem. He would hand over a bottle of vodka and get me through. So, there were lots of bottles of vodka to get me through this tour. It was just amazing for somebody who had studied Russian and read Russian novels and loved Pasternak. We went to Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Warsaw, and Prague. I was in Prague in August of 1968. That place was just alive with energy; the tension in the air, you could just feel it. All the students were just so nervous and there were a few Soviet tanks around.

Q: Had they already gone in?

RUEDY: No. This was just on the cusp. In fact, it was not until I was in INR and talking to some of my great learned colleagues that I figured out something interesting that had happened to me at the time. We did all of our traveling on these wide-gauged Soviet trains. As we were leaving Prague, our last stop was supposed to be Lvov, Lviv now. We never got there; they stopped our train out in the middle of nowhere. We sat in the hot sun and we worried. They just left our car there, and the rest of the train went on. Our car stayed there. We wondered what was going to happen. There was this little tiny town, and there was a little boy in the square. We went out to stretch our legs. Our tour guide didn't know what was happening; we didn't know what was happening. This little boy kept running around saying Robert Kennedy, Robert Kennedy. It was a very bizarre experience. That night or late in the afternoon a train pulled up with food and water and we got fed. Then the next day we move on. It turns out that was the main staging ground for the invasion of Prague, Lvov, and so they didn't want us in the way. So we just got

sidetracked, literally, until it was safe to go on. We never got to go to Lvov. That was on our itinerary, but we didn't get to go there.

Q: Did you come back with any feeling – you had been reading the Russian romantic novels, this wonderful thing – and then coming up against the socialist system which is not very appealing. Did this have any effect on you?

RUEDY: Yes. I mean it was the grimmest thing I'd ever seen. It was like going back a couple, maybe three, decades. When our train went through Poland here were women wearing kerchiefs and leading cattle and donkeys and ox-drawn carts and out in the fields with the most primitive kind of farming equipment. Moscow itself was full of these banners, and that was about it. Otherwise, it was a very dark and grim place. I had a rendezvous with a man who was an Intourist tour guide. We had a date, and he took me up into the Russian hills and we had a picnic there. He told me how bad it was, and he also asked me if I would send him some jazz records. I don't know how many other women in the trip had that experience, but it was very interesting. I had some kind of correspondence from him a few months later, but it was very difficult to continue any kind of relationship like that, but he was a fascinating person.

Q: Did you find say with a British students at that time, I think there was still a strong appeal of the Soviet Union the labor side in Britain. Did some of the British students go with sort of stars in their eyes?

RUEDY: No, these were students who have enough money to make this trip. I don't think the students were particularly left-wing on this trip. If they were, by the end of the trip we were all agreed that this was pretty dreadful. The people were enslaved and the Cold War was worth it.

Q: Let's go back to the end of Duke and all. What about the Foreign Service? You found yourself without a job and without job prospects.

RUEDY: Right, but I was also hesitant to commit to something. I wasn't sure I would get in, but I thought if I did get in – in those days I was already by that time aware that the biological clock was ticking and I thought this is going to postpone having a family for several more years. That made me uneasy, so my husband said, "Well, I'll take the exam." He did, and to the surprise of both of us he just kept passing. He kept going and was finally offered a position with the U.S. Information Agency. He accepted and went off to Washington in January of 1974. He was not finished with his dissertation; he was a semester behind me. I was close to being finished. My professor was a summer scholar at the Folger Shakespeare Library so we made arrangements for me to finish my education by doing research at the Folger while Ralph was doing his thing. It was fantastic. What a civilized place. You were sitting in these leather chairs surrounded by these wonderful books and a little bell would ring at three and you would go down and have tea. It was very civilized.

Q: Did you get involved in introduction to the Foreign Service, the courses and that sort of thing?

RUEDY: Right. It turned out my husband's first posting was not Germany, though he was a fluent German speaker, but to Iran, Teheran. So he got a full dose of Farsi. I took, I think, six weeks just to get some very basic stuff because I wanted to finish my dissertation. He would go off to FSI (Foreign Service Institute) which was still in Rosslyn at that time, and I would go off to the Folger. We prepared to move to Tehran in the fall, and we did.

Q: You finished up and were Frau Doktor by this time?

RUEDY: It was really tough, because that was also the summer of Watergate and Nixon, and I was totally enthralled with this whole thing. I was typing my own dissertation so I would be with one eye on the TV, trying to type and finish this thing up.

Q: You went out to Tehran when?

RUEDY: In the fall of '74.

Q: And you were there from '74 to?

RUEDY: To '76.

Q: What was Tehran like at the time?

RUEDY: It was a busy, bustling, noisy, polluted, fascinating – endlessly fascinating – place, especially for somebody like me. I had had my exotic experience in the Soviet Union, but that this was a new degree of the exotic. We had had a little bit of cultural orientation, but I got there as a newly minted Ph.D. and I thought, OK, what am I going to do here? I'm going to do something; I'm not just going to sit at home. So I immediately was out knocking on doors trying to get some kind of teaching job. But I should back up and tell about one incident which was very telling. I don't remember which day of the week we arrived, but by the time we got over our jet lag it was a Friday and Ralph, my husband, had gone to USIA. I decided that I was going to go out and walk around. I was a fully educated, independent Western woman, and I was not going to stay in my hotel room cowering. So I got up, and I put on my Sunday suit and went out and started walking around. Big mistake. I got hit across the back with a steel pipe by a man who obviously didn't think I should be out on the street on a holy Islam day especially without a chador. That was a real awakening; I had to regroup and think about this again.

I still was very, very motivated to find a teaching job. I went to Teheran University and talked to the English Department there and they were very happy to see me. The Department head said he would be thrilled to have me come and teach 16th Century English literature, but they didn't have a position and I didn't have a work permit so perhaps I could come as a Fulbright scholar. I was all excited about this until I talked to

my husband and he said well you can't be a Fulbright scholar because of nepotism. USIA is involved in the Fulbright program so you can't do that. I was heart-broken because Tehran University was a very exciting place, and I thought this is really cool. Then I went to another university called Meli, which means National, University. It was located on the mountain in the middle of Teheran. I applied there, and they said fine we would love to have you but you're going to have to get a work permit. I went back to the embassy, and they said nobody's ever gotten a work permit from the Iranian government. It took me several weeks, months, and I got the permit.

Q: What was the problem? Was it that the embassy didn't push or was it the Iranian government?

RUEDY: The Iranians. What a bureaucracy. Byzantine does not begin to describe it. You just had to keep going from office to office. I don't know that there was anything intentional about it.

Q: That's just what Iranians did?

RUEDY: That's what they do.

Q: Well, it gave you a wonderful insight into the system.

RUEDY: Indeed. In fact, sometimes at embassy parties I'd be talking to people, and I would think which country are they in? There are certainly not in the country I'm in.

Q: What were you teaching at Meli? How did you find the students?

RUEDY: When I started teaching, most of the students had had some kind of Western orientation. They either maybe had a father who worked for the Iranian Oil Company or they had traveled to Europe; they had had some experience with the West. No one wore chador: all the men and women in my classes sat together. They read Newsweek; they were sophisticated. Shortly after we arrived, the Shah decided that he wanted to provide universal university education to every Iranian who wanted it. Within a few weeks, the whole classroom had changed radically. I got all these students coming in from small towns and villages and the women in chadors. Suddenly, the men were sitting on one side; the women were sitting on another. They were very provincial. They didn't know what to make of me. They decided I was CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). My car was stoned. I was not somebody they wanted to have around. That was a manifestation of the Islamic fundamentalist movement, and there it was right in my classroom.

Q: How did the authorities at the university treat this?

RUEDY: My boss Faridah Sahoon was a very sophisticated, beautiful Iranian woman who had her degree from the University of Massachusetts. She was head of the English Department. She was just appalled, but frightened. Several of the teachers were also quite Western-oriented, Western-experienced and sophisticated. I would try to talk to them.

What's going on here? What's happening? They were very, very careful as far as the government itself, the Shah's government. In fact, I was told to be very careful about what I said in class because every class contained SAVAK agents, that was their secret police. I could tell who they were; they were sort of stuck out.

Q: When I was in Yugoslavia we had the equivalent and they said you could always know who they were because they wore police boots.

RUEDY: Well, they stuck out. So there was an atmosphere on the campus of concern, fear, hesitancy, watching your back, even before this great sea change with the people coming in from the villages. In fact, I remember as a teacher I was required to take an oath of loyalty to the Shah's Rastakhiz Party. This was a great concern to me because I knew, I was just terrified, that this could somehow affect my U.S. citizenship. I went down to the consulate and gave them a statement saying that this was done under duress and so on because members of the Iranian government took pictures of us and so I was on record as having had to raise my hand.

Q: Was there a concern on your part, you mentioned how you were an authority on the court of Queen Elizabeth and all the intrigue and politics, and here you are in a place where the court full of the intrigue and politics. All of the literature of the time sort of revolves around this. Did you have to be careful?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. I think I mentioned that I had become a great liberal, but I was surprised and somewhat shocked at how easy it became to do self-censorship. This came in handy again in East Germany when we were advised never to talk about anything in our apartments of sensitivity. It's so easy to then really fall into that.

Q: Was anyone seeking you out to tell you how awful the Shah was? Or how awful the fundamentalists were?

RUEDY: Yes. I got it from both sides. One of my teacher colleagues lived very close to a central prison, and she told me how they couldn't sleep because of the screaming they heard from the prison. There were those who were very critical of the Shah and told me in confidence about it. There were also those who were very concerned about the social problem, what they saw as the social instability caused by this influx of fundamentalists. There were people who pulled me aside and said there will come a time when no American will be safe here. Some of the students were very protective of me. I was about three months pregnant at the time and I remember hearing that the government was going to raid our campus because there were too many free-thinkers. Indeed, they did show up in full battle gear, SAVAK, with billy clubs and I looked out the window and watched them beating up students, bloodying their heads. Some of my students came and got me and said we really need to take you to a safe place because they will think you are one of the people inspiring the insurrection. I remember they took me into an inner room with no windows and they stacked desks against the door. We stayed there for quite a long time. Afterwards when all was clear, the damage that had been done by the SAVAK raid was

extensive and many students had been very seriously injured. I myself, a week later, had a miscarriage.

Q: You mentioned wondering what world the people at the receptions were living in. Obviously you were talking to your husband. Were you talking with others? Was this penetrating in the embassy, do you think? Did you have the feeling that the embassy was...?

RUEDY: The Ambassador at the time was Richard Helms. I was more and more aware, even though I was a teacher, of the embassy and the way it worked as the more people I got to know; obviously this was my first embassy. I got to know and understand what the political section did, what the CIA did, and there was a huge, huge American military presence there. I started understanding more about what sorts of jobs these people were doing. I remember feeling very superior to them, because I thought that I had more actual contact with Iranians and students and the intelligentsia and so on through my work than some of them did. I also know there was quite a lot of concern in the embassy that the messages weren't getting through to Washington about what was really going on in the country. I do know that at least one person sent in a dissent channel cable. I was asked to do some reporting on the university situation, which I did, and gave to the political section so that was my first political reporting. There was this kind of tension between people who were writing reports that they thought Washington wanted to hear and reports that Washington didn't want to hear.

Q: This is the era that now we look back on, and it is well-documented, about how the Shah would complain about negative reporting. Talk about self censorship. The embassy wasn't reporting, although of course that reporting got through, it just meant it was official informal or something else. It was a time when we really were cozying up to the Shah. Did you find yourself getting into discussions, heated or not, with your colleagues at Foreign Service things or Foreign Service gatherings?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. I felt on an equal footing; I felt that I had views and I had knowledge and information as much as they did. Some of our friends were with CIA, and they were very concerned. We had very interesting conversations.

Q: I would think that a good number of students there. I was a consular officer most of my career and particularly when serving in the European area or around the periphery you were deluged by Iranian students who were trying to get to the United States and knew that they probably weren't going to come back. This was a fact of life. So you must have been hit up by those people trying to figure out how to use you to get to the States, weren't you?

RUEDY: You know, that didn't happen so much. Looking back on it, I'm surprised now that it didn't happen more than it did, only in a couple of instances. They were obviously very concerned about learning their English. Maybe it was because the particular student population that I dealt with, either already had access to the West through their well-connected families and the fundamentalists didn't want to go there.

Q: Here you are teaching, was it 16th Century English literature?

RUEDY: Well, I was teaching a little bit of everything. I was teaching English language. I was teaching some literature. I was teaching MD students and students in the medical school and in the law school. You know I was kind of a Jack-of-all-trades, all kinds of things wherever they needed me.

Q: I would have thought that this influx of students from the villages not only would come bringing some their fundamental beliefs, but they also would not have been the recipients of as good an education. This must have caused real problems. Were you under pressure not to discriminate and make sure they all come out about the same as far as grades?

RUEDY: No, no. That may have been the case in other departments, but I think the English Department was a little different. No. There was just a lot of concern about not saying something that would irritate the government and not cause any riots among the fundamentalists. Just being very, very careful.

Q: Religion is very much a factor in so much of English literature. You must have had to tread very carefully there.

RUEDY: Yes. That was taboo. That was not something we talked about.

Q: How did you find embassy life?

RUEDY: That again was in a time of transition. I remember getting a booklet from FSI before going out to Teheran which talked about when to wear gloves and when to visit the Ambassador's wife and drop off your visiting card. And it was so. I had to go and there was a little silver bowl and drop off my card. It was still pretty old fashioned, I guess people would say today. I didn't have direct dealings with Ambassador Helms except that I was a member of his Christmas band. He had a Christmas band. I played the flute. He took great delight in conducting this group at the embassy Christmas party.

Q: What were you getting about USIA's operation there?

RUEDY: It was this huge operation. There was a huge America House which had its own movie screen and a little grill where you could get hamburgers. They had a huge area for exhibitions and then there was the place where English was taught. USIA was separate from the embassy, and it was a huge operation and a lot of activities and students lined up to get into the English classes. Lots of American movies were shown.

Q: Did you all make many Iranian friends?

RUEDY: Oh, yes, many many. Colleagues at the university were friends; they were very hospitable people. I went to weddings, I went to funerals, I was invited to homes for meals. I had one friend who asked me if I would help her with her English, and I said yes

and it turned into quite a regular thing. She would come. She was well-connected in the government, and at one point I received a very official invitation to tutor one of the Shah's nephews. I was supposed to go to the palace and meet with this student. I turned it down on principle. I decided I did not want to get involved with that. Now I could kick myself. I decided that basically what they wanted me to do was to write the student's papers, and I wasn't going to do that.

Q: How about traveling around?

RUEDY: That was another thing. That was great. In the Farsi class at FSI, we had two of the future consuls; the one for Khorramshahr and the one for Tabriz**.**

Q: Who were they?

RUEDY: Mike Arriya in Khorramshahr and Robert Campbell in Tabriz. There was an opportunity to take the diplomatic pouch around. Since my husband and I didn't have children we often volunteered and so we ended up visiting all the major cities. Khorramshahr, Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz, we did a lot of traveling. I remember one very memorable extended trip when we took the pouch to Tabriz. Our friend there had a jeep and we drove around Lake Rezaiyeh, now called Lake Urmia. That was an amazing adventure. These were towns where I don't think they had seen a Western woman, maybe only on TV but they didn't have TV. Sexual harassment was a big problem and in some of the little villages in order to walk down the street I had to have my husband in front and my friend behind to protect me.

Q: Did you learn to dress in a modified manner?

RUEDY: I dressed in what I thought was a very conservative way. When I went to the bazaar, I wore a dark scarf. I also learned to wear a dark scarf at night when I was driving, because before I started wearing a scarf the Iranian male drivers would nudge my car and just harass me. So I started wearing a scarf, but even so it was not an easy thing to do, to be a Western woman – especially a blonde, I was a blonde at the time – walking around the streets. So I had to have lots of male protection. It made me very angry.

Q: This is a problem when you come up into a country where you're representing the United States and up against a different culture that doesn't accord you what you feel is your due. At the same time, this is their country, not our country. How did you vent your anger?

RUEDY: Well, I used to complain a lot to friends. I certainly did not make any scenes, because I was always very aware of the face of the U.S. so I didn't react at the time. But we talked a lot. It was a real formative influence.

Q: Did you continue your teaching at the university there?

RUEDY: Yes, I did. I taught until we left. I have to say although I did get the labor permit for a long time I wasn't paid at all. My boss said, "Don't worry, you'll be paid. I'll see to it. You'll be paid." I was earning quite good money. It was a very rich school. I was also teaching for the University of Maryland. So I was earning a good salary; I was earning more than my husband. But I wasn't getting any of it. The Maryland money rolled in, but the money from Meli University didn't roll in. I got pregnant again, and we went back to Durham, North Carolina because my husband decided to take some time off and finish his degree. We thought that would be a good, safe place to have the baby. One afternoon the mail came with stickers and seals and wax, and everything. I opened it up and it was a huge amount, for us, a huge amount of money from Meli University. I got my money long after I had left the country. I had given up on it. I thought, well, that was volunteer and then there it was.

Q: When you left the university did people say there was something coming?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. In fact, one of the FSN's (Foreign Service Nationals) at USIA took us out for a farewell lunch. He also said there would be a time coming where no American would be safe. We were very distressed to hear that some of our good FSN friends got out, especially those who worked for USIA. USIA is so public and yet I suppose it's because of the Soviet model where so many of their KGB people were put into these kinds of positions that some governments and cultures think that USIA people are also CIA people. There's always that kind of aura about them.

Q: You came back in 1976.

RUEDY: We came back in 1976. Our daughter was born in Durham in September. My husband's onward assignment was Kabul, Afghanistan. I wasn't too excited about that, because I had talked to a representative from the World Health Organization who said he would not take an infant to Kabul. I was getting just a little bit nervous about that. One afternoon my husband was at the library, and I got a call from Personnel saying when your husband gets home, tell him we're changing his assignment from Kabul to East Berlin, because we are starting our USIA operation there and we need German speakers. We know that he already has the German. We would like to know if he is interested in that. I said I will speak for him. Yes, we are; we are very interested. And that's where we went.

Q: You were in East Berlin from when to when?

RUEDY: We were in East Berlin from 1977 to 1980.

Q: Did your husband get his Ph.D.?

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: So it's doktor doktor?

RUEDY: Yes. And we loved that and especially with the East Germans. I enjoyed that immensely. It made every note card worth it, every long hour in the library.

Q: Was there any suggestion or desire on your part to get into the Foreign Service at this point?

RUEDY: I was thinking about it, especially since a friend in East Berlin decided to do it. She had a similar situation where her husband had joined. We had a lot in common. We both had three children, and we each had a child born on the same day that weighed the same amount. We had a lot in common. She also had an advanced degree. She was going through the testing process.

Q: Who was that?

RUEDY: This was Meg Keaton. I thought hmmm.

Q: That's when the Foreign Service was changing too. It was beginning to open up.

RUEDY: Yes, that's right, although she didn't have a very easy time of it. She and her husband were separated much more than my husband and I because I came in just a little bit later. She was still going through the very tough times.

Q: It wasn't a bed of roses, but it was changing.

RUEDY: It was changing. At least the idea was there, the possibility was there. So I started thinking about that.

Q: How was your German, by the way?

RUEDY: I had never studied German. When we arrived in East Berlin, the embassy was going through a lot of growing pains. They had been in a hotel, and they finally opened up the building and were starting to set up their offices. They didn't have enough housing for everybody so we went into this most dreadful apartment I can ever remember living in. It was at the corner of Lenin Allee and Ho Chi Minh Strasse. It was out beyond the stockyards. The building was full of Cubans, Yemenis, and some other Arabs. It was eighteen stories, one of these hideous Soviet things where there were two tiny little elevators that served hundreds of people; one was always broken. There were roaches everywhere. It was a horrible place. Carolyn and I arrived in January of 1977 to face this, and it was not a happy time. We didn't have a phone for a long time, we didn't have a car, and I didn't have any German. It was tough; it was a tough time; probably also some postpartum depression there. I had just left a very tearful mother who thought she was being deprived of their first and only grandchild. It was very, very tough. My husband was very excited about his work, very involved and very often in his own world. I was trying to deal with this home situation which was just dreadful. The baby was sick a lot; we had to go to the doctor; we had to drive all the way over to West Berlin. We were lucky to have that, but still it involved some logistic planning. I remember that Castro

came to town. The building went nuts. We had so many Cubans there. They were throwing all kinds of things out the window. It was just crazy. There was so much drunkenness. It was hard to sleep at night; you couldn't open the windows because all these people were drinking and yelling and screaming. It was just an awful place

Q: How long were you there?

RUEDY: We were there several months, and I finally got to the point of where I was saying if this doesn't improve, if they can't find us a better place to live, ... Because literally everybody else was living either in the really nice part of the East Berlin or they were down on the Leipsiger Strasse which was right near Checkpoint Charlie. For some reason, we were out miles from anybody. I said if we don't get out of here I'm going. I'm just not going to do this. Finally some inspectors came through and I can't remember for sure whether they talked to me but they definitely talked to my husband, and they came out and looked at our place. We were then able to move to Leipsiger Strasse, and we were much happier people.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

RUEDY: I'm sorry, I don't remember his name. He was from Texas. He had been in the oil business. He was an Afro-American, his wife was an artist.

Q: How did you find the embassy? Was it a friendly embassy?

RUEDY: It was small, in a beautiful old building, very elegant. I got to know several people there. The Marines were great. They had Halloween parties for the kids. We did things like caroling, which drove the East police, the Volkspolizei, nuts. We drove around the city and sang Christmas carols. I remember when the Chinese government decided to open up and improve relations with the U.S. the Chinese cultural attaché called my husband and invited us to dinner at the Chinese embassy. This also drove the Volkspolizei nuts. They followed us all the way there, they sat outside while we ate our meal, and then they followed us all the way home. The meal was tremendous. We were the only ones there. It was just one of those strange little diplomatic things which affect you personally in ways which you never expected.

Q: What part of the USIA action did your husband have?

RUEDY: He was cultural affairs.

Q: I would think that that would open up stuff for you, wouldn't it?

RUEDY: Yes. We had a grand time. We did all kinds of really interesting things. We went to the theater; we met all kinds of interesting writers; we had access to a writer's club. We had the most interesting invitations in the embassy.

Q: The East Germans put a hell of a lot of their money into the cultural field being good Germans. In fact, I think a lot of East Germans now are pretty unhappy that a lot of these artists were just cut loose.

RUEDY: No, that's right. If you were a certain kind of artist you had it made. Katarina Witt, the great skater, was a personal favorite I understand of Eric Honecker. She did well. If you were a dissident artist, then you didn't do so well. We had friends who were baptized Christians; they didn't do very well. We had friends who were writers who wrote one way officially but then wrote another way in their personal lives. So there was a great deal of schizophrenia, but absolutely fascinating.

Q: Were you able to put your curve professional career into anything while you were there?

RUEDY: Well, yes. One of the positive decisions I made when we were living in the old terrible apartment was to start working on German. So I got the FSI German books and tapes, and I started really seriously working on my German. I took some classes at the embassy and I continued that. By the time we left East Berlin I could get along; it was ok. What I decided to do was again I was able to teach for the University of Maryland. So I traveled to West Berlin to teach courses which interested the East German Stasi a lot because my husband and I recently requested and received our Stasi records. I don't know what they thought I was doing, but it was noted that I made frequent trips to West Berlin where I met with military people, although they were in my classes of course.

Q: East Germany had been touted as being the jewel of the Soviet bloc. Looking at it close in did you get the feeling that this was another disaster or not?

RUEDY: Definitely. I couldn't believe the kind of writing that was done about the descriptions of East Germany. My husband is an excellent German speaker and we were off in the boonies of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) every weekend. What we saw out in the countryside was appalling. There was a shortage of laundry detergent and so they couldn't wash their children's clothes and so the kids couldn't go to school. There wasn't enough salt; there were just terrible shortages of the most basic things. The place was horribly polluted. Down around Halle and such places when you drove through there in you could hardly breathe. The damage was so great. We learned that newborn babies down around Halle were sometimes taken off into other parts of the country so that they would have a chance at life, because of the terrible threat of what they called industrial croup. It was a disaster.

Q: How did you find the embassy officers? Was this sort of the unanimous opinion or were people looking at it with slightly rosier eyes?

RUEDY: No, I don't remember people being very rosy about it, definitely not.

Q: You were there when our embassy was taken over in Tehran. How was this treated in East Germany? And how were you getting reflections on events there?

RUEDY: It hit home to the embassy family in a very personal way because there was a man who I think was an economics officer in the embassy. He was allergic to cigarette smoking. The embassy was not smoke free, and he protested. He didn't like working in this environment. So he curtailed and he was sent to Tehran and became one of the hostages a few weeks after he arrived. We were very personally concerned. I did not feel any surprise whatsoever. It was seemed to me what one would expect.

Q: Were any of your students part of that?

RUEDY: I often think about that. I must say, if I taught English to any of the revolutionary guards, I often think about that. I don't have any concrete evidence though.

Q: I saw on TV the other day, the Vice President of Iran who apparently was one of those students, spoke flawless English.

RUEDY: I just don't know. It's probably possible.

Q: Did you mix and mingle much with the East Germans?

RUEDY: We knew that anyone we met had to report. That said we did have people that we thought we had friendships with. We also had "friends", a couple who showed up everywhere we went; it turns out that the couple was assigned to us, to kind of keep track of us. They were very nice people, and we had nice conversations with them. It was sort of like they knew we knew they knew sort of thing. After a while you just get used to it.

Q: This is how one survives so its not that awful as you come to accept this. As you say, you knew your apartment was being bugged.

RUEDY: Right. We knew that anyone who came to our apartment had to report. We kind of looked out for people. We didn't put anyone, I don't think, in a dangerous situation. We were very aware of all that. As I mentioned earlier of a surprise is how easy it became to have that sense of the third person around. I remember my husband saying well I just hope they don't have a camera in the bedroom. We sort of laughed about that but then we thought, well they probably did.

Q: I spent five years in Yugoslavia and when we went to Zagreb we were given the same room that everybody else had. We used a sort of laugh and say good night in Serbian to the wall. Did you get involved in any sort of embassy activities?

RUEDY: Well, there was Inga Parker's jazzercise class and my German lessons. I was good friends with a woman named Ramsey Pavitt. She was married to Jim Pavitt who recently retired as chief of covert operations for the CIA. I didn't find out until many years later that she was also a CIA agent, and so all the time that I was shopping with her because she also had children and our daughters were good friends that again the Stasi probably thought I was somehow involved.

Q: They put out a book called Who's Who in the CIA? I remember seeing that in a bookstore in Washington and I looked in it and there was my name. I guess I fit a certain pattern or something like that. I don't think they really cared because they were trying to blacken a lot of names.

RUEDY: By that time our daughter was three, and we had a second one on the way. I was just sort of concerned about my daughter missing out on preschool and this kind of thing. There wasn't really a good place to play outside. Through the Pavitts, we found a kindergarten which was owned by the Catholic Church in East Berlin. We started sending my daughter Carolyn to this kindergarten run by this woman whose name was Sister Felicitas. She was just a saint, and she had all these little children and that's where my daughter started to learn German. About the only illegal thing that I did in my time in East Berlin was to sneak in schools supplies for them from West Berlin. We would bring in paper and scissors and all this kind of thing. They were very, very poor. They ran on love. They really had so little, but they were so kind and so gentle and so good with the children. Carolyn remembers Sister Felicitas. They had their little cots where they took their little naps; it was all very German. But I just remember the love of these people and the odds against which they were working. There was a waiting list; a lot of people wanted to send their kids there and not to the state sponsored schools.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover there?

RUEDY: In East Berlin? Well, there was the night that all these East German soldiers, tanks and missiles suddenly appeared on the streets, a bright moonlight in the middle of the night. I woke my husband and said, "Oh, my God, there's some kind of military action is starting, you'd better call the Marines." He said, "Oh, no. They're just practicing for the big May Day parade." They were coming out of Metro stations that weren't used anymore. There was this whole army with all this equipment. I'll never forget that. In the countryside we would drive past whole towns that had been taken over by the Soviet army. Those were fascinating. It would be a whole town just of Russians, the little girls with the ribbons in their hair. On Saturdays we would see the Soviet soldiers had obviously done their own laundry; their trousers were hanging out the windows of their living quarters. I remember thinking when I saw some of these soldiers, especially some of them from the "Stans", not the white Russians but the Asiatic Russians, that these were some tough looking dudes. I began to lose some of my liberalism. I began to think these guys are serious; these are fierce fighters. I wouldn't want my son or my husband or anybody I know to have to face these guys. They were tough.

Q: You left there in 1980? Where did you go?

RUEDY: Düsseldorf.

Q: What were you doing there then?

RUEDY: My husband had been posted their as the DPAO (Deputy Public Affairs Officer) for the consulate in Düsseldorf. We arrived with two young children. We were given a very nice house in a German residential area. It was a time for me of settling in with my young children and also becoming part of the German neighborhood. That was kind of new and unique. No compound living there, we had German neighbors on either side. My oldest daughter started to go to a German kindergarten run by the German Catholic Church. We got to know some of the other families, and I had lots of opportunities to practice my German. I had to deal with the German pediatrician auf Deutsch so I learned a lot of terminology of childhood illnesses. I got very interested in the kindergarten, and I was actually elected – maybe the first American to be elected – to elternrat which is sort of like our PTA (parent teacher association). We met once a month and talked about issues *auf Deutsch* about the kindergarten. I remember one particular meeting that really I was in over my head in vocabulary because it was all about what children should be told about sexuality. That was pretty difficult for me. I learned a lot of vocabulary that night. That was kind of what we're about. Düsseldorf is in the British sector and so they're a lot of British installations. Right down the street from us was the British equivalent of the PX (Post Exchange). They had a movie theater, a book store. We also began to attend the old Anglican Church. It was a beautiful old building right across from the Rhine. To get there we walked through the Nordpark which in itself is an absolutely gorgeous place. We would just walk through the park and then go to the Anglican Church. There again, I was exposed to British Anglicanism which was a new experience. I eventually started teaching there in the Volkshochschule, and I had the advanced students who were working on their literature courses so I taught Faulkner, Hemingway, and lots of classic American authors. That was fascinating too.

Q: You were there from 1980 to ...?

RUEDY: To 1984.

Q: Then you got a real dose of this. When you arrived there how would you put German American relations as seen from Düsseldorf?

RUEDY: They were very good, especially with older people. There were still people who could remember being liberated by the Americans. We lived in a neighborhood of well-to-do people. On one side was a woman who had escaped from East Germany and come to the West and become quite wealthy. She owned a major department store chain. On the other side was a man who had been in the German army but was very glad that the Americans had won. In talking with them, and also with a man from whom the consulate rented our house had been in the war, so that was kind of different, an older generation. Given my husband's work we socialized quite often with people who were interested in America or who wouldn't be seeking out the USIA or ICA, as it was called at that time. I did encounter a great deal of hostility among college and university students, some of whom were in my classes. Our whole family remembers vividly some of the Peace Marches. That was the time of the debates over intermediate nuclear forces.

Q: That was in response to the SS-20's and our putting in the Pershings.

RUEDY: That's right. For some reason, I suppose it was because of the centrality of where we were living but one morning a huge group of demonstrators gathered. I don't think it had anything to do with the fact that we lived there. I think it was just a convenient place for them together. But it was a huge group of anti-American demonstrators. Our oldest daughter who was about four or five at the time still remembers that and is still upset by it, because there were all these pictures of Americans in not very flattering ways. My daughter at that time being in kindergarten understood German, and she still remembers it as really terrifying. The idea that all these people hated Americans is something that left quite an impression. We tried to explain to her that this was just one group of Germans, and she didn't have to be afraid of Germans, but they were loud, they were noisy, they had lots of signs and they marched. It was something we all remember very well. That anti-Americanism was there too.

Q: Where was Düsseldorf on the political spectrum?

RUEDY: I think Düsseldorf has generally been an SPD (Social Democratic Party) area. The Minister-counselor for Nordrhein-Westfalen went on to become the President of Germany. It was kind of old-fashioned SPD. As I lived in Germany and after I joined the Foreign Service and became a political officer, I began to understand that there were a couple of different SPDs. There was the old-style SPD, represented by this man. They had grown up as part of the trade union movement, and represented those values. Then there was the SPD of Oskar Lafontaine from the Saarland. They were called, not just by American observers but by other politicos in Germany, as the Chablis and cheese SPD. They were usually quite well off and, while they realized that they depended on the trade unions for their political support, they were also interested in kind of the good life. They were a different breed. I think Schroeder is part of that new SPD.

Q: Was there any evident Green movement while you were there?

RUEDY: I believe there was, but I was not really focused on that at the time. I'm trying to remember if I even saw Green posters. I don't recall.

Q: What about with your German neighbors and all. Did you find yourself getting involved in explaining the introduction of missiles into Germany in response to the SS-20?

RUEDY: Not really, because as I said, these neighbors had been through the war, and I think they understood the reason for our actions.

Q: Actually, it turned out to be the right response.

RUEDY: Exactly.

Q: The Soviets overplayed their hand. What about your students? Was this a Hochschule?

RUEDY: Yes. It was a Hochschule.

Q: Students in the Hochschule and the universities are different breed of cat in any country. How did you find them?

RUEDY: I had a variety of students. I had younger people, I had many middle-aged people who were wanting to just improve their English. I had some folks from other countries who had immigrated to Germany; I had some students from Yugoslavia. They were very interested in learning English. There was a degree of the anti-Americanism among the younger ones, and, in fact, there was kind of a mini-rebellion when I was introduced as their English teacher because I didn't speak British English. I responded by developing a course comparing British and American English and pointed out to them that, I thought this might appeal to their German concern for order in grammar, American grammar is much more conservative than British grammar and that American English is much more creative in absorbing words from other languages than is British English. That was my response to that, to try to "enlighten" these young people.

Q: Did you find that, by and large, there was an understanding of the United States and American institutions and development or was it only from the TV and the movies?

RUEDY: I would say that it's very similar to what I feel today. The young Germans were enamored with American pop culture; our music, especially jazz, rock music, this kind of thing, but they really thought that we are superficial, that we don't understand history, don't take things seriously enough, that we don't study hard enough, but then on the other hand, they were all trying very hard to go study in the U.S. Their responses are contradictory, paradoxical and it's the same today.

Q: Did you find a certain amount of distancing yourself by the fact you were in the British Zone? Did this sort of keep you from having to deal with the normal problems of having a lot of young American soldiers sitting in a country?

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: I think I at one time actually was part of "occupying" Germany, then we changed over and I was "supporting" Germany. I was first there in 1953 or 4 as an enlisted man, you know young and carefree guys.

RUEDY: Right: Well, we didn't have so many rowdy Americans, but we had Brits. Are you familiar with Faulkner's short story The Bear. Trying to teach that to American freshmen is tough; trying to teach that to Germans is nearly impossible. Trying to explain to them what wilderness means to an American, what our relationship to nature is, of course somewhat contradictory, the whole business of the coming-of-age ritual that is implied by the shooting of wild game. That is such an American story, and it was a great challenge to teach that, but I did feel that I made some progress. I thought based on essays and things that the students sort of got it. They respected Faulkner as a writer

because he was so difficult; they thought given their German prejudice against American superficiality, here was a writer who was not superficial so they respected very much those American literary classics.

Q: Had most of them been brought up with Oh Shatterhand and all that? You know, the German who wrote all these series of books about a sort of the James Fennimore Cooper type hero who was in the West? Most German kids before WWII were brought up on these. Does this ring a bell?

RUEDY: There was a series of books about American cowboys and Indians. Is that the one you're talking about? The author escapes me.

Q: Might have been. At least when I was there, that's what everybody had been brought up on.

RUEDY: I think we're talking about the same fellow. There are these clubs that put up tepees and live like Indians and they have their complete Indian costumes.

Q: When you put up your hands, instead of saying "How" you say "Wie gehts?"

RUEDY: Yes. And of course, the SPD and the Greens were very concerned about treatment of indigenous peoples. If USIA put on any kind of program that involved American Indians that was always extremely popular and politically correct.

Q: Did you feel for, this was when Ronald Reagan came in and it must have been sort of a shocker to the Germans?

RUEDY: That's an understatement. Talk about Americans superficiality, lack of preparation, the cowboy; they saw all these things in Reagan. Hollywood, you name it, he fit the stereotype. They just couldn't believe that this could happen to the American people. Then they assumed that the American people were a) ignorant and b) misled.

Q: Did you find any sympathy, understanding or desire for the Soviets?

RUEDY: Among the SPD, yes. I found out later that the SPD had regular consultations, at least regular meetings, with members of the SED over across the border. I guess since I'm retired I now have the freedom to say this, but when I was doing political work at Embassy Bonn, one of my jobs was to attend all the political party meetings. I found the SPD meetings to be very Soviet in the way they were controlled. I much preferred the Greens. The Greens really did practice a very radical kind of democracy. The SPD did not as far as I could see understand the real democracy; everything was prearranged, at least that was my impression. They seemed old-fashioned; they seemed part of the world that was crumbling.

Q: Did you get any feel what the people you knew thought about to East Germany, the Osties?

RUEDY: There was a great deal of pity, I would say. Of course, there were a lot of divided families and so there were people who still made their trek and tried to get in to see their relatives, so that was still going on. The people that I talked to seemed to have this feeling that the East Germans lived on the moon, that they had become a different volk. I tried to explain, probably not very well, having lived in the East and moved to the West is that I saw so many similarities. It was indeed one volk. Düsseldorf is not Bavaria. Düsseldorf is a city of culture and finance and sophistication. I think they had a hard time. I think the Düsseldorf people I got to know had a hard time connecting culturally with East Germans, although it was my feeling that those cultural similarities ran very deep even to the kind of paperwork one had to fill out for various things that you needed from if the government. The daily rhythm of life was very similar. The Düsseldorfers weren't very receptive to what I was trying to explain.

Q: After four years, in '84, wither?

RUEDY: We went back to the United States and by that time we had added to our family. We had a third child, our son Daniel was born in Ratingen, which is a suburb of Düsseldorf. I did want to mention a couple of high points in Düsseldorf. We got to entertain members of the Utah Symphony, and for me as an English major and teacher I had the great delight of having coffee by myself with one of the greatest critics, in my mind, that our country has produced and that's Helen Vendler. So I sat down and had coffee with her which is probably every graduate student's dream. That was such a wonderful experience. We talked about all sorts of things. She was a charming and extremely bright lady.

Q: I take it that in Düsseldorf when we were able to bring and cultural presentations, they sort of gobbled them up, did they?

RUEDY: Yes, they did. While we were there Nordrhein-Westfalen celebrated the 300th anniversary of the first German immigrant to the United States and this was made much of. The President came, and my husband got an award for all his hard work. I think he found the mayors of the cities involved and the government officials were all very receptive. This was a big success. That took place while we were in Düsseldorf. Our time in Düsseldorf, my memories of it, the demonstrations aside, the anti-Americanism aside, are very positive. We met some very fine people there, my husband enjoyed his work he had a lot to do with the university there; it was a wonderful family time and for him professionally.

Q: Then you came back to Washington in 1984? What was up?

RUEDY: We bought a house for our now, quite large family. My husband went off to work at USIA; he was the German desk officer, was extremely busy and put in very long hours. I was trying to get us settled and trying to decide what I was going to do. Again, the idea of joining the Foreign Service emerged, and I took the various exams, and I was sworn in June of 1987.

Q: Do you recall the oral exam, any of the questions?

RUEDY: Yes, I do. I was asked to talk about our trade policy with Mexico. When we took a break, I was talking to other people who were taking the exam and another person had gotten the question about Eric Honecker, and I said, "Oh, why did I get the trade question, I know nothing about Mexico. Why didn't I get the question about Germany?" I also remember that during the interview there was interest in my academic background and the fact came out that I had written my dissertation on 16th Century British poetry. One of the examiners asked me if I thought that would help me with a career in the Foreign Service, and I asked, "Well, do you know anything about the court of Queen Elizabeth the First?" Those are the things I remember most about the exam. I know I also got a high score on the in-box portion of the exam. After I was working for a while I wasn't so proud of that score.

Q: You were obviously destined to be a great bureaucrat.

RUEDY: Yes. I remember they offered me political or USIA. I really would have preferred USIA because I liked the work they were doing but I also could see down the line that nepotism would be a problem.

Q: Oh, yes. No doubt. What was your incoming class like?

RUEDY: I wasn't sure what to expect. I walked in, I was really nervous. I couldn't believe this was really happening. I didn't really believe it until I saw my name card.

Q: How old were you at that time?

RUEDY: 40, I had just turned 40. I expected to walk in and find a lot of young whipper-snappers; they were all like me. They said the average age of our class was the oldest class they had had in some time. There were a lot of second-career people. There were a lot of lawyers who had gotten bored with legal work, there were academics who hadn't gotten tenure, there were some who had gotten tenure that just didn't like academia; I felt that I fit right in.

Q: How did things work out after you finished your basic officers course? You said your husband, you had already done a good three years in Washington, and so you were due to go out?

RUEDY: We were. My husband had already been offered a job in Bonn as DPAO (Deputy Public Affairs Officer) and I had this hanging over my head. I wasn't sure; I had heard very mixed things about how tandem couples were treated. Two of our best friends were a tandem and the couple had been separated 90% of the time they had been in the Foreign Service. I said that I would just not accept family separation. If things couldn't be worked out, then I would have to reconsider. I felt very strongly about that; I saw what it had done to people who allowed themselves to be separated, what it had done to their

children. Our children were at a sensitive age, I guess they're always at a sensitive age. I had some German which was basically self-taught and so my counselor encouraged me to take the German exam. I got a 2+, 3. I was pretty proud of that; I had just done that on my own. It wasn't quite enough because I needed the 3, 3. I thought I'm not going to get that job in Bonn, because there was a job in a political slot opening in Bonn, and I thought I'm probably not going to get it. But, lo and behold, when they read out the assignments in the very dramatic way that they do, I was assigned to Bonn and I was practically weeping with joy. They sent me for six weeks of brush-up German. So everything worked out; both of us went off to Germany. My husband had to take leave of absence for a while because the postings weren't exactly set up that way. So he played mom for a while which was good; he experienced the chicken pox with all three. He was ready when they said let's get you started, he was ready to go back to work. I remember the first morning I walked in to work along the Rhine. I left early. I walked from the compound to the embassy, and I just had to keep pinching myself that it was happening. I just couldn't believe that this person who was 40 years old with three children was actually going to start working at this embassy. I got in and it all started.

Q: You were in Bonn, was it '87 or '88?

RUEDY: We arrived in '87, and we left in '91.

Q: An interesting time to be in Germany. Who was the ambassador when you arrived?

RUEDY: The Ambassador was Richard Burt. The DCM was James Dobbins and the Political Counselor was Olaf Grobel. I couldn't have been luckier in my first boss. He was a tremendous person; he and his wife were so kind to us. I remember he sent me off – I had only been in the office a couple of days – to cover a meeting the CDU (Christian Democratic Union). There had been some funny business involving a CDU leader from the North who had been found dead in the bathtub. It was kind of a scandal. There was a party meeting, and I remember Mike Polt, who was my boss saying, "OK, you go to this meeting and you write it up. Let's see what an English major can do with a political cable." That proved to be prophetic, because I did indeed have a little trouble at first with writing to task. I was a little bit too flowery; I needed to get to the point. I was interested in describing people and giving the flavor. I was too interested in atmospherics. I had to learn to write cables. Mike Polt was just excellent. He's an ambassador now in the Balkans, but he and his wife, Halle, were just fantastic people.

Q: What slice of the political pie were you given?

RUEDY: I was doing the political parties and especially the SPD and the Greens. I was to cultivate connections with the SPD and the Greens. Rick Burt was invited by the Greens in December of 1987 to an INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) treaty signing party. The word came down from the Ambassador's office that the embassy should be represented at a "suitable" level. And so I was sent as a junior officer to the Greens INF signing party. I was very nervous. I didn't quite know what to expect. Here I was three months into the job. I wasn't even sure what I should wear to a Greens' INF party. I didn't have to worry

about it, because I didn't have time to change, I went right from work to this enormous gathering of Greens in all their variety and individuality. I thought OK, so far so good. One of the Greens asked me if I would please make a statement. There were hundreds of these people there and my German was OK, but it wasn't up to making statements in front of hundreds of people about the INF treaty. I said, "Well, I hadn't really come prepared for that and I didn't even know if my Ambassador wanted me to do that." They finally talked me into it saying we're glad you're here and we want this as painless as possible so just get up and say a few words; you can speak in English, we don't care, we all understand English. I got up, and I don't remember what I said, but it was quoted in Die Welt. I was really concerned about that. That was amazing.

Q: Talk about when you started to get with these parties. How did a young officer, let's take the SPD first, how do you get in and mix and mingle and make contacts?

RUEDY: Well, there is something called the International Visitors' Program. This is a USIA program that brings young and upcoming political leaders and other sorts of people to the States. I'm sure you're familiar with it. Mike Polk, in all his wisdom, set me to going and doing the follow-up interviews for those to who had returned for all the parties. It gave me entree into this level of the future leaders of the parties. They seemed glad to see me. Ninety-nine percent of them had had a wonderful time in the United States; they were very sympathetic, even the Greens. I got to meet the current head of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) Party who is someone I talked to as returning IVP all those many years ago. I'm sorry, I misspoke it was the FDP (Free Democratic Party), not the CDU. I went down to the University of Mainz where he was a student to interview him about his trip to the U.S. Whoever nominated him did a good job.

Q: What did these future leaders come back with? Were there particular elements to this? Was there a common trend that impressed them more, either positive or negative?

RUEDY: On the positive side, friendliness of the average American family that offered them hospitality; what I guess we would call family values, the idea especially in the Midwest where families are very important and they felt that they were warmly welcomed and made to feel like a family member. The vastness of the United States was a word that I heard a lot. They would laugh and say you know we planned to make all these trip, but we just didn't realize how far all these places were. The magnificent scenery, the variety of people, the fact that in New York you could find somebody from every country in the world and a restaurant to match; this is just something for the Germans that is really eye-opening. The universities were always praised, especially research universities. They thought that despite what impressions they might've had of American superficiality that the American university system was first-rate.

Q: American high schools aren't quite up to European ones. The real work is done at the universities. Granted there are some where people go to party, but basically we catch up very quickly. In many European universities, Herr Professor get up and lecture and there's not much intellectual exchange that goes on.

RUEDY: Right. And you have the phenomenon of the perpetual student. Some of the Greens in their thirties are still students, and still being supported in one way or another by the government. That was a very different kind of attitude toward education. The young Germans I talked to were impressed by the seriousness with which research students, especially in the sciences, how serious they were and they wanted to get finished and do something else, not just study.

Q: How about things like gender or race? Did they see that we were behind before or what? Were they matters of interest?

RUEDY: They were of great interest. I remember just after I got my assignment to Bonn, I ran into a man who had spent a lot of time in Germany as a diplomat. He said, "Shirley, I wish you luck but as a woman you're going to have a tough time dealing with the German political leadership." I think I was only the second or third woman political officer at embassy Bonn. I made up for it by working my butt off and just learning as much as I could and just working extremely hard and knowing my briefs. I encountered a kind of condescension sometimes, especially with older German politicians. But with the younger people I didn't sense that. I remember I was invited to a talk at the German equivalent of FSI to new German diplomats were just starting their training. There were several women in the group. They were very glad to see me, and I was glad to see them. I think things were changing. It was very much a generational thing.

As far as race, I think for the Germans race is so complicated. I think there are some blind spots there. I don't think they understand quite the challenges that we face and that our history has been extremely complicated and that we have made a lot of progress. It's almost as if the young people were projecting in a way their deep anger and disappointment in the generations that came before and their parents' generation, their grandparents and their great grandparents about how Germans treated race and the Jews and the gypsies, the Roma, and people with handicaps. It was almost as if they were projecting that onto us because when you get right down to it, and I think it's still the case today, people look to us for idealism. And when they find out the we're not as perfect as they want us to be, they get angry. I think the young Germans were tapping into this great disappointment in their own forebears and saying, gee, we thought the Americans were going to be better. It's very complicated.

Q: Were you getting any feeling for the treatment of the Turks? These were no longer gastarbeiters? The immigrants who were coming in were manning their factories.

RUEDY: Exactly. I wrote a long cable on the foreigner problem in Germany. It was very complicated because you have people who can claim German citizenship on the basis of blood. They may have lived in Kazakhstan and don't speak a word of German but they have a claim on German citizenship. On the other hand you have, say, people from Turkey who have been invited in to do work that needed to be done but had to wait ten years or more to get their citizenship. The whole German attitude toward who is a German is very complicated, and it complicates their attitude toward newcomers. There are the asylum seekers, there are the immigrants, there are the gastarbeiters; each of these

groups presented different challenges for the average German. The German government tried to deal with it by naming an ombudsman for foreigners. They were concerned about it, but you know you couldn't escape the Turkish ghettos in the big cities.

Q: Was there a skinhead element?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. In Düsseldorf I used to be a little bit afraid of walking. There weren't too many places in Germany where I was afraid of walking by myself at night, but down where I was teaching there were several places which catered to the skinheads. I felt very uncomfortable there. When I was in Bonn, of course, we had the rise of the right-wing party. I wanted to go and interview the leader, but the embassy said no.

Q: How was the party identified?

RUEDY: I forget the name of the party. It was at the time of Le Pen in France and his party did pretty well. That was when I learned about not trusting opinion polls. The opinion polls taken before the German elections said oh, no, nobody was going to vote for this party, but then it did very well which indicated to me that people weren't being honest about how they were going to vote.

Q: Looking at the parties from what you were gathering, as an American observer sometimes see things to that aren't as a parent to people who are there, where were the members of the SPD coming from? Was this because of their work or because of their family, was this the way they lived? What brought them to the SPD? This goes for the other parties too.

RUEDY: I think tradition played a big part. We have something similar in Democrats, you know they're just Democrats. Their families for generations have been Democrats. There was some of that. There was an anti-capitalism strain there. There were some who really did believe that socialism, it's in their party name, was a better way to go than American capitalism. And there was this new breed of SPD. I remember a book from college which described parties that these very wealthy, well educated New Yorkers were having for members of the Black Panthers and so forth.

Q: It sounds like Thomas Wolfe and <u>Radical Chic</u> & <u>Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers</u> or something. It was Leonard Bernstein and his wife that entertained these guys..

RUEDY: Yes, Tom Wolfe. To me it described this new breed of SPD, that same moral righteousness, holier than thou, we really understand the problems of the world. One of our friends often said that he chuckled when he thought about the rich Germans on the beach on the Mediterranean talking about the oppressed people of the world as they ordered their Kalsch and their copy of the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper. That captured it for me; they were very socially committed in one sense but they lived a very comfortable lifestyle.

Q: The Green movement was relatively new at this time. What were we seeing in the Greens, I mean looking back and observing?

RUEDY: Actually, I think some of my reporting attempted to point out that there were many kinds of Greens; the greens by definition held different political points of view. Within the green party, you're talking about a huge umbrella. Within the Green party you had people who were almost moving toward an almost kind of a strange nationalism and at the other end anarchists. I tried to make the point that you can't just talk about the Greens. They have so many different political agendas. Each Green has his own individual political agenda. There was a major split between the Fundies and the Realos, the fundamentalists and the realists. The Realos were willing to work the system; the Fundies wanted to do away with the system. Then it broke down even further within those groups. They were concerned about the environment; they were concerned about nuclear disarmament. They were trying to hold our feet to the fire – we had signed a treaty saying that we would work for complete nuclear disarmament and they were going to make sure that we followed up on that. There was the beginning of the homosexual issue, the treatment of women, these were all big issues. I think the Greens treated women much better than say the SPD although the SPD made more waves at their political party meetings.

Q: Sometimes people so fundamentalist in their thinking tend to be dismissive of other groups. Sort of we'll take care of you kind of thing.

RUEDY: The Greens were really free thinkers and there were some extremely bright political strategists in the Green party. I got to know some people who were doing some very serious long-term thinking about Germany and Europe and relations with the U.S. and they were mostly in the Realo camp. They were concerned about proper relations with the U.S. They did not want to the U.S. to leave Germany or anything like that because they felt that the U.S. kept Germany in its place and kind of under control. It kept Germany from returning to its old ambitions. There were some Greens who also could see a role for NATO. I had a hard time convincing people that such Greens existed, but they did just because it was a way of ordering Europe. There are some very farsighted Greens.

Q: Did you run across Joschka Fischer or Petra Kelly?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. I had breakfast with Joschka.

Q: He's now the Foreign Minister but there are shots of him battling the police.

RUEDY: By the time I was in Germany he was a very skilled politician. Petra Kelly spent a lot of time in the U.S. and was, I think, a cheerleader. She was a very complicated person, and I never understood her. I felt like I understood Joschka better. She was bigger than life even for the Greens.

Q: She eventually ended up with a tragic death.

RUEDY: Yes, she did. She was living with a general who had joined the Greens. It was a double suicide, I think. She embodied the Greens.

Q: In a way, playing with the Greens must've been fun, wasn't it?

RUEDY: I loved the Greens. Some of my most enjoyable meetings, talks, social gatherings were with the Greens. I really, really enjoyed their company.

Q: I imagine an awfully lot of talk, wasn't it?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. They were smart, they were tuned in, they knew what was going on, they read all the latest things. I always learned something from them. They always had a different perspective.

Q: Here you are the new officer on the block and reporting what you're getting from the Greens. I would imagine in the marble halls of the embassy that the Greens – our German Club is a pretty staid outfit – were sort of like the Katzenjammer Kids let loose. Did you have any trouble getting across to them the Greens? How were your reports received by them?

RUEDY: I was received well as long as I was able to back it up, that I wasn't just writing off the top of my head. In fact, I got some very good feedback from Washington. I wrote a long paper on German youth, which is a perennial topic, but it got some very good response from Washington. I certainly didn't have any trouble getting cables out. I learned to write cables. I sort of enjoyed, and I was encouraged, to write these longer think pieces: I did a piece on the foreigners, I did a piece on youth, I did several pieces on the Greens, I did a piece on the Church. I got a personal cable from our now Deputy Secretary complementing me on some of the work I had done. People were receptive. I didn't run into any problems.

Q: Youth, wither late nineteen eighties youth in Germany? What were you seeing there?

RUEDY: I was seeing young people who were aware of the new world that was emerging with globalization, with possible political changes in the offing, Gorbachev. People who wanted to get out from under the burden of World War II and the Holocaust. They just wanted to move on. And they wanted to get on with their lives. They wanted to get an education, they wanted to get a good job. They were quite sophisticated about politics. Not every young person rushed off to join the Green Party. All the political parties had youth wings and even the FDP. They were not a monolith. There was always concern about the so-called successor generation, but I didn't find anything in that younger generation that would lead me to believe that there were great changes coming. These young people wanted stability, they wanted peace, they wanted to get on with their lives.

Q: In that time of intellectual ferment, I'm intrigued by another issue. The Jewish Germans fit in so well historically before they went. I mean, they were what made German culture in a way. They were the salt in the German stew. With the removal of the Jews from Germany, I don't think Germany will ever recover. Was there any talk about this at all, that is, the contribution that Jews had made, not only to German culture but also to German science, what made Germany great?

RUEDY: I don't recall any conversations about that in particular. I do remember the Holocaust series that was American made played in Germany. There was a lot of response to that, mostly what I interpreted as a positive response. Some young people said it was the first time they had seen the whole story or felt that they could get a handle on the whole era. But I don't remember anybody addressing that particular question.

Q: Of course, time has moved on and so in a way it's almost forgotten. I just see this as a real tragedy, a tragedy for Germany itself. This was a vital element of their society that had worked so well before.

RUEDY: Their loss, our gain.

Q: Hollywood came out way ahead. How did you size up the FDP?

RUEDY: They were a party of professionals. I remember sensing that they were dentists, accountants – that's not fair – but it just seemed to me that a lot of them that I met were pharmacologists, doctors and they were verging on libertarianism, you know, the free market was their motto. They were the free party. They didn't want Christian in their name, they didn't want socialism in their name. They wanted freedom from government regulation to the extent that's possible in Germany. They were interested in fiscal policy and this kind of thing. They were a very small party.

Q: But Genscher played a major role? Genscher just sort of planted himself in the foreign ministry and remained there. He screwed up the whole Yugoslav thing, but nevertheless.

RUEDY: Oh, Genscher, yes. He was larger than life Figure in the FDP. He was always the tail wagging the dog. He was Mr. Foreign policy, and if you're looking at the rest of FDP policy then you're in the weeds with fiscal policy and those things, concern about working on Sundays and all that, everything to do with business. He and Kohl are just amazing politicians.

Q: How about the CDU (Christian Democratic Union)?

RUEDY: Kohl's party. I have to say I admired him greatly. He could walk into a room, he was like a magnet, his political skills were unmatched. He knew exactly the right thing to say, the right thing to do. His life was kind of tragic in the way it turned out. He was Mr. CDU. I had good relations with some of his staffers. They admired him personally. I think he was a kind-hearted man, just a very admirable figure.

Q: You mentioned with the FDP about hours and working conditions etc. Something that has engaged France for so long has been trying to control commerce by only 35 hours of work, trying to manipulate the pie, a very socialist thing of over regulation in a way. Did you find this in the German body politic?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We were always amazed; we in the embassy who put in long hours that Germans could seemingly work their time – they went from 40 to 37 and a half while I was there and later to 35 hours a week. They seemed to get their work done. I always kind of envied them. I thought they were doing something right. But it got to be so that if you tried to do any business you just could not do much embassy business unless it was truly an emergency on Friday afternoons. People were just gone; they weren't at their desks.

Q: Did you get at all involved in foreign policy?

RUEDY: No, we had a large political section. There were other folks doing that. But what I did get to do is, we got the new ambassador, Vernon Walters. I was given the task. Vernon Walters asked that someone in the political section put together the biographies of the 300 most influential Germans from all walks of life. As a junior officer this task fell to me. It was one of the best things I ever did. It was wonderful. I had good support from all the consulates. I collected, collaborated with them, with other sources of information here in Washington. When the ambassador arrived, I had a nice thick notebook of 300 bios. He used that to start making his initial calls. That's how he decided who he was going to see. I don't know if that had anything to do with it, but a little later he chose me to be his staff assistant. So I worked for him during German unification and the beginning of the Gulf War.

Q: Where were these people coming from? Can you categorize who were looked upon as the leaders?

RUEDY: Well, obviously business leaders, people in the media, church leaders, the political parties, cultural types, university academics. We had representatives from all sorts of professions.

Q: You mentioned before that you wrote a cable on the Church. What was happening to the Church at that time? If you look at France the Church isn't a big deal. Even in Italy it seems that women go to church and men don't. What was happening in Germany?

RUEDY: Germany too has a tax that supports the churches. There is support for the Catholic, the Evangelicals and for the Jewish synagogues. This is paid for primarily, as I understand it, by taxes. You can get out of paying that tax by going through a process. The assumption is that you will pay the tax until you decide otherwise and go through the procedure. The churches there, unlike churches here, are not directly responsible for their existence to their parishioners. This gives it a very different feeling. The churches in Germany are much more political than they are here. We talk about our religious right

and so on but if you going to go to a church in Germany I would venture to say, you would always find some evidence of social activism. Attendance is not so good. I did know some young people who were quite fervent Catholics. Again it was Catholicism of a social activist. In fact, we took one of the young Catholic women from Düsseldorf with us to Ireland, and she was absolutely shocked by the Irish Catholics because her Catholicism, I think, was more intellectual. The Irish Catholics were so emotional, the rosaries and the pictures on the wall and the graves and all that sort of thing. She said she had a hard time connecting with that. The churches, I think, are more social; this is a gross over-generalization, but my sense was the churches were for the congregants the parishioners more a social than a spiritual institution. There are still Germans who are concerned that being baptized, being married in a church and getting a church burial, and they are entitled to all those things because they pay the taxes. I didn't know any Germans who went regularly to church except for these young people in the neighborhood. Of course, I should say that the Catholic Church is an important component in both the CSU and the CDU.

Q: Is that concentrated more in Bavaria?

RUEDY: No. It's also nationwide I would say. The Evangelical Church, I don't connect them with a particular political party but they were very politically engaged on specific issues.

Q: Did you see a role for the intellectuals or the chattering class, in other words social commentators? Were they an important factor?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. German media has its media stars. That has continued to evolve. I think we were at the beginning of it when I was there but when I was in Germany last I was watching German TV and they have adopted some of our kinds of news programming and commentary where you have people fighting each other and shouting at each other. There was definitely a chattering class. When I was there also Die Zeit, which is a paper published in Hamburg but it is a paper for intellectuals and has extremely dense articles very difficult for non-native speakers of German to get through. I think translating articles from Die Zeit is like a 4-level here at FSI. That is an extremely influential paper; the people who write for that are very well-known and always have an opinion on everything.

Q: Vernon Walters, when did you become his assistant?

RUEDY: January 1989. It may have been 1988.

Q: How did he strike you? He has this tremendous reputation of everything he does and his language ability and he's been around the great people from World War II on. He translated for de Gaulle

RUEDY: Everything you hear about Vernon Walters is true. He was for me again a larger than life figure. Someone I came to admire greatly, respect; I learned things from him I

never would have learned if I had not been able to work for him. It was a high point of my career. He knew himself. I don't know that many people know themselves as well as he knew himself. He understood politics, it was in his blood. He had great insight, he had a sense for great movements of history, and yet he was a very kind man. I've seen him take great care in the smallest detail of helping somebody out. He was a great man but he didn't take himself that seriously. He was hilarious. He had great stories. He always had great jokes. He made people feel at ease. He was very charming.

Q: Did you find when he came in from what you were seeing in his interaction with others are with you that he was musing about whither Germany? We are talking about the eve of the collapse of a divided Germany. Certainly within any establishment anywhere on both sides of the Iron Curtain, this was not a matter of concern. It wasn't going to happen.

RUEDY: I think, I know, he understood before a lot of people did what was happening in the Soviet Union. He was a student of Russian and Soviet history, as he was a student of so many things, but I think his grasp of great historical movement, larger historical movement, stood him in good stead and he understood, I think, that things were changing in the Soviet Union. He was a great admirer of President Reagan. He thought that Reagan was putting the pressure on at just the right time and in the right place. I think the way he viewed the world, he thought what was happening in the Soviet Union would devolve on Europe and Germany and there would have to be a change in Germany. He liked to tell people that he talked about German unification before he was permitted to do so by Washington.

Q: I've heard other people say this. As things led up to the summer of 1989, how were events in East Germany playing out with our embassy in Bonn? Did they pay much attention to it?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. We were focused like a laser. The reporting that came out of our embassy in East Berlin was read, reread, dissected.

Q: I've had a long interview with Dick Barkley.

RUEDY: Well, he and Ambassador Walters did not see eye-to-eye on things. I had some sympathy for the folks in East Berlin because after all, I had lived there. I knew the scene. I understood. There were things about East Germany that I loved too. But from where I was sitting and watching what was happening in Bonn, I just had a hard time understanding the continued sympathy for East German political types when history was moving so fast. I thought Ambassador Walters had a better handle on what was really going on. Dare I mention the word, I thought there was a hint of "clientitis". It's normal, it's human.

Q: It happens. How was Gorbachev seen? For people looking at Gorbachev in the embassy, the political section particularly, were they saying what's happening here?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. And the Germans were fascinated with him, even Maggie Thatcher was fascinated with him. Here was someone who just didn't fit the mold. I think people were trying to figure out what to make of him. I was talking to my boss in INR (Intelligence and Research) at State who was a Russian-Soviet specialist and he had dug out a piece he wrote about Gorbachev in 1985. He was just an enigma. People were hoping for the best, but it was hard to categorize him. So, yes, we were very interested in what was going on, although I have to say that was my not my department. I was getting it more indirectly from what the Germans were saying on how it was affecting their politics. No, he strode on to the world stage.

Q: In a way, he was caught up in something. Things came out the way he didn't want them to come out. He thought he could both preserve communism and ...

RUEDY: Yes, preserve the union. But I've done a lot of work on Russia too, and it seems to me that he was already reading the tea leaves, at least on the economy, about the Russian economy quite early, and he was putting people into positions who knew something about a Western economy. He was starting to see the handwriting on the wall.

Q: Speaking of the economy, during the time I mean when you started out in Bonn how were we looking at East Germany? There was a tendency in a lot of reports, you know, it's the tenth largest economy, painting East Germany being much more of a substantial power, particularly economically and militarily than it turned out to be.

RUEDY: I personally truly never understood that. It didn't square with what I had seen when I was traveling around with my husband in the East. People didn't have soap powder to wash their children's clothes so the kids couldn't go to school. Some of the villages didn't have salt. I couldn't put those two things together; it didn't fit. No, I never understood where it was coming from.

Q: What were you getting from the German parties? What was coming in to you through Walters' office on all the events of the summer, events in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, asylum seekers and all? Was there much agitation on the part of German body politic on this?

RUEDY: I think Kohl was masterful in the way he handled all of that. First of all, there was just total euphoria. There was this sense of an era coming to an end, infinite possibility ahead. Who knew that this could happen? The Germans were very excited at the beginning. I think then when they started looking at the balance sheet and looking at what this was going to cost and just how was this going to work, the devil in the details, then I think we started to see some concern. I think Kohl just handled it so well in connection with other Western leaders by just taking leadership, powerful. He could have, had he been a politician who sort of had his finger in the wind and followed the people rather than leading the people, I don't know that it would've gone as smoothly as it did.

Q: It was a remarkable thing on the part of everyone including our American leaders.

RUEDY: Yes, James Baker

Q: And Bush, Sr.

RUEDY: Yes, it was fantastic and, as I said, Kohl being a leader. We are one people and just hewing to that line; as I said, it was just a miracle.

Q: One thing it looked like the unrest was really boiling and particularly in Berlin, in East Berlin and there was also the possibility that the East German authorities would put it down with force. How was this being seen both in Germany with the politics and also from our own embassy?

RUEDY: As I recall, there was a sense that Gorbachev had things under control. When he visited Honaker he kind of said, "Look, we're not going to have a bloody revolution here. Handle it." But as I recall people believed that Gorbachev could manage this. He still had enough clout that he could manage this, and that he wanted to manage it so that catastrophe was avoided.

Q: What were you all doing, watching TV all the time of the events that led up to the fall of the wall?

RUEDY: It's hard to describe the sheer joy and anticipation, just history on the move. Things happening, things falling into place, like God's hand was at work. This was going to work out, there was just this wonderful new era approaching and it was going so fast, moving so fast; it was almost impossible to keep up with the developments in all the different areas. These things were historic, truly historic things were taking place. It was just amazing, a marvelous time, what a time to be a diplomat.

Q: What was Walters doing? Was he in frequent consultation with the German leadership?

RUEDY: Oh, yes. A large part of his time was taken up with the Two Plus Four Talks. That's when I first met Condi Rice; she was there as part of that delegation. Once that started, it just absorbed all of the embassy's attention. He was in very close contact with Baker and with the Germans. I'm trying to remember Kohl's adviser who we worked so closely with at the embassy; he had been in Texas and loved to give Texas barbeques.

Q: The Two Plus Four meeting, what did this mean? There was the practical thing about East Germany? Is this going to be good? Stabilizing or what?

RUEDY: I don't think anybody in our embassy was worried about those kinds of issues. I think people in our embassy in East Berlin were. There were some differences of opinion and just reading between the lines of cables that were coming out I think that there was some concern there that things were moving too fast. I was just a little fly on the wall carrying papers back and forth, but I got the sense that our team in Bonn recognized the

speed and did not want to put up any roadblocks. Let her roll. I remember a cable that Olaf Grobel drafted, and it was like two sentences. "Things here are moving faster than expected; unification could come at any time." It was just amazing. I think the folks up in Berlin were more concerned about the possibility of unrest, about going too fast, about the effect of the economic fallout. Our embassy in Bonn, I think, was concerned that we work out very carefully the whole military situation, especially with the Soviets.

Q: The Soviets had lots of troops in Germany, and Poland had already turned unfriendly or at least separated itself. It was a very tense situation.

RUEDY: I think getting that right was a big concern, and what was going to happen to the whole nuclear issue, basing, our military presence, suddenly all of those were questions on the table and they had to be dealt with. There were a lot of legal eagles looking at all that paperwork and all those things that were being signed. It's a complicated document.

Q: What were you doing for Walters for Two Plus Four and all that?

RUEDY: Keeping his schedule, making sure that he had the papers that he needed. I was his staffer, arranging his travel. I was working with Tim Tellenko; there were two of us because he was a very busy guy. I do have to tell one story. In the middle of all this, I went to his office to consult with him on something and he had all these papers on his desk to do with Two Plus Four. Then over on one side, he had a Swedish grammar book. That was his way of relaxing, just study a little Swedish grammar.

Q: He was a renowned linguist. When unification started to happen, did Walters tell the embassy not to go running around, let's keep a low profile?

RUEDY: I think we took our cues from him and that was certainly his stance. I don't know if there was an embassy directive or anything like that but we just all had the sense that this was the way the President was approaching it and the way we should approach it. I think we felt quite humbled by everything that was happening, at least I did.

Q: When history gets moving, you feel like a ship in the ocean. What about the influx of East Germans? Did you see this as a problem?

RUEDY: It was still too early. People were still caught up in the euphoria. There were a lot of jokes about the Trabants, the little cars, and how they were going to pollute the atmosphere and so on. I think it was just too early. I think some of that concern came later.

Q: What about later? You were there until mid-1991, is that right?

RUEDY: Right.

Q: How were things by the time you left?

RUEDY: I left the Ambassador's office, and I went to do my consular tour so I was doing consular work for about eighteen months, I guess. I was on the visa line, and we started getting folks from the Soviet Union, from other parts of the former East coming through Bonn trying to get visas to go to the U.S. That was quite a dramatic change in the clientele that we were seeing. We were starting to see more people moving West with the new freedom, with the new, more porous borders. There was that movement. I think then people did start to think about what the longer term economic consequences and social consequences of this were going to be.

Q: I realize you weren't dealing with it where you were, but within the embassy context what about Kohl's decision to exchange the D-mark one for one?

RUEDY: I think the economic experts were concerned about that. Politically, I don't know that he had any other choice. It seemed to me he was very concerned not to create second class citizens. The way you deal with your money is very symbolic, so politically I'm not sure he had much of a choice.

Q: What was the word on the visa line about dealing with all these people? Before that I assume the consular section in Bonn was a fairly quiet enclave.

RUEDY: It wasn't quiet when I got there.

Q: When I was in Frankfurt in 1955, they had one consular officer who didn't do much but manage diplomatic visas.

RUEDY: It was tough for those people to get visas. We welcomed them with open arms and then they'd hit the visa line, and we'd say no visa for you. I remember we had this Russian, he was a music producer or something like that, and I got him. He wanted to go to the United States to investigate new business possibilities. There was no way I could give him a visa, given our visa laws. He was just furious. Here was this pip squeak of a woman telling him that he, this great Russian entrepreneur or whatever, could not get a visa was just more than he could take. He asked to see the supervisor and the Minister-Counselor Affairs who wasn't in. I had a terrible time with him. It was the only time I had to call the Marines to remove a person from the waiting room. We had a lot of disappointment, folks like that.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to talk about? There were really exciting times.

RUEDY: There was just so much. Driving to Berlin with our kids and seeing people hacking away at this wall; it was just incredible. They had little hammers that you could rent. The East Germans became entrepreneurial overnight. And so we rented little hammers for our kids and the kids were there; it was just amazing. I would love to go back and relive it and take a lot more pictures. It was fantastic.

Q: How did you see from the parties about their relationship with France? There was this tremendous effort to bring the French and Germans together again. In a way it was together and against Americans and against the Brits. Did you pick up this feeling with France?

RUEDY: Yes, there would definitely was that idea. Of course we have this now with Schroeder these annual summits or whatever.

Q: Picking up where Mitterrand and Kohl had been.

RUEDY: I think the reasons were complex, but that was an idea that Kohl had, to strengthen relations with the French. Of course, the French-German relationship has had its effects on European politics, on NATO, relations with the U.S. So that has had far reaching consequences. I don't know how seriously the French take it. I don't know much about France, but I always had the feeling that the Germans were much more serious about it, in their German way, than the French were. The French thought if we can get something out of this, it's OK, but otherwise

Q: Were the German party people talking about the French relationship much?

RUEDY: Yes. There was a lot of discussion about it. As I say, I think the German saw this as a part of a larger plan; Kohl had his vision of a united Europe and I don't know that they thought the Brits were really on board with this, but if they could get France the two biggest economies, they could take it someplace. Especially with the reunification of Germany, that was very important to Kohl; this was a long-term strategy.

Q: In 1991 where did you go?

RUEDY: In 1991, we went back to Washington.

Q: Let's talk about your impressions of what was happening when the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait happened.

RUEDY: I was not really deeply involved with the policy in all of that. We were sort of in a reactive mode in embassy Bonn. I think there was a lot of concern about personal security, about how secure the embassy was, because we were expecting some kind of reaction as we were seeing the troop buildup and so on, and thinking what was going to happen. Some people I know even sent their children home, they were so concerned they sent them back to the U.S. We lived on a compound there and a lot of us were concerned who had children in the school. The school was right on the Rhine and it was right on the public bike path which was heavily used. There was a lot of concern about protecting the compound, protecting the embassy. I was still working in the front office, so I knew of the ambassador's concern, and DCM George Ward's concern. There was a lot of attention to security, a lot of new rules and regulations, new boundaries set up. Some of these changes had very poignant affects. My family and I attended the Protestant chapel there, the Stimson Chapel. A good number of third country nationals attended that

church. As soon as security put up new checkpoints for getting onto the compound where the church was located attendance dropped because we realized a lot of the third country nationals, especially those from the Philippines, weren't properly documented so they were afraid to come through the line. There was a lot of fallout from those new restrictions. Physically we were restricted and, of course, it does something to your psyche to see all these armed people around in Germany where one normally feels extremely safe.

Q: What was the threat?

RUEDY: The threat was that the Red Army Faction or some group like that who opposed our invasion of Iraq would do something to the embassy. We had lots and lots of threats. There were multiple threats to blow up the embassy. Indeed, the embassy was attacked from across the river by a rocket propelled grenade. The Ambassador's office faced the Rhine; it was a beautiful office but very vulnerable because it faced the Rhine. This rocket propelled grenade hit a few yards down from his office. It actually hit a USIA office and did quite a lot of damage. Yes, they were serious, and I'm pretty sure that was the Red Army Faction.

Q: What was the Red Army?

RUEDY: They were left wing radicals, anarchists. They had attempted to kill a U.S. general. They were very anti-American, and would use any excuse; well, they were terrorists. One very personal example of the state of mind we were in and the lengths to which we were going to protect all of the American personnel. I got a call at probably 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning on the weekend from our DCM George Ward. He asked me if I would please get up and go into the embassy because he had been told that the embassy was going to receive a fax, I believe from the French. The fax was something that had been picked up by a Swiss shortwave radio operator and purported to be plans to deploy biological weapon against either the embassy or a target in the United States. The DCM asked me to go in and get this piece of paper and fax it to Washington to the Operations Center. When I got into the car very sleepily and pulled off of the embassy compound, I was immediately picked up and tailed by a car which had four males in it who looked to me Middle Eastern. I had no idea what was going on so remembering my defensive driving course I started driving all around. I knew the area pretty well. I started driving all around trying to lose them and eventually I thought I did. I headed straight for the embassy and it felt pretty good to get behind the doors of the embassy, the gates. The whole process of getting this fax out was a nightmare. The Marines told me in the meantime that they had just received another call from the French embassy that there was going to be an attack on the embassy in 30 minutes. You can imagine that my heart was pounding. I was trying to find a fax machine that would work in semi-darkness. I looked at the paper and it made no sense to me at all. It was obviously in Arabic and I don't read Arabic, but there were coordinates on it and it did look ominous to me. I felt like the whole state of the Western world was on my shoulders, and I needed to get this thing faxed. The first fax machine didn't work so I was at one point crawling down a dark hallway counting doors to find where I thought another fax machine was located, because

part of the embassy was completely dark. I don't know if it was because of the bomb threats or whatever, but I was alone in this huge building and desperately seeking a fax machine that worked. Finally, I got it faxed off. I went home and I don't think I went to sleep. I think I was awake for the rest of the night still in the state of shock. That was a night I will never forget.

Q: Did you ever get any feedback from your four Middle Eastern types following you?

RUEDY: No. I reported it to security but I don't know what they were up to. It may have been just a coincidence; four guys were out driving around at 2:00 in the morning but I doubt it.

Q: After having a wonderful time in Bonn fending off biological attacks and bombs on the embassy, you left Bonn when?

RUEDY: In 1991.

Q: Where did you go?

RUEDY: We went to Washington. I was assigned to the European Bureau in Regional Political and Military Affairs which by reputation at that time, and deservedly so, was a real sweat shop.

Q: You were there from 1991 until when?

RUEDY: I was there until 1994.

Q: What did regional affairs amount to?

RUEDY: It was CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), NATO and a third part dealt with mostly disarmament. Some of the treaties that had been signed that involved Europe were dealt with in a third department of RPM. I was the most junior officer in the office and I was set to work on CSCE.

Q: CSCE later became OSCE?

RUEDY: That's right.

Q: You were there at the time the Soviet Union ceased to be the Soviet Union. With the CSCE, what were you doing? How did we regard it at that time?

RUEDY: It was extremely important. We were watching very carefully everything that was happening in Europe. I started work in July and in August my bosses said how would you like to go to Moscow as the Executive Secretary for the CSCE Human Rights Conference? You will be working for Ambassador Max Kampelman. I was so excited because I had always been interested in Russian culture, and so I said yes, yes. Then

because of the uncertainty of what was happening in the Soviet Union we weren't sure that the conference was going to go forward. Every day when I went to work, I would think when are they going to decide? What are they going to decide? Am I going to Moscow for five weeks? Of course, my family was very concerned about my safety there because no one was sure what was going to happen. So finally at the end of August we got the green light that CSCE was going to go ahead with this big conference and so off we went to Moscow. The U.S. delegation was huge; I think there were 30 or 40 people and we had a big office. In those days CSCE meetings were never short. They had these long, drawn out meetings in which every country, every member had its say. The fact that Secretary of State James Baker was going to be coming near the end made all of us sit up and take notice and to try to make sure that something good came out of this conference. There were lots of anecdotes because everybody who attended that conference must have their own store of war stories. I remember a group of us going down to where the students had tried to stop the tank. There were flowers; the place was covered with flowers, it was an amazing scene. I had been to the Soviet Union in 1968; coming in the fall of 1991 I couldn't believe what I was seeing.

Q: This was when Yeltsin stood on a tank and the time when Gorbachev was held in the Crimea?

RUEDY: Yes. That's right. We were just amazed at the way people were reacting. There just seemed to be a kind of joyful mess in the air; it's hard to describe, but it was like the promise of a new world, a new era. We were all caught up in it. Ambassador Kampelman was just wonderful. There was no gloating or anything like that, but there was just a real focus on the work ahead with the CSCE. The CSCE seemed to open up to new possibilities of dealing with the situation and to ensure there were positive results. I remember one of the most striking things, most striking speeches I heard, was from the Hungarian delegation. They stood up and actually criticized the human rights policies of the Soviet Union, which was historic since that had not ever happened before. There was just a feeling of joy, of possibility, of potential. I was even struck by my relationship with the Russian who was my counterpart who was helping me with arrangements. As the Executive Secretary I did a lot of gophering and troubleshooting.

Q: It's sort of like herding kittens, wasn't it?.

RUEDY: Right. People were coming and going and wives were coming and going and making sure that every one had a ticket to the Bolshoi who wanted it. I was extremely lucky to have a person from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who was a delightful person, so kind. It couldn't have been a better working relationship. Even that to me seemed like such a change and to offer so much promise we could work with the Russians. We all worked extremely hard; we worked extremely long hours. From a personal point of view, the human point of view, there was very little food. There were all these people and things were breaking down. The system was kind of breaking down. I remember we would go to the restaurant at the hotel where we were staying but there would be very little food. We were living off of peanut butter and caviar. For some strange reason there was a lot of caviar and Snickers bars. Snicker bars were ubiquitous; you could always

find a Snickers bar. I remember seeing a huge truck full of nothing but Snickers bars pull up at our hotel and unload.

Q: I remember a couple of years later, I spent three weeks in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. I was warned and so I brought peanut butter and strawberry jelly, a couple of huge bottles.. I could always get bread and I could also get Snicker bars but particularly Twix. What was the CSCE conference trying to produce?

RUEDY: First of all, these human rights conferences in those days offered the opportunity to review the human rights records of all members of the CSCE. We were also trying to accomplish some administrative changes to make it easier to send fact-finding missions to problematic areas. These were very detailed proposals that the United States was putting forward, but it amounted to getting around the strict consensus rule that CSCE used for everything. In other words, if there was a problem in a country, that country could, of course, say no, we don't want CSCE observers to come in. The United States was trying to creatively to find ways around this strict consensus rule without, of course, making ourselves vulnerable.

Q: Were most of the nations in it already on the same wavelength at this time?

RUEDY: I think they were. I think there was just a lot of uncertainty; there was a lot of anticipation and excitement. There was also uncertainty, just to make sure that it continued to be peaceful. One of the things that the U.S. was concerned about was from a policy point of view, how to handle the membership of the various countries which now had emerged from the former Soviet Union. There was a great debate in the State Department about whether these countries could just come in automatically and become members of CSCE just like that or whether they would need to go through some kind of a probationary period. I remember many late hours and many position papers written on this. It was a major, major issue. In fact, it was split memo time; we could not get consensus within the building. It went to Secretary Baker that way, and I think his staff did not show it to him. I'm not sure of all the details. I gather he did not want any split memos; he wanted consensus on this. Eventually, our ambassador to CSCE, Ambassador Jack Maresca, worked out a deal – he was such an amazing diplomat and such an amazing negotiator that he worked out a deal whereby he would undertake to visit all of these countries and evaluate them. This would be in lieu of a formal probationary period at least for the United States. In that way all of the countries came in together and there was no discrimination. It worked out OK, but it was not an easy decision. There were people who did not think some of these countries were ready.

Q: Well, like Belarus which is still today is a little Stalinist country. I would think with consensus, you can have countries sitting there saying no.

RUEDY: That's right, and those were the concerns. From the point of view of our office as I understood them there was concern about how all of this would affect some of the very important disarmament and arms control agreements that we had within CSCE. We

didn't want countries off the reservation feeling that they didn't need to honor those, like the Vienna document, that they didn't have to honor those.

Q: Was there a consensus that every country that comes in has to agree to certain things?

RUEDY: Yes, that's the whole point. You sign on to hundreds and hundreds of commitments. It was one of my jobs to catalogue all of the commitments. That meant going back to each document that had been agreed at each CSCE summit – there were pages and pages of these things. Before we were so fancy with computers, I had to type all of these in and move them around and list all of those having to do with, for example, the environment, and all those having to do with arms control. This turned out to be a document about three inches thick. I think it was the first time anyone had attempted to do this, and this document became very popular. I was always getting requests from Canada and other countries for copies of this thing because suddenly it became very important. Suddenly these commitments became really important, not just something we agree on and put in the drawer, because now with the world changing as it was we had to know exactly what people had committed to. The CSCE commitments contain an amazing array of things; there are things in there about fish in the Mediterranean and everybody's little hobby horse somehow got codified.

Q: In a way it sounds like a replication of the European Union.

RUEDY: Or the UN, it was a European UN. I spent a lot of time writing memos fighting the whole push to further bureaucratize and organize the CSCE. The Baker State Department wanted it to remain a conference with some fluidity, with more flexibility. There were others, especially the larger European countries, who wanted to make it into a European UN, with a structure, with a Secretariat, with a very big budget. The United States opposed this the whole time I was in RPM. I don't know how many memos I wrote about this. Later, I understand the United States came forward with this great proposal to convert the conference into an organization. Now we have a full blown organization that has a Secretariat, it's got all these satellite organizations connected to it, there's a whole generation of OSCE technocrats who have specialized in this and who are willing to devote their entire life to this, so goodbye flexibility. I was really surprised when I came back from Russia to find out that this had happened because as far as I could understand that it was a 180° turnaround.

Q: What were all these people on the American delegation doing? Was this thing loaded with starry-eyed political payoffs or were they all technocrats?

RUEDY: It was a mixture. We had Congressmen. They would come for part of it and then leave. We had a lot of NGO (non-governmental organization) representatives from various human rights organizations. I remember there was somebody there representing AFL/CIO. We had, of course, heavy representation from the Helsinki Commission, the Congressional commission. I don't know that there were any political payoffs, it's not exactly that kind of a place, maybe if it had been held in London or Paris, but I think you really had to be dedicated to attend this one. It was not easy.

Q: How did Max Kampelman use you?

RUEDY: I was the Executive Secretary. I was responsible for keeping track of everybody, their arrival times and their departure times. I was responsible for coordinating all of the reporting to Washington, proof-reading, everyone took turns as note takers. There was so much reporting, we wrote down everything. I remember I would gather it all up about 2:00 AM and take it to someplace to fax it, I think one of the big hotels. I would have to go and stand there and fax all this material. The embassy, curiously enough, wasn't all that involved. They were busy with their own things; they were very busy.

Q: It was the end of an empire.

RUEDY: So they kind of let us deal with things on our own, which was understandable. I had to report to Max; we'd have a little meeting each morning on what was going on for that day just to make sure that we were on top of it. And, of course, when the Secretary was getting ready to come out our work load increased. We had to make sure that everybody knew the schedule, when he was going to speak, and that everything was ready for him and his staff. A lot of detail work.

Q: What about some of the other delegations such as the British, the French, the Germans, the Scandinavians? What kind of role did they play?

RUEDY: I think we had done the groundwork before sufficiently so we succeeded in getting our proposals through. I don't remember that there was a particular roadblock from any country. Max was such a diplomat, and he worked the crowd so well. I don't remember there being any particular problems. As I said the United States always gets everything agreed ahead of time. I think a lot of that work was going on even before I got to RPM.

Q: How long were you there?

RUEDY: Well, I actually extended which made people ask me if I had lost it completely. Not many people extend in RPM; they count the days until they get out because of the long hours. The long hours are primarily the result of the need for inter-agency clearance on all of our guidance cables. That means getting clearance from the Pentagon and sometimes other agencies; this usually took until eight or 9:00 at night. You could just count on twelve or thirteen-hour days. The work was fascinating but very stressful and lots of real tough deadlines.

Q: So when did you leave?

RUEDY: I left RPM to go to Russian language study at FSI (Foreign Service Institute) in 1994.

Q: What was in the offing?

RUEDY: I was going to Moscow as to work in the EST (Science and Technology) office. It was not my first choice; I wanted to go work in the political section, but again the tandem couple issue was determinate since my husband was named DPAO (Deputy Public Affairs Officer) for Moscow. He was responsible for the various USIA facilities throughout Russia, so he did a lot of traveling. He had to check on these places. I'm an English major, but I said oh, OK, I'm up for anything; I'll go work in the Science and Technology office and they gave me trade craft training. The political parts of it really did interest me and that's what I did when I got in the job. My boss recognized that's where my strengths lie. I didn't know that much about physics as he did; he was a physicist. We had some very interesting, funny experiences working with the Russian scientists. We would go and visit some of the labs that had been used for pretty nefarious things. I remember one time, in particular, we were meeting was some graduate students and we had gone through a swinging door with a red skull and crossbones on it. We walked through there and I thought, hmmm, this is interesting. We were talking to these graduate students and they had this vial, a chemical, and they were passing it around and my boss said, don't touch that. He said I'll explain later. I was struck by the carelessness. These were just students, but I saw it in established scientists as well. To me it looked like carelessness, but to them I think it was a of disregard for individual human life. Science is the God and they were willing to sacrifice in anything to this God. This was the impression I got after several experiences like this.

Q: Did you have any particular part of the action?

RUEDY: I was responsible for liaison with the International Technology and Science Center. This was an attempt to attract Russian scientists to peaceful projects, to turn their attention from making weapons and other things, to try to get them involved in peaceful applications for the kind of research they had been doing. I don't know how successful that really was. I know that there were lots of conferences and the people at ISTC would put out a call for projects. Scientists would send in various projects and some of them would get funded. It was not just a U.S. thing; it was also paid for by the EU. You met very interesting people through this work, but it was tough going because the mind set was going to be very difficult to change.

Q: Whose mindset?

RUEDY: The Russian scientists' mindset.

Q: Was it that they were not used to being in an international group or were they to very good at creating better armor or...?

RUEDY: That's what they'd been trained to do, that's what their work had been, that's what they were rewarded for, and there was a kind of rigidity. It was a difficulty in thinking outside the box. OK, so I'm an expert on this, what can I do to develop this in a different direction? Can I go into pharmaceuticals? There were some of them that were

very sharp and caught on, but there were a lot of others. I think it was a generational thing; the younger scientists coming up are much more entrepreneurial.

Q: By the way, you were there from 1995 until?

RUEDY: 1995 to 1997.

Q: Were you to seeing a change in the impact of computers, the Internet, the whole thing which must've been relatively new. The Soviets had their specialized computers, but this openness of sharing must have been a new game for them.

RUEDY: It was. I remember being invited to MGU (the state university there in Moscow) to meet with some students in physics. I thought I was going to be shown around with lots of test tubes and machines and vials that I probably shouldn't be touching, but instead what I found was that this very entrepreneurial teacher had set up a whole roomful of computers. His students were not working on physics; they were working on setting up this computer lab. They had gotten onto the Internet, and they were fervent, they were working around the clock to suddenly tap into all these new sources of information. He, I believe, had the idea that he was going to make money off of this somehow. I think this was the whole idea. Some of them were very entrepreneurial and were trying to find ways to augment their meager incomes using their labs or whatever, for example, the setting up of this computer lab. I think it is pretty much complete now, an attempt to link all of the universities by computer. I've been away from it for while, but it must be complete by now.

Q: Were you feeling the basic collapse of the economy at that time? The whole Soviet controlled system had broken down, everything was up for grabs, but there was really nothing to replace it.

RUEDY: There were so many people, especially the elderly. There were two groups I really felt for: the elderly whose pensions had simply disappeared with the new economy and the children whose parents couldn't support them and they just started living on the streets. There was an incredible number of children about nine, ten, eleven years old who lived on the streets simply because their parents couldn't take care of them. I have the privilege to be a member of the Protestant Chaplaincy and one of its major projects was a series of soup kitchens. The number of meals our church provided was staggering. We had some of those people come in and talk to us, people who used our soup kitchens. It was heartbreaking. There were, for example, older women who had been school teachers, and they were very, very correct and proper and educated and well spoken, but they didn't have enough to eat. They were surviving by coming to this soup kitchen. It was very tragic, and there didn't seem to be a whole lot of concern on the part of the Russian government about this. I also have to say the Russian Orthodox Church didn't seem to be stepping up to the plate either. By the time I left we were trying to engage some particular individual neighborhood Orthodox churches and trying to work with them to see what we can do together so that the soup kitchens wouldn't be just some American thing. I think

slowly they were starting to come around, but that was not in their book, not something they automatically thought they were responsible for.

Q: How about other countries, particularly France and Germany? Were they getting into the science field and that sort of thing?

RUEDY: There was great concern about the Russian scientists. I think Germany, in particular, was using their very well thought out, very effective apprentice training program. They had for years offered people from all over the world the opportunity to come to Germany, learn German, and work to learn trades. I think we saw that quite a few of the 9/11 hijackers had ended up in Germany doing this very thing. They have attracted people from all over the world and what happens is eventually these people become the business leaders, scientific leaders, and speak German and they have connections with Germany in that way. I think that Germany was quite active. The European Union also had various programs for scientists; there was a lot of attention being paid. We did a lot of work with the Russian Academy of Sciences. I would say that the major European countries were very involved just like we were. They were very involved with the ISTC. People just realized that a) we had all of these scientists running around who needed money, and b) there were bodies in the world willing to pay them for their expertise in North Korea or Iran or Iraq and c) the Russian economy desperately needed new products, all of these things to improve the economy, and the research component was not there, we needed to get them oriented in a new direction.

Q: How did you find the non-governmental organizations' response to this particular issue?

RUEDY: The human rights organizations were very active, including the Helsinki Commission, though, of course, that's not exactly an NGO. I worked for one year in the Science and Technology Office, and then I was offered a position in the political section in external affairs. My colleagues in internal affairs would have had more to do with the NGO's; that's an area where I don't have a lot of background.

Q: You did external affairs from '96 to '97?

RUEDY: Yes.

Q: What did that involve?

RUEDY: Again, I was the junior person so I got the Iraq account; I got basically the rogue country accounts, and the UN, Afghanistan. It was wonderful; I had just such an amazingly rich experience. It was just one year but it seems like a lot longer. One of my very first assignments was to accompany the Assistant Secretary for NEA (Near East Bureau) to a meeting with Foreign Minister Primakov. The occasion was we had just bombed Iraq; this was a discrete surgical bombing under President Clinton. It turns out the Russian equivalent of our Assistant Secretary had been in Baghdad at the time of the bombing and had not been officially told, according to him by our government, that they

were going to do this. It was a bit frosty at that meeting. I could see that I was going to have a tough time; this was not going to be easy.

I found that once I started working with people at my level, the Russian diplomats were extremely well informed, fair minded, even idealistic about that part of the world. I had so many really good conversations with them. They were off in an annex, all of the offices that were dealing with countries I was dealing with were in an annex across the street from the main MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) building. I got so I knew the guards; I knew everybody there because I was there daily delivering one demarche or another. They teased me that they were going to give me an office because I spent so much time there. I found them really good colleagues. That was not what I expected at all. Even on Afghanistan where we didn't see eye-to-eye, I thought it was really, really important that we share some information. I got permission from Washington to start sharing information with them about what we thought, not our political analysis, but just basic information about where help was needed, with statistics, to demonstrate to them that we were concerned about the people of Afghanistan. We did not have these big geopolitical plans, but we were like the Russians in that we were concerned about stability, about what was going to happen to the people.

Q: The Taliban had not taken over the country completely?

RUEDY: They were in the process. I did a lot of reporting on what the Russians shared with me; I shared with them, they shared with me. These were younger diplomats; I always appreciated dealing with the younger diplomats. They really did have a different attitude and mind set; and they really did want to work with us. They did see that together we could solve some problems in Afghanistan. I look back on that with some professional satisfaction.

Q: Was there concern on their part about the Taliban?

RUEDY: Yes, there was. Some of the hardliners in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of course, blamed us for the Taliban too. That could be argued either way, I guess. I learned a lot about the history of Afghanistan in talking to the Russians. The Russians usually know their areas very well; they don't move their diplomats around as much as we do. These young diplomats spoke the languages, they'd been in country, they stuck with those countries and became real experts. I learned a lot from them. About that time Ambassador Pickering gave me some material about Afghanistan that had just been recently declassified. I learned a lot by reading this big thick notebook. I began to see the complexity and began to understand some of what the Russians were saying and accusing us of. The Russians, of course, had very dirty hands in Afghanistan and these younger diplomats recognized that.

Q: Were they concerned about this spread of Islamic fundamentalism, the underbelly of what we call the "stans"?

RUEDY: Yes, most definitely. It was interesting because some of the diplomats I worked with were from the more Muslim parts of the Soviet Union and may have been Muslims themselves. They had been educated in Soviet schools and so on; I think that's a very interesting thing to remember in considering the whole problem of Islam in the former Soviet Union is that at least for certain generations that share that Soviet education for good or for bad, but it is a kind of a glue that holds the thing together. The concern was there definitely, and I think we saw it with Putin, his concern about Chechnya and Dagestan. They really do believe there are certain Islamic groups that want to break off portions of Russia, and they're just not going to allow that to happen. This is a major issue. The Russian diplomats that I talked to very early on, even before it got in the press, were convinced that the trouble in Chechnya was stirred up by outsiders, by people from the Middle East. There was very quick identification with the United States after 9/11 that we both have people from the Middle East trying to destroy us. Of course, a lot of our human rights organizations were saying no, this Chechnya thing is definitely a legitimate desire for self-government, self-determination and the Russians are just grinding them down. The Russian government just doesn't see it that way.

Q: How about North Korea?

RUEDY: I didn't have North Korea, thank goodness. I've never dealt much with North Korea.

Q: You say you had U.N. affairs?

RUEDY: Yes, I had U.N. affairs.

Q: How were we viewing the role of Russia in the U.N. at that time?

RUEDY: Obviously, the Russians continue to be major players in the Security Council. I think both countries were trying to figure out ways to reform the UN so as to better reflect the new world situation we find ourselves in. There was a lot of consultation between the United States and Russia about the future of the UN. Obviously, when Israel is involved, or certain other hot button issues, we don't see eye-to-eye. It is my understanding that in our views of how to proceed with reforming the U.N., the United States and Russia often were closer than we were with say France because we both had similar goals. That was very interesting to watch. The Russians were quite upset about what they perceived as the United States getting rid of Boutros-Gali and putting in someone the United States approved of in his place; they see Kofi Annan as an American plant; they blamed Madeleine Albright for that. That didn't go over very well; there was a lot of tension around that.

Q: Was terrorism a major concern of ours by this time?

RUEDY: The embassy was shot at. Someone – and I don't remember if they ever caught anyone – set up one of these RPG's in an alleyway right across from the embassy, shot across the street and hit two floors below where I was standing; the whole building

shook. This was not too long after the Oklahoma City bombing so we didn't know if the building was going to collapse or what was going to happen. That shook everybody up. I don't know that we were that concerned about terrorism in Moscow or Russia itself because things were still pretty tightly controlled. At that time we had people from the embassy going down to Chechnya – there came a time when nobody was allowed to go there. When I was there people were still going there and reporting on the situation. So I guess it was just a little bit early; we were all shocked back here in Washington when we read about the bombings in the Metros and the schools and that sort of thing. That's not something we would have contemplated when I was there.

Q: How was morale at the embassy at this point?

RUEDY: Moscow's a tough place. We knew that before we went out. There was the compound which I think gave everybody a sense of security in a way, but it also felt very claustrophobic; actually, for people with families I think it was really tough. My husband and I took two teenagers over there and that was amazingly difficult.

Q: Where did they go to school?

RUEDY: They went to school right on the compound. It was an excellent school. Both my children did very well, they profited thereby. My daughter learned Russian and now she's a professional dealing with Russian affairs. I think it was just a matter of people being squeezed into a very small space, and seeing the boss or seeing the secretary that you had words with that day and then seeing them that night at the gym. It was very difficult to get away from work; of course, you were right there on call too so it was not unusual for people to go home for dinner and then back to do work at the embassy.

Q: Was the KGB security apparatus pretty well gone?

RUEDY: No, absolutely not. There was still a lot of that. My boss, for example, in the EST unit was followed for a few days when he first arrived. There was still a lot of that going on. When I got back to Washington, I got stung because there was this young officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Russian Embassy who wanted to talk to me about CSCE/OSCE and so we had a couple of meetings. Eventually, I found out he was KGB; I had no idea and that was really a blow to my pride because I thought I could tell. This young man just seemed, we talked about preparing a Thanksgiving turkey and it seemed very innocuous, but I got called in.

Q: Where was this going? Was this leading to recruiting you or?

RUEDY: I have no idea. I think he was probably young and enthusiastic and didn't know where he was going with it either. He was just doing something he could report.

Q: It sounds as though the KGB hadn't gotten the word.

RUEDY: Well, you know they installed that listening device in one of our conference rooms not that long ago, after Powell was Secretary. They were still very much looking out after us.

Q: I can't thing of anything worse than having to listen to what went on in that room.

RUEDY: Well, people were saying this particular room was being used for bridal shower, baby showers, etc.

Q: I remember when we were in Belgrade where the phones were all bugged, my wife spent an inordinately long time on the telephone organizing an international Girl Scout meeting. I'm sure there were people from the secret police who knew all the ins and outs of organizing a Girls Scouts meeting.

RUEDY: They were still very much looking out after us.

Q: But you didn't feel that they were provocateurs at that time?

RUEDY: I didn't experience anything like that. There is a church that sits at one end of the compound and that has traditionally been considered a KGB listening post. It's a beautiful church with a lovely spire. My daughters, who were very adventurous, decided they were going to go visit this church; I didn't know anything about this, I was at work. The two of them, they both speak some Russian, went over and asked if they might see the inside of the church. They were met by a priest from the Orthodox Church, who seemed delighted to see them. He took them around, showed them around, let them ring the bells. So if that was still a KGB listening post, it was very well disguised. I was beside myself when I heard what they had done, but they said that the man had invited them back, had given them books, and had been a very good host.

Q: What about the openness of society, getting out and around?

RUEDY: That did not seem to be a big problem. People didn't hesitate to talk to us, especially if they found out we could speak a little Russian, and they seem to very eager to talk to us including people out in the countryside. We did a lot of weekend trips; I didn't sense that there was any concern. It was so different from when we were in East Germany where if we went to visit someone we would have to hide our car. I didn't sense any of that. People seemed to speak quite freely. Even the diplomats seemed to speak quite freely. I don't know what it's like now; I understand things are changing. My daughter leaves on Tuesday for a three-week trip so I'll be anxious to hear her impressions because she is in the human rights area.

Q: In 1997 you're back again where, to Washington?

RUEDY: Back to Washington. I started on the German desk; I was the German desk officer working mostly on Holocaust issues. That was a time when this whole issue of

repaying Holocaust survivors and returning money held in Swiss banks and all that sort of thing.

Q: I've interviewed J.D. Bindenagel.

RUEDY: Oh, yes, you know all about that. I was the point person on the German desk. He came a little bit later. He took over that portfolio after I had gone. The point person when I was on the desk was Stu Eisenstadt. There was a lot that I was working on, also on the whole Scientology issue.

Q: That was one of those third rails that no one wants to touch. You were doing this on the German desk from 1997 until when?

RUEDY: I did it for a year from 1997 to 1998.

Q: During that time what was happening with repatriation and restitution?

RUEDY: The United States was working very hard to make this work finding some problems with the Swiss. The Swiss desk officer could talk about this much better than I, but Swiss banking laws are very strict and so the whole business of how do you deal with the Swiss and get them to open up their records so we could see what really...

Q: There was also an issue that a lot of Swiss bankers had profited by this.

RUEDY: Oh, yes.

Q: They had that money around and had used it for their own advantage. We were breaking a very big rice bowl.

RUEDY: The Swiss desk officer knows this better than I. The Swiss were really embarrassed. They were not used to being on the front pages in a negative way like that. Eisenstadt and Bindenagel had to work very hard to make a lot of progress, and I think the good that came out of that was due to U.S. efforts.

Q: Let's talk about Scientology. What is Scientology and what you were doing with it?

RUEDY: Scientology is a 'religion', according to the United States Government. I have had a lot of contact with Scientology lawyers. I had frequent meetings with them, frequent telephone conferences with them, my inbox was always full of very professional, very in-depth legal material about Scientologists' problems in Germany. I understood it as a human rights issue. It was always mentioned in the human rights report. I also knew that in Germany they were coming at it as consumer protection issue.

Q: It was considered a cult.

RUEDY: It was considered a cult, but the Germans, the German government, was coming at it as a consumer protection issue for which consumer protection law applied. This was sort of like two ships passing in the night; how our government saw it, how the German government saw it. It was very, very difficult. We did at one point organize a round table and we invited Scientologists, we invited Jehovah's Witnesses, we invited some other groups that had had problems in Germany, and we invited German government representatives, German NGOs, just got everybody together in the same room, for a sanity check. That was supposed to be the start of a series of meetings in which they were going to air their differences and try to come to a working relationship or at least agree on a plan, but I think that fell through. I don't think they ever followed up on that.

Q: My impression of Scientology – I ran across it one time when I was Consul General in Athens – is that it's a cult. Before my time, a ship full of Scientologists had sailed the Mediterranean and had home-ported near Athens. The stories that we got of brain-washing young vulnerable people suggest it's a cult. They recruit young people and they keep charging you money to move to a higher level. Once you're in, 1) you're brainwashed, and 2) you're milked of your money. I'm sure you would have six lawyers on top of me because the Scientologists are inclined to respond by legal means immediately. But I think it would be a little hard to defend this as a religion versus cult..

RUEDY: I have my personal views on that. As a Foreign Service Officer, I had to follow U.S. policy, and that was clearly that scientology is defined as a religion. There were all sorts of rumors about why this was the case, some of them very interesting, about who had friends where. That's about all I want to say about that.

Q: I am surprised because generally things have changed a lot in the States but for a long period of time we were concerned about cults, the brain washing, the removal of young people from their families, and that seems to have died away. I can't believe that would be this would be that popular of a cause within the body politic because I think most people do consider it a cult..

RUEDY: Scientology, as far as I can tell, had friends in high places.

Q: Even the newspapers let it go, I mean investigative reporters.

RUEDY: If you write about scientology in a negative way, you can expect the lawyers to appear so people, I think, think twice.

Q: After this, where did you move?

RUEDY: I went back to RPM. I got an offer I couldn't refuse. They needed somebody to do NATO-Russia. I thought OK, this is it, I've got to do it. I'll dump Scientology and go do NATO-Russia.

Q: I imagine that with Scientology, you were walking on eggshells all the time.

RUEDY: It was very difficult.

Q: And I would imagine it would be difficult to be personally engaged, to be very careful you don't really know.

RUEDY: I think I felt, personally, the taxpayers' money was not being well spent, all this attention to this one particular group. With all the problems in the world, this just seemed to be overkill.

Q: You were in RPM from 1998 until when?

RUEDY: From '98 until '99.

Q: What was the major issue of Russia and NATO? Or was that the issue?

RUEDY: The whole relationship; what were we going to do with Russia? How was Russian going to respond to NATO expansion? There was a big theological issue about whether it was expansion or enlargement, and I can't remember now which I was supposed to call it.

Q: Probably enlargement which has a less pejorative meaning than expansion.

RUEDY: That's right. During that year we had the 50th anniversary NATO summit here in Washington. That was a BIG DEAL. That was going to include the first round of enlargement, we were going to take in three countries. We were also, of course, bombing Kosovo just before the summit started. People at the State Department working on NATO became sort of shadows of themselves. I thought I had worked hard before when I was in RPM but that year I don't know how many hours I put in. We worked weekends, we rarely saw our families; it was really an amazingly difficult time because we had all these different things we were trying to get through. We had some very talented military people seconded to RPM to help us with some of the proposals that involved more military operational things. We had a series of very tough deliverables that we were trying to get through, and it was such a high profile summit that we couldn't fail.

Q: I would imagine that you also ran across a real cultural divide between the Western Europeanists and people who had been Soviet specialists because the whole thing being we can't do this because this will turn the Russians into an enemy and all that. You must have been caught in the middle of that.

RUEDY: Yes. We were trying to create a kind of mechanism which would allow Russia and NATO to interact more or less on a level playing field. In other words, we were not going to admit Russia to NATO, they didn't really want that anyway. But we had to find a way, some kind of diplomatic mechanism. So we came up with the idea of a NATO-Russia Council. This Council was going to meet on a regular basis and have the same kind of ministerials, in other words, there would be a NATO-Russia ministerial at the

same time there was a regular NATO ministerial. This is the way we were going to satisfy the Russian need to kind of keep an eye on what NATO was doing without actually joining. I was supposed to be developing a series of deliverables for a NATO-Russian summit for this 50th anniversary and worked very hard on that to try to come up with some things that both sides could agree on, but in the end it didn't happen because of the Kosovo War. There was a lot of drama.

Q: What were the Russians, the people you were in contact with, saying about this?

RUEDY: I think we have to remember the very natural linkage and friendship between the Serbs and the Russians, they're both Orthodox. I think their gut feeling was that the Muslims were getting all the attention and that it was much more complicated than that. Secondly, Primakov thought he could resolve some of the issues but was not given a chance; there was some feeling like those who thought we went into Iraq this last time too soon and didn't let diplomacy have enough of a chance. You have to remember also that it was the first time that NATO had actually gone to war. This was very disturbing for the Russians. They didn't know what they were dealing with and what they were going to face from this new NATO that was willing to go out of area. I think all these things together, and I'm certainly not an expert on this area, but just from my little chair at the Russian-NATO desk that's kind of how I saw it.

Q: What were you getting from your contacts at the Russian Embassy?

RUEDY: They were very hierarchical at the time and dealt only with our office directors. I would sit in on those meetings. I had the impression that the man who came most often to talk to RPM either pretended to be out of it or was out of the loop. We found that quite common. We would talk to Russian diplomats at NATO for example, and they would not know as much as you would expect them to know. Whether that was just pretense, I was never quite sure. It gave them wiggle room because they would say we don't know about that, we have to get back to Moscow, this kind of thing. So that was the deal with this fellow who worked with us on the Russian participation in the summit. He seemed to be not in the loop. That was being handled at a much higher level with Strobe Talbott. Strobe Talbott was Mr. Russia. He dealt with Russians on all these issues.

Q: What about the NATO Summit, the 50th anniversary? There were all sorts of protest groups, weren't there?

RUEDY: Yes, there were. But, of course, everybody involved officially at the summit were kept cordoned off and not much interaction.

Q: I realize that you were down in the nuts and bolts of this thing, but were you getting much feel from your military colleagues, oh, my God, this is going to deluge NATO with a bunch of people coming in, with different types of equipment, different training and how it doesn't fit.

RUEDY: There was a lot of that. There was a perception that people at the State Department were unrealistic, they didn't understand what this all meant, they were just off on a tangent, they wanted to bring these people in for political reasons and what's that got to do with the military alliance and so on and so on. There with some people in the State Department who said, "You know, we've got an OSCE, so why do we have to expand NATO?" I must say for what it's worth, I was not a great fan. NATO was already a talk shop in so many ways; I could just see more talkers.

Q: I think this is just to give a certain amount of reassurance to countries that have just broken up more than anything else. We are no longer worried about the Fulda Gap and all that.

RUEDY: Right. I guess I can say this now that I'm retired, but I think NATO is bigger but I don't know that it's more effective, or that it's really contributing that much. We have some token people in Afghanistan but nothing major.

Q: In a way it may have helped keep NATO alive. In 1999 what happened?

RUEDY: In 1999 I was supposed to go to Moscow, but for family reasons and for health reasons, that assignment was canceled. I did not get a clearance to go to Moscow.

Q: So where did you go?

RUEDY: I went to INR (Intelligence and Research) to work on Russia.

Q: How long did you do that?

RUEDY: I did that for three years.

Q: To 2002?

RUEDY: Yes. I still didn't have a medical clearance, so I still had to find another job in the Department and so I was the German desk in INR, and then I did a year in public diplomacy for the Caucuses and Central Asia.

[Interview discontinued due to move out of Washington, DC area]

End of interview